



Children's Place at the Plaza

Parent Handbook



General Information

Center Description

The Children's Place was established in 1979 primarily to serve children of New York State employees. The Center is located on the Empire State Plaza, in the Swan Street Building. It is licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and complies with its rules and regulations. The center is inspected on a regular basis by the Fire Department, Department of Health, OCFS, and other regulating authorities. The Center's license to operate is posted in the office.

Pierce Hall was established in 1979 as a parent cooperative, with a commitment to provide loving, nurturing, child-centered day care to a culturally and economically diverse community of families who value non-violent and non-sexist principles. Originally located at the downtown SUNY campus, the center relocated in 1996 to Madison Avenue.

The merger of these two centers provided the opportunity for both programs to continue to grow and offer a quality early care and learning alternative. The Children's Place at the Plaza, as it is now known, looks forward to having the opportunity to be a part of your child's learning experience.

In addition, we make an effort to implement the guidance of the State Education Department, as well as the recommendations of leading experts in early care and learning.

Board of Directors

Children's Place at the Plaza is a non-profit corporation, operating in accordance with a set of by-laws. The governing body is the Board of Directors. The list of current Board members and schedule of upcoming activities is posted in the front foyer of the Center.

Parent participation on the Board and committees is essential for maintaining and developing the Center's operation. The standing committees are mandated by the by-laws. In addition, special committees are often formed to facilitate specific projects or events. If you would like more information or would like to become a member of the Board, please contact the Director or a Board member for more information.

Center Philosophy

The Center provides a safe, happy, healthy and nurturing environment for its children and their families. The climate in each classroom promotes love, self-confidence and mutual respect. The classroom environment encourages developmentally appropriate learning which includes problem solving, creativity, and social/emotional development. Each child is provided with the opportunity to develop these skills through active participation.

The Center recognizes the uniqueness of each child and his/her family. The Center is committed to working with parents in developing healthy habits that become an important part of each child's day.

The Center encourages free and open communication between parents and staff. Parents are encouraged to provide any information about their children and family to enable staff to build on each child's family experience to address both the unique needs and interests of each child.

The Center recruits well-trained, professional staff, who desire to work with children and their families. It is the Center's goal that employees grow both professionally and personally. The Center supports and encourages professional development and staff trainings to maintain our high quality environment

It is our goal that our program is based on developmentally appropriate practices and the continued family support and engagement— that is critical to the provision of quality early care and learning. We consider parents to be valuable partners and a great resource to our children's development We hope you will share our enthusiasm and commitment in helping all children achieve the highest of their potential.

Ages Served

6 weeks to 5 years

Hours of Operation

7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admissions Requirements

Children must be between six weeks and five years of age to enter the Center. They must be up-to-date with required vaccinations and in good health as verified by a physician's medical form and vaccination list. The form is required upon admittance and annually thereafter. Priority for admission is given to children of State employees and to siblings of children already enrolled in the Center. The Center only accepts full-time, and in certain circumstances part-time tuition payments.

Parents are encouraged to visit the Center prior to their child's enrollment and to visit the classroom with their child once or twice, before starting full-time. This facilitates the transition for both the child and family, and sets the stage for a more enjoyable experience.

The Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.

Parking

Parking for the purposes of dropping off and picking up children at the main Center is located outside the Swan Street Building. You may park in the spaces labeled *twenty-minute visitor* parking. Spaces labeled *reserved* are only for State employees who pay for these spaces. They are not to be used at anytime during the workday.

In addition, families in the Crystal room may use the metered parking on Madison Avenue.



Program

Curriculum

The Center implements Creative Curriculum in each classroom. The Creative Curriculum is a developmentally appropriate program that promotes children's social-emotional development and learning in the core areas of literacy, math, science, and social studies. The learning objectives of this program are aligned with the NY State early learning objectives for Pre-Kindergarten. Individual goals and objectives are determined for each child based on observations by the classroom teachers. Developmental assessments are completed twice a year and parent-teacher conferences are offered at these times.

