

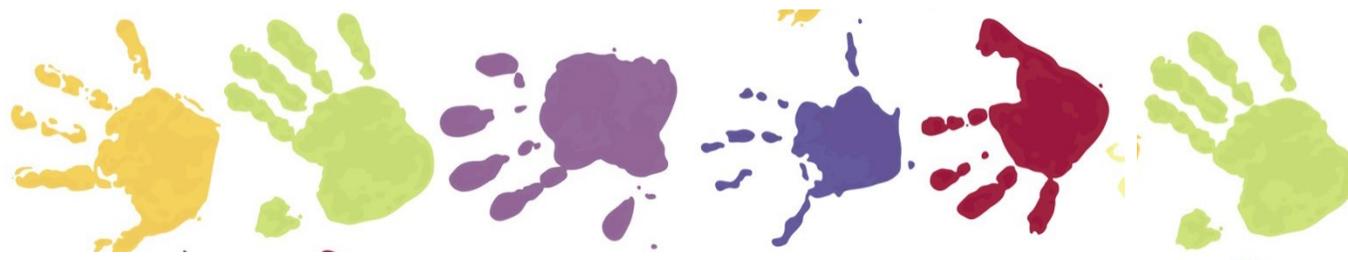


# University of Central Oklahoma Child Study Center

## Policy and Procedure Manual for Families

(updated 06/12/21)

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**The University of Central Oklahoma**

**Child Study Center**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome! This booklet is designed to help introduce you to the Child Study Center. It will be a rewarding time as we simultaneously experience the growth and development of your child and ourselves. Included in this packet you will find an overview of the philosophy, information about accreditation, a school calendar, the daily schedule, policies, curriculum insights and sample forms. There is also information regarding attendance and illness, signing in and out, tuition and fees, clothing, guidance, family involvement, safety, staff, communication and parking instructions.

Even if you have previously been involved in the program, **please read the entire booklet**. Policies change from time to time and we want everyone to feel informed.

## MISSION (10 B. 17)

The mission of the Child Study Center at the University of Central Oklahoma is to provide a model program for young children consistent with the teaching, research and service missions of the University. Within the university structure the center strives to:

- Provide a quality program for young children and their families based on scientific development appropriate practice.
- Provide education in all aspects of child development in a child- directed, inquiry-based, play- centered learning environment that is nurturing, safe, and secure.

## PHILOSOPHY (10 B. 17)

The philosophy of the program is based on providing opportunities and experiences for the development of each child and family served. The Child Study Center believes that each child is unique and learns best through play and exploration of a variety of materials and the environments. An environment that fosters all aspects of development through comprehensive and multi-disciplinary activities will enhance a child's opportunities for learning. Our philosophy is soundly based in child development and educational theory. Play experiences are provided that are developmentally effective and meaningful to young children.

### **PROGRAM GOALS FOR CHILDREN (10 B. 17)**

The primary goal of the Child Study Center is to present a high-quality program that will provide enriched educational experiences designed to meet the developmental needs of the children enrolled. More specific goals are to:

1. Provide each child with opportunity and encouragement to express his/her individual creativity in a variety of ways;
2. Foster the development of large and small motor skills through a variety of activities;
3. Stimulate language, problem solving skills, and cognitive development that leads to higher ordered thinking skills and provides the foundation for early math and literacy skills;
4. Develop social skills through interactions with other children and adults; and
5. Enable the child to appreciate and respect differences among people.

### **LICENSE & NATIONAL ACCREDITATION (10 B.17)**

The University of Central Oklahoma's Child Study Center is licensed by the Department of Human Services Child Care Service of Oklahoma. The program is a three star facility. Information about our license or licensing in general may be obtained by calling the Department of Human Services at (405) 521-3561 or 1-800-347-2276 or <http://childcarefind.okdhs.org/childcarefind/>

The Child Study Center is also accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. To learn more about the professional organization and accreditation visit NAEYC's family information website: [www.rightchoiceforkids.org](http://www.rightchoiceforkids.org).

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Child Study Center is open from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon Monday through Friday and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday during the school year. The summer program is 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Friday is reserved for planning and cleaning/sanitization. At enrollment time parents will receive a school calendar indicating which days the center is closed. The Child Study Center follows the UCO school schedule.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The Child Study Center closes for inclement weather when the university is closed. Please listen to local stations for complete listing of school closings or call 974-2002.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

<p>9:00-9:30 1:00-1:30</p>	<p><b><u>Arrival of Children:</u></b> Children and parents are greeted by the staff. Children put their belongings in their labeled cubby and are free to move about the room for a short period of time. Student participants are encouraged to greet and introduce themselves at this time.</p>
<p>9:30-9:45 1:30-1:45</p>	<p><b><u>Large Group Time:</u></b> A teacher will lead activities such as games, songs, books, puppet shows, etc. This is also a time for sharing amongst the children.</p>
<p>9:45-10:40 1:45-2:40</p>	<p><b><u>Free Choice Play:</u></b> During this time, children may move in and out of the activities they choose. Some children may stay a long time in an area and others may move in and out of several activities. The centers they will have an opportunity to choose from include: art, blocks, dramatic play, music, math and science, manipulative, reading, and sensory table.</p>
<p>10:40-10:50 2:40-2:50</p>	<p><b><u>Transition/Pick up Time:</u></b> It is the responsibility of the children to pick up the room. Adults help as well to encourage a sense of community and cooperation.</p>
<p>10:50-11:10 2:50-3:10</p>	<p><b><u>Snack:</u></b> Parents and children help in providing snack each day. The child who brings snack will also pass it out to the class and teachers (if enough snack is available). This is an excellent opportunity for them to use their manners and learn about a variety of foods. Snack time also offers them a chance to pour and possibly pass foods. Children will get only the snack that is served regardless of whether they like it or not. The only exception is if a child has a dietary restriction due to a health issue or religious beliefs.</p>
<p>11:10-11:20 3:10-3:20</p>	<p><b><u>Large Group Activity:</u></b> Another group activity designed for music, books, games, and wrap up of the days events. Planned special guests may be involved at this time also.</p>
<p>11:20-12:00 3:20-4:00</p>	<p><b><u>Outside Play Time:</u></b> Outdoor play is scheduled every day, weather permitting. Please dress accordingly. <b>Mark all clothing for easy identification.</b></p>

## **STAFF/ADVISORY BOARD**

Staff includes two full-time adults; one who serves in the capacity of director/teacher and the other as the curriculum coordinator/teacher. The staff will work with your child each day and maintain the appropriate teacher child ratio in the classroom and during outdoor play (10 B. 21) (10 B. 22). A Graduate Assistant is hired on a part-time basis. They help with the day to day activities and maintenance of the classroom. The staff of the Child Study Center is a team of dedicated and experienced professionals. All staff are required to continue their education through in-service workshops and trainings. Staff are also required to renew First Aid and CPR training regularly in courses specific to the care and needs of children.

The full-time professor in Child Development is the Faculty Administrator. The Child Study Center Advisory Board is composed of a group of dedicated parents, staff, faculty and community representatives. The Advisory Board serves in an advisory capacity to provide support and guidance to the center and to help the center fulfill its goals. Membership is open and past minutes are available.

## **CURRICULUM**

The Child Study Center incorporates principles of project-based learning at various levels throughout the center. The project approach refers to a way of teaching and learning, as well as to the content of what is taught and learned (Katz & Chard, 1988). Projects provide opportunities for learning experiences. They are based on the strong conviction that learning by doing is of great importance and that to discuss in groups and to revisit ideas and experiences is the premier way of gaining better understanding and learning. Children ages 3-6 learn best through direct interactive experience rather than just listening and watching. They learn extraordinary amounts through play and exploration. The younger the child, the more of what they learn needs to be relevant and interesting on the day they learn it, not just in the context of some future learning. Based on such knowledge about what children of this age are like, we design our program to fit them.

In addition to being age-appropriate, we are eager to learn as much as we can about each child's family, cultural background, past experiences and current circumstances. The staff will then work to create a program that fits the needs of the children and families we serve, thereby fostering an atmosphere in which we all can grow, learn about new things, and appreciated one another.

Outdoor Play is an important part of the curriculum. Young children need regular opportunities for outdoor play. The Child Study Center schedules outdoor play daily if weather permits. We use the Child Care Weather Watch Chart to determine if is safe

for outdoor play and ensure that the children wear the appropriate layers of clothing for the type of weather.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

It is our belief that each child's healthy development depends in part on a significant amount of regular physical contact with adult caregivers. This contact can be divided into three categories: nurturance (hugs and pats), health and safety (removal from harmful situation) and hygiene (blowing nose, assistance in toileting). With any physical contact, staff will be respectful and professional.