There are three age units in the center. The Infant Unit is for children from 6 weeks to 18 months old. The Toddler Unit is for children from 18 months to approximately 3 years. The Preschool program serves children from 3-5 years. Each classroom is staffed by a head teacher and an assistant teacher. In addition, each unit has a supervisor. Children are transitioned into each classroom on the basis of several criteria, including age, developmental skills and space availability.

The infant program is determined by the needs and development of the children enrolled. As Creative Curriculum requires, each baby's routine for eating and sleeping is determined by his/her individual needs rather than the needs of the group. This routine is the vehicle with which social-emotional development will be achieved. The children are exposed to a variety of activities and experiences that allow them to actively explore their environment. Developmentally appropriate language is used extensively as this is a very important way babies learn about their world.

Our toddler rooms focus on the premise that toddlers are active learners. They are constantly exploring the world around them; touching, feeling, and tasting. With this in mind we provide opportunities for child initiated activities that provide plenty of time for play and exploration. We know that toddlers at one moment "want to do it themselves" and at other moments want to be cuddled and hugged. Both are strongly encouraged.

Preschool children learn through play. Our children learn through experimentation, observation, and exploration as we provide a hands-on environment. The preschool rooms are arranged into learning centers; including, but not limited, to dramatic play, creative art, science, manipulatives, blocks, library, woodworking, sand/water play and a writing center.

All classrooms go outdoors in all types of weather (except when it is below 20 degrees or heavy rain). It is our goal to provide a well balanced program that provides opportunities for both active and quiet play and learning, as well as individual and group activities.

Arrival and Departure

Parents must accompany their child into the classroom and sign the child in each day. When leaving, they must also sign them out on the appropriate form. Parents should assist their child with their outer clothing and make sure that the child is comfortably settled into the classroom and under the care of a staff member before leaving. It is highly recommended that information is shared about the night before as it may affect their child's behavior during the day.

Saying goodbye can be difficult for both the child and family. However, we ask that you never sneak out without saying goodbye just to avoid an uncomfortable transition. Children are learning to build trust and need to know you are leaving. It is best to say goodbye to your child and let them know when you will be back (ex. after snack, after nap, before story-time). The teachers will help you with this transition and please know you can always ask for help if needed. Also, if you would like, the teachers can call you later in the day and let you know how your child is doing.

Children will only be released to individuals who have been authorized for pick up as indicated on the release form. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Custodial parents or legal guardians can change this form at anytime. Staff will ask for proof of identification (picture ID only) if they do not personally know the authorized individual. Security codes are not to be given to anyone, including people who are authorized to pick up the child. Parents are asked not to open the door to anyone.

The center closes promptly at 5:30 PM. Parents are asked to arrive prior to this time and to leave by closing time. As children who are waiting for late parents often become upset, it is best for the child if the parents arrive before closing.

Inclement Weather Policy

During inclement weather, the Board of Directors of the Children's Place will determine if the center should close or delay opening. The Board will consider the status of the Albany City School District and National Weather Service Advisories in making this determination.

The Center -listed as "Children's Place at the Plaza"- will reach out to the school network stations available on local television, radio, and newspapers and will post updates under closings/delays. When the Center delays opening, we will open at 9am and breakfast will not be served, so please make sure that children eat at home. If the center closes early due to weather, parents will be contacted by phone. Please ensure that the Center has an up-to-date phone number where you can be reached. The Center will also post any weather related update on its website at www.empireplazakids.org.

Classroom Transitions

Children are moved from one age group to the next when they are chronologically and developmentally ready. Parents are contacted when a child is considered ready to move to discuss the transition. The child is provided opportunities to visit the new classroom and to interact with the children and staff of the new room prior to the actual move. A formal transition period of one week (unless there is the need for more time) will be planned to allow the child time to adapt to the new children, staff, and classroom. In addition, a conference may be scheduled with the parents and the involved staff.