## **TOILETING**

Because of our program schedules and room arrangement, we prefer that all children be toilet trained at the time they enter the program. If a child is not toilet trained, then the staff will work closely with the family and any special service providers toward meeting that goal.

## **SNACKS**

Parents are asked to sign up to bring snacks for the class. Nutritious snacks are required. We ask that you limit sugary foods. Generally, children eat plain foods the best. We want to practice good choices for the children. It is recommended that food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged food in factory sealed container.

## **BIRTHDAY / CELEBRATIONS**

Throughout the year, parents may want to send a special treat into the center for their child to share with the group (birthdays, school party, etc.) Keep in mind, it should be commercially prepared. The Public Health Department will not allow us to serve anything that is homemade. If you would like to send a treat for a special occasion, please speak with the staff in advance. **We ask that you bring healthy treats for our celebrations.** Part of our curriculum is teaching children about good foods. Learning that we can have fun parties and still eat healthy foods will help our children learn to make healthy food choices. Please check with the teachers to see if any of the children have diet restrictions.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Along with day to day greetings, the staff will regularly communicate with you via notes, phone calls, email or one-to-one discussions. The staff will relate information about your child's moods, activities, successes, challenges, etc. In addition, we are always available to discuss concerns, or to set aside time for a private conversation. Staff will

also schedule regular parent/teacher conferences with twice yearly. We welcome parents to spend time in the classroom or in the observation booth observing the children. We encourage you to share time, talents or interests. Throughout the year, the Center provides a variety of parent education activities and family gatherings. Newsletters and flyers will announce such events. Parents are encouraged to visit and participate. Opportunities for involvement include the following:

- Family Receptions
- Advisory Board Involvement
- Sharing Special Talents
- Sharing Cultural Experiences and Traditions
- Evaluating Program Effectiveness
- Parent Educational Resources
- Special Activities (i.e. parties, cooking, teacher help)
- Time in the Observation Booth (at your convenience)

### **FAMILY CONFERENCES / ASSESSMENT / SCREENING (4 A.1) (4 E.5) (7B.3)**

Our program utilizes portfolio assessment. This type of assessment uses many methods to observe and document each child's interests and development. Some of the methods may be observations, checklists, and formal screenings. Each teacher in the program is trained to administer each of the instruments used for assessment and is responsible for documentation. Every staff member in the classroom may conduct observations and keep anecdotal records. All information will be kept confidential. Parents and staff will have access to the information. Teachers will arrange time with families for a parent-teacher conference twice a year. These are designed for families and teachers to share their observations of the growth of the child in the areas of physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Occasionally, screening of a child's development may be advised. Teachers and families will discuss what is needed. Results of screening/evaluation are confidential, to be kept in the child's files and released only with parental permission. Another purpose for assessment is to improve curriculum and teaching practices which contribute to overall improvement of the program. A speech and hearing assessment will be scheduled during the spring semester.

### **ANNUAL FAMILY SURVEYS**

The Child Study Center is an accredited center and strives to meet the needs of our children and families served. Families are asked to complete a survey during the spring semester. The survey questions are related to the standards for an accredited center. We review the findings and discuss areas where we can make improvements.

**GUIDANCE / DISCIPLINE (1 B.4) (1 B.8) (1 B.10) (10 B.20) (10 B.18)**

A preventative approach to discipline is employed whenever possible. Clear limits and realistic expectations of the children are defined and children are encouraged to have reasonable expectations of adults as well as appropriate behavior in various situations. At the Child Study Center, we recognize that conflict is a very natural part of any group experience. Center staff provide support to children and families as they learn healthy, non-hurtful ways of resolving conflict. We maintain a respectful attitude toward children at all times and will never subject any child to any form of coercion, physical punishment or psychological abuse. (1 B.8) (1 B10).

**SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES**

The Child Study Center offers special needs services to children and their families who are experiencing developmental delays or accelerations, or who are in crisis or transition. Our special needs services include but are not limited to: needs screening and assessment, individualized program plans, parent support and education, and resource referral. We work with many community, university and statewide agencies if referrals are needed. We work with the school system in collaboration with any IEP (Individual Education Plan).