Staff

Each class is directed by a head teacher and a full-time assistant teacher. In addition, there is a floater who moves among the classrooms as daily needs dictate. Part-time college students (studying Early Childhood Education) may also be present in the classrooms from time to time. As full-time staff departs for the day (in half-hour intervals) they are replaced by afternoon staff who continues the children's day. All teaching staff is supervised by the Program Directors, Assistant Director, and the Executive Director.

The Center is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. Staff is selected on the basis of their educational certification in early childhood education, experience with young children, personal philosophies on early childhood education and their ability to provide warm, nurturing care to children and their families.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) requires that all head teachers must have at least an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood or a Child Development Associate credential with two years experience. All assistants must have at least a high school diploma or extensive early childhood education experience. Staff is selected not only for their Early Childhood backgrounds, but also for their personal qualities that will help promote a caring environment for the children. All staff is screened through OCFS Central Registry of Child Abuse and Maltreatment.

Staff Development

The Office of Children and Family Services requires that all directors and staff complete at least 30 hours of professional training every two years. In addition, staff attend regularly scheduled meetings, periodic in-house trainings, and various professional conferences.

Clothing

Please be sure that your child's clothing is comfortable, washable, and allows for self-dressing. Clothing should be marked with the child's name and be appropriate for messy and/or active play (paint smocks are provided).

When the weather is cold, all children should have mittens, hats and a sweater to layer over clothes. Parents must provide snow pants and boots. Remember that boots become very warm if worn all day, so please provide alternate shoes for indoors. When it rains, please provide boots and a raincoat. If your child wears dresses or jumpers with tights, please provide extra pants to cover their legs.

Jelly shoes and sandals do not provide necessary protection and are discouraged. Sneakers must be provided for safe, active outdoor play. The wearing of jewelry, chains and earrings is also strongly discouraged. The Center is not responsible if any such items become lost or damaged.

Please keep a complete extra outfit in your child's cubby, including spare socks and underwear. Remember to change the extra clothes when the seasons change.

Meals

Older infants, toddlers and preschoolers are served breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Breakfast is intended for children who arrive before 9:00A.M. Please plan on feeding your child breakfast at home if you will be arriving later than 9:00A.M

Meals are prepared on site and are served family style. Staff eats with the children as this time is used to extend language experiences, model good manners, and create a relaxed atmosphere. Parents are always invited to join the children during lunchtime.

The Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program as administered by the Division of Nutrition of the New York State Department of Health. The menus are posted in the main hallway and are prepared using a four-week cycle.

Food Policy

Each day the Children's Place provides meals for breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack that are prepared on the premises and that meet Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutritional guidelines.

CACFP guidelines ensure that infants between the ages of twelve months and eighteen months, toddlers and preschoolers receive balanced meals that include the following food components:

- Milk (whole milk for infants and toddlers, 1% milk for preschoolers)
- Fresh fruit or 100% juice and/or vegetable
- Whole grain
- Meat or meat alternative

CACFP guidelines ensure that infants between the ages of six weeks and twelve months receive balanced meals that include the following food components:

- Breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula
- Fruit and/or vegetable (introduced at four months to seven months)
- Iron-fortified infant cereal or bread/cracker product (introduced at four months to seven months)
- Meat or meat alternative (introduced at eight months to twelve months)

The center offers Parent's Choice Formula to infants aged six weeks to twelve months. You may use the *Statement Regarding Child Meal Program* form in your enrollment package to accept the center's offer or to decline it and provide your own brand of formula/breast milk.

Meals are served family style, with children and teachers seated together around a table and with all meal components in the center. Your child will be encouraged to serve him/herself and to try each food component that is being offered.

Food Allergies

If your child has allergies please provide documentation from your family's physician. Once documentation has been provided the center may prepare meal substitutes for your child.

Our center has a no-nut policy to protect the safety of children with severe allergies. Parents should be mindful of this policy when bringing food into the center. Many packaged foods, such as granola bars or doughnuts, are prepared alongside products that contain nuts in processing plants and are not permitted in the center.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special days in the life of a young child and the children are certainly welcome to celebrate their special day at the Center. However, we ask that parents please limit the celebration to cake, cupcakes, or cookies to share with friends at snack time. For such special occasions, review our food policy before making any purchases. Please be advised that the Center does not allow any homemade food for special occasions, any food containing nuts, or food that does not have a list of ingredients clearly marked. Our goal is to create an environment where children and parents alike don't feel obligated to do the same when it is their birthday. Prior arrangements must be made with your child's teacher if you wish to share food with other children for birthdays or holidays. All food must be purchased at a store or bakery and must include a complete list of ingredients. Candy may not be served in the center at any time.

Naptime

The OCFS requires that the Center provide a rest or quiet period when a child can lie down to rest (ours is approximately 1-3pm). We try to make naptime a relaxing time so that children may fall asleep if needed. Please know that if your child does not fall asleep, they will be given the opportunity to look at books, listen to music or play quietly. The infant room is the exception since children are on their own schedule for napping.

Each child is provided with a cot/crib. Parents are asked to provide a small blanket for their child, a sheet (for Crystal Room children) and a snuggly if desired. Each Friday, the blanket is to be taken home for laundering and returned the following Monday.

Field Trips

Field trips and walks are considered an important part of the educational program. Periodically the toddlers and preschoolers will leave the building to attend a concert at the Egg or go on another type of excursion. Please know that on these occasions you will always receive advance notice and will be asked to sign a separate permission slip. We will also invite parents to join us as the extra supervision is much appreciated.

Each child must have written permission of his/her parent or guardian prior to participating in the activity. Permission slips to be signed by parent and guardians will clearly indicate the location, date, and method of transportation being used. No child will be allowed to attend a field trip without written permission.

When children are transported to an off-site field trip, staff to child ratios still apply (18 NYCRR section 418- 1.8 (e)). During these trips, the Board of Directors has determined that it is necessary to

establish the following* additional guidance: for any field trip that involves leaving the Empire State Plaza** a ratio of 1 adult to every 2 children must be maintained. For these occasions, parents and guardians will be asked to provide chaperone assistance and/or additional staff members may be scheduled if available. If a ratio of 2-to-1 cannot be maintained, the trip will be cancelled.

*This policy does not apply to routine activities such as the library or parks near or adjacent to the Empire State Plaza.

**the 10 buildings making up the Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza.



Partnership with Families

Communication

We recognize the effectiveness of good communication with the families we serve and we strive to provide many opportunities for the sharing of information. The main bulletin board, located just inside the front entrance, holds information specific to the Center as well as general community events. Also, please visit our website at empireplazakids.org and sign up to receive important Center updates as well as school closing information on snow days.

Reports are written by the staff to describe your child's daily activities. A newsletter containing information on activities and events is sent home monthly. Pertinent childcare information is also addressed in the newsletter.

Staff members will communicate with you on a daily basis in writing and/or verbally. We believe that regular communication between staff and families helps to build trust and enhance comfort levels for our families and staff. It is our desire to promote an atmosphere of open communication. We hope that you will feel free to share your thoughts and concerns with us.

Visitations

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit and observe their child's program at any time throughout the day and to join in the activities of the classroom. We believe that parent visits enhance the program by promoting communication and continuity between the Center and the home. To ensure the safety of the children however, we do not permit other visitors such as family and friends, without prior consent from the parents concerned. If approved to visit, we will also require proper identification.

Discipline Philosophy

The goal of the Center at the Children's Place is to create a safe and nurturing environment for our children.

Discipline involves guiding a child to treat themselves and others with respect. We believe that the purpose of discipline is to assist a child in developing the social skills needed to successfully function in a diverse setting. Our goal is to help children develop respect for themselves and others.

We attempt to minimize the need for discipline by listening to the children, observing behaviors and setting up activities in ways that will encourage participation and cooperation. We use consistency and positive reinforcement. Appropriate limits are set for the children and when possible the children are given the chance to make their own choices. All guidance is phrased positively and disapproval always focuses on the behavior, not the child.