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES****PROGRAM ENTRANCE**

Upon entrance into the program, all families receive this handbook. The staff will also give you a tour of the facility including observation booth, playground and your child's personal area. If you have several questions or concerns, a personal time meeting can be set. All children's enrollment information and health records will be filed in a locked cabinet and kept confidential.

**ATTENDANCE**

In general, it is best for your child to attend regularly and in time for daily activities. A fairly set routine is important for your child's sense of security in the program. You must bring your child into the center and sign him or her in on the sign-in sheet located in the front entry. The morning session (9:00-12:00 noon, Monday through Friday) is for children three years of age. The afternoon session (1:00-4:00 Monday through Thursday) is for children four years of age.

Regular attendance will be required to attend (except in the event of illness or vacation). The hours are strictly enforced. Please drop your child off by ten minutes past the hour and pick them up by the scheduled departure time. We ask that you arrive at the Child Study Center by **11:50 a.m. or 3:50 p.m.** when picking up your child. This will avoid

delay in your departure. The staff may need to go speak to classes on campus about the program. Although there is no late fee in place, we ask you respect these hours because of the effect it has on both your child and the Child Study Center staff. If you have a situation which will keep you from arriving on time, please call the following number: 405-974-5788. You might enter this as a contact in your cell phone. It is important to note on the Child Record Sheet who is permitted to pick up your child after school.

The classroom door will be open for 10 minutes upon arrival to the center. At 9:10 a.m. and 1:10 p.m. the classroom door will be closed. Families will need to knock on the door or use the doorbell for admittance to the classroom. (10 B.19) If you have any concerns about a visitor or someone who is not identified with a name tag, please talk with the staff.

If you have authorized an adult other than yourself to pick up the child, please have that adult come to the center with a photo ID. They will need to ring the doorbell or knock to be admitted to the classroom.

Every family is required to sign in and out each day. Please kindly adhere to this guideline.

## **ITEMS FROM HOME**

The staff prefers that children leave toys at home. Bringing a toy often leads to disagreements with playmates and upset feelings. Sometimes items from home get broken. Sometimes children would like to share found “treasures”. The staff are always eager for you to share these with the class. Shells from the beach, wildflowers, bugs, seeds, bird nests, magazine pictures, interesting leaves or containers, or old jewelry are things that are valued by the children and the teachers.

## **CLOTHING**

The following guidelines are suggested:

- Clothing worn to school should be comfortable and allow freedom of movement.
- Clothing should be simple enough for children to button, snap or zip as self-care is encouraged.
- Clothing should be considered play clothes in order to allow for “messy” activities.
- Because children will be going outside most of the time, send appropriate gear for current weather conditions. Please label your child’s coat.
- All clothing should be marked for easy identification.

## FEES AND TUITION

Tuition is due on or before the first day of school. Your child is invited to attend class after this obligation has been met. The tuition is a semester rate. Costs for the AM class will be \$400 for Monday, Wednesday, Friday; \$350 for Tuesday, Thursday; \$725 for Monday through Friday. The cost for PM class will be \$400 for Monday through Thursday. Checks should be made payable to the **University of Central Oklahoma or UCO**. Payment may be made directly to your child's teacher, in which a receipt will be obtained when deposited to the Bursar office. Please be advised that withdrawal from the program within 21 days of the start of the semester carries a penalty. Any family dropping from the program 15-21 days before the start of the semester will be required to pay 10% of the tuition. Withdrawal 8-14 days prior to the semester will pay 20% of the tuition, with a penalty of 35% being assessed for dropping out 1-7 days before the first day of class.

## HEALTH / ILLNESSES

Since our program is a part day program, no medicine will be administered while at the Child Study Center. Sunscreen and insect repellent will not be administered as well. (10 B.19) We recommend, especially during the summer session, that sunscreen be applied before the children arrive at school. Hand washing is practiced regularly while your child is at school. This includes upon arrival, after toileting, handling bodily fluids, after playing in water, after playing outdoors and before eating food. Handwashing is the single, most effective way of preventing the spread of illness. (5 A.19) **A child should be kept at home if they have the following symptoms:**