Our teachers encourage and assist the children in working out problems with their peers by discussing the issue with them in appropriate language, verbalizing their feelings if possible and resolving the problem together. Children who are in the stage of developing early social skills will need more assistance than those whose skills are further developed in this area. A teacher will intervene immediately in all cases where there may be danger of a child being hurt. Where appropriate, the children involved will be offered suitable ways to handle the situation.

We do not equate discipline with punishment. When we discipline we are trying to teach, not punish. We will not use any type of corporal punishment or speak to a child in a degrading manner. A child is never bad, his/her actions may be inappropriate, but the child is NEVER referred to as a bad boy/girl. Time out is used, but very infrequently. We feel that when time-out is overused, it will no longer be an effective means of discipline.

Supplies Provided By Families

Parents/Guardians are required to provide diapers, wipes, diaper cream, and sunscreen for their child as needed. In addition, each child should bring a blanket for napping which should be laundered weekly by the parent.

Teachers will also circulate a "wish list" of various items for each classroom. Parents/Guardians are under no obligation to supply items from the "wish list" but donations are gratefully accepted.

Toys

Please allow the children to share the wide variety of communal toys available at the center by leaving your child's personal toys home. If a child does bring in a toy from home, staff cannot be responsible for those items. A stuffed animal or book/cd from home is welcomed to help ease transition to naptime. Fighting action figures, toy guns, swords, or weapons of any kind are not allowed at the Center.

Part of the Center's philosophy is to help children be responsible for themselves, their behavior and their property. When you pick up your child, please be certain to allow them time to put away the toys or materials they are working with. This will help your child learn that returning things to their appropriate place is important.

Photographs and Publicity

Children's photographs will not be taken by anyone outside the Center or accompanying children on a field trip, unless you have been notified and asked to sign a permission form. Upon enrolling, you will be asked to sign a permission slip to allow Center staff to take pictures of your child.

Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

In the interest of the child, we will do what we can in order to provide both parents with communication about their child. We are happy to provide duplicate notices, and if requested, will set up two separate conferences.

Parents must provide a copy of any legal document regarding custody arrangements for the child. We will only be able to support what is in a court ordered document. Both parents will be allowed to visit and pick-up unless otherwise is specified in a court order.



Health and Safety

Health Policies

Health policies are established and maintained to ensure a healthy, safe environment for the children and staff. Please be aware that children who are in group settings are exposed to more illnesses. Depending on your child's immunity, he/she may also be more susceptible. To minimize exposure and the spread of illness, please respect these policies. Staff will take all precautions possible, but we count on parents to do their part. Please call the Center and advise us of any illness or absence due to illness.

Medical Examination and Forms

As a licensed day care facility, the Center follows policies established by the Office of Children and Family Services and the New York State Department of Health. The Center is required to report all outbreaks of contagious illnesses to the Health Department. The Health Department, in certain instances, will make their own regulations with which the Center must comply (such as closing a room or requiring certain tests be conducted).

All parents **must** provide and annually update the Center with the following:

-  A medical examination form as detailed in above (admission requirements). A card listing the work and home phone numbers of at least one other person to contact in case of an emergency and the name and phone number of each child's physician. If changes occur please let the staff/director know immediately.
-  A signed medical permission form for emergency treatment to be used in the event that a parent cannot be reached. A list of any agent which may cause an allergic reaction in your child (i.e. bee stings or certain foods).
-  A doctor's note for treatment is kept in each child's file. If medication is necessary, it must always be available for your child at the Center.

Medication

New York State Office of Children and Family Services regulations state: "Children will not be administered any medication, prescription or otherwise, except upon the written order from a physician." No exceptions will be made (medical permission slips are available in the office).

Medication must be in its original container including the pharmacy label, carefully labeled with the child's name, and safely and properly stored. It is best if the parent administers medication to his/her child. If this is not possible, the Center must have the written permission of the child's physician and parent on the authorized Medication Consent form. This completed form must be on file at the Center before any medication can be administered.

Illness

We realize that keeping your child home when he/she is feeling ill presents problems. We therefore ask you to make arrangements for alternate care far in advance. Please contact the Center if your child is not planning to attend due to illness.

It is not uncommon for children entering a group care situation to experience a period of increased illness while they build up immunities. We ask that you be aware of this possibility and prepare for it.

Sick children and children with a temperature constituting fever will not be accepted at the Center. Parents should advise teachers if the child "seemed off" during the night or has been exposed to a communicable disease. The family medical practitioner should be told that the child is in a childcare center to help determine when he/she may return after a communicable illness. Parents will be notified if their child is exposed to a communicable illness while at the Center.

If your child becomes ill, he/she will be removed from the classroom and you will be called. Please come promptly. Parents are expected to get their child within a reasonable period of time, generally not longer than 30 minutes, following notification from the Center.

Accidents

In the case of an accident at the Center, first aid will be administered by the Center personnel (if necessary, 911 will be called). An accident report will be filled out and filed by the teacher in charge at the time of the accident. The report will explain what happened, how the injury was attended to and how your child responded. A copy of the report will be placed in your child's cubby. In the case of a severe accident or injury, you will be contacted immediately. **Please be certain that current emergency contact numbers are on file with the Center at all times.**

Health Guidelines

The activities at the Center are busy, and would not be enjoyed by a sick or convalescing child since provisions are not made for a modified routine. If your child cannot participate in an "active childcare day," including going outside when everyone else does, he/she should be at home. Please wait until your child has recuperated before returning to daycare. The Director reserves the option of requiring a written note from your physician after any illness. In order to keep illnesses at a minimum, the Center requests that any child exhibiting the following conditions remain home until they are no longer ill:

1. **Severe Colds.** With thick nasal drainage (sometimes yellow or green).
2. **Temperature of 100 degrees F or higher:** If your child runs a fever the evening before attending childcare, they should remain home. If temperature is “normal” only with Tylenol, your child is still contagious. If your child runs a fever while at childcare, you will be contacted to pick him/her up from the center. If your child has been sent home from childcare with a fever, he/she may not return to the Center the next day. **Your child must be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to the Center.**
3. **Diarrhea:** Toddlers and older children who have 2 diarrhea stools in twenty-four hours or who refuse fluids generally have infectious diarrhea and should be kept home. Please do not bring your child to childcare until bowel movements are normal and fluid intake is good. If diarrhea occurs at the Center 2 or more times, it will be cause to send your child home. Children must be diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to the Center.
4. **Vomiting:** A child who has vomited more than once in the preceding twenty-four hours should be kept home. He/she should be able to tolerate a regular diet during the day. If vomiting occurs at the Center, it will be cause to send your child home. A child may not return to childcare for 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting.
5. **Upper Respiratory Symptoms:** Should be presumed to mean acute infectious illness, for which your child should be kept home. The symptoms are: profuse nasal discharge, recurrent sneezing and/or cough, listlessness, fever, and inability to keep up with the day’s activities. Asthma related problems are excluded from this.
6. **Undiagnosed Rash:** Unless specifically diagnosed by your doctor as non-contagious, the Center will send home any child who has, or develops a rash during the day.

Diaper Changing and Toileting

Sanitary measures are utilized to prevent health risks to both children and staff. These include the staff’s use of disposable gloves while diapering and thorough washing of hands after they have been removed. When diapering your child at the Center, we ask that you please follow the same procedures.

Hand Washing

The first line of defense against infectious disease is proper hand washing. The staff at the Center is instructed in the techniques of proper hand washing and helps the children learn the proper way to wash their hands too. Hands are washed before entering the classroom, before and after meals/snacks, after every diaper change or use of the toilet, after contact with nasal/mouth secretions, and other times as deemed appropriate.



Emergency Procedures

Fire Drills and Evacuation Drills

Monthly fire drills are conducted by the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control. In addition, emergency evacuations will be conducted at least twice a year.

Our evacuation procedures are as follows:

-  Main Building. We will proceed through the lobby of the Core II (DMV) building on to South Swan Street and walk to the Legislative Office Building. In the event of an emergency situation that prevents us from returning to the day care, you will be contacted to pick up your child at the LOB on the State Street Entrance. Please bring a photo ID to present to the guard for access to the LOB.
-  Crystal Rooms. We will exit the crystal room to the Plaza and walk to Madison Ave. We will enter the Concourse from Madison Ave. at the underpass across the street from the NYS Museum. In the event of an emergency situation that prevents us from returning to the day care, you will be contacted to pick up your child on the far end of the South Concourse.



Fiscal Policies

Pre-Enrollment Fees

Upon acceptance, a \$25.00 non-refundable registration fee, per child, is required. This fee is not applicable to the deposit or tuition requirement.

Upon acceptance, a deposit equal to two weeks tuition will also be required. This deposit will be held interest free and will be applied to the final two weeks of the child's attendance with the required two-week notice. Please understand without the two-week notice, the deposit will be forfeited. One half of the deposit may be paid in four equal installments over the first four weeks of the child's attendance.

Tuition Fees/Late Fees

Tuition is charged on Friday for the following two weeks and is due by the following Friday at the close of business. Any tuition received after Friday may be charged a late fee of \$25.00.

If tuition has not been paid by the Friday of the first week of service, then child care services may be denied the following Monday. Any deposit paid will be forfeited and the Center will continue to seek payment for any outstanding fees owed.

It is preferable that tuition be paid in the form of a check. However, if you need to pay in cash, you must deliver the tuition to an office staff member and secure a signed receipt. In the event of a billing disagreement, no credit will be provided without a signed receipt.

All tuition payments need to be placed in the locked box that is attached to the office door.

There are no tuition credits for vacations, illnesses or holidays.

Returned Checks

A \$20.00 penalty will be charged for all returned checks. This fee will be billed at the time of the occurrence.

Sibling Discount

There is a 10% reduction in tuition for families who have more than one child enrolled in the Center. The tuition reduction will be taken off the oldest child's tuition. This discount will continue as long as more than one child is enrolled at the Center.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Sometimes a meeting goes longer than expected or traffic is heavy which will result in you picking up your children after 5:30. We understand the unpredictable nature of these things, but because our staff has families and lives beyond work we will need to charge you \$10.00 for each 10 minutes that you are late. You will be asked to sign a late pick-up form if you arrive after 5:30. The fee will be billed with your next tuition invoice.

In the event a child is not picked up by 6:00PM, and no emergency contacts are available, the Center reserves the right to contact the Police Department.

Withdrawal from Program

Withdrawal from the Center requires written notification no less than two weeks prior to the intended date of departure. This allows the Center time to fill the vacancy. Failure to submit your notice within the required amount of time will result in the loss of your two-week tuition deposit.

It is our goal to try and meet the special needs of all the children enrolled at the Center. If needed, we will conference with you, make recommendations and help you obtain outside resources. However, there are times when our program may not be the best situation for a particular child or their family. In the event that this occurs, we do reserve the right to ask you to withdraw from the Center. We will however, make every attempt to refer you and your child to a program more suited to meeting your family's particular needs.

Disenrollment

The Center reserves the right to disenroll a child. Parents will be given written warning and notification prior to disenrollment when possible. Grounds for disenrollment may include, but are not limited to:

- unpaid tuition for more than two weeks;
- three or more bounced checks within a six month period;
- chronic lateness in picking up a child after the 5:30 closing time;
- parent behavior that is abusive (verbally and/or physically abusive) or detrimental to the program or well-being of children or staff;
- after all attempts have been made to improve the situation, persistent child behavior that is abusive or detrimental to the program or well-being of other children or staff;
- if parents refuse to meet with staff;
- the necessity of administering medical treatment for which staff is not trained;
- care exceeding staffing ratio abilities.

Any remaining tuition deposit, after all financial obligations are met, will be refunded. The above are provided for guidance only. Any circumstances which threaten the health and safety of children, parents and/or staff may result in immediate disenrollment.

Fund Raising

Several times a year the Center organizes fund raising events to support the curriculum. The Parent Committee currently raises funds to enhance the children's cultural and educational experiences. If you would like to participate in the organization of any of these events, please contact the director or the parent committee chair.