1. An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in the center activities including outdoor play.
2. An illness that results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of other children in care.
3. The child has one of the following:
  - a. axillary (armpit) temperature of 100 or higher without other symptoms of illness (must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours to be readmitted to the program).
  - b. axillary temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness (follow readmission rule for fever above);
  - c. vomiting and /or diarrhea (3 or more episodes of a water consistency in an 8 hour period; must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the center);
  - d. an infectious disease (chicken pox, measles, strep throat, etc.; readmission is based on a Pediatrician guidelines);

- e. ear infection with discomfort and fever (follow readmission rule for fever above; be able to participate in all activities comfortably);
- f. sore throat with fever (follow admission rule for fever above; after 24-48 hours on an antibiotic if required);
- g. croup (until symptoms subside);
- h. lice (may return after shampoo treatment and removal of nits);
- i. any unexplained rash (until a doctor has released the child to return to the center);
- j. any skin infection – boils, ringworm, impetigo (may return 24 hours after treatment and in the infection is covered);
- k. pink eye or other eye infections (may return 24 hours after treatment and the symptoms are gone); and
- l. other signs or symptoms of illness not listed above; readmission guidelines offered by the American Academy of Pediatrics will be followed.

Please notify the teacher immediately if your child has been exposed to any contagious disease. Upon arrival each day the child will be observed for symptoms of illness. No ill child will be admitted to the center.

In case of a serious illness, emergency medical care will be obtained and the child's family will be notified as soon as possible. A release for emergency treatment must be on file.

When a child becomes ill, he/she will be cared for until arrangements can be made for his/her removal from the center as promptly as possible. Parents must provide the center with the phone number of a person to contact in case of an emergency, if you are unavailable. Parents will receive a copy of a symptom report stating the details of the symptoms of illness observed. Parents will be notified when the child has been exposed to a communicable disease. Readmission to the center of any child recovering from a communicable disease or disabling condition must be under physician advisement. If your child has been exposed to a communicable, reportable disease or condition while at the center, we will notify you the same day we are notified. Parents will be given a letter describing the condition and steps to take if your child displays any of those symptoms.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS (5 A. 14)**

It is required by DHS Child Care Licensing to have an updated immunization record kept on file for each child. An updated record should be brought to the center when your child gets new immunizations. If a child is under immunized for a vaccine, preventable disease to which children are susceptible they may be excluded from the

program. If you have reason to complete an exemption from immunization, it should be filed with the Oklahoma Health Department promptly for approval.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES** (10 B. 19)

### **MEDICAL**

The University has standard protocol for various emergencies. The procedures are located in the red folders by each exit. More specific procedures for classroom emergencies are listed below. Teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid. If an accident should occur, you will be contacted immediately, but other appropriate medical assistance will also be sought. Medical Authorization Forms and Child Record Sheet must be on file beginning from the first day your child attends class. Failure to turn in these vital forms will result in the loss of days your child is able to attend. In case of emergency, an ambulance will come on campus to the center and the child transported to OU Edmond Medical Center unless otherwise indicated on medical form. A staff person will accompany the child to the emergency facility if a parent is not able to arrive in time. A written report of the injury will be completed by the staff person(s) involved, and a copy of that report will be given to the parent.

### **DENTAL**

If a mouth injury occurs, the child's family will be notified for pick up. In case of a serious injury, emergency medical care will be obtained.

### **FIRE AND TORNADO PROCEDURES**

Specific procedures are in place for Center staff and children to follow in the event of fire. These procedures will be practiced through **monthly fire drills**. The children are led out of the classroom and line up near the playground fence for roll call. Should there be a **tornado**, children are taken to the basement of the University Center. A storm drill is practiced on a **monthly** basis by going into the ladies restroom next to the classroom. If sirens are going, the class will go to the Nigh University Center basement.

In the event of an **earthquake**, the children will be directed to sit under the activity tables in the classroom until it subsides.

In the event of an **intruder** on campus, the children will be taken into the observation booth. While this is taking place, an assistant will be turning off lights, closing blinds and locking all classroom doors. When possible, we will leave the building and go to a nearby building to get further away from the intruder. When the all clear is announced on the building PA system, we will return to the classroom.

If there is a need of a **relocation** emergency such as a bomb threat or gas leak, the procedure will be to exit the HES building and walk to a secondary location. The safety management team and UCO police department will suggest a building for us to walk to. For all emergency procedures, the Child Study Center staff will take your child's emergency contact phone numbers and will call you to let you know our location.

\*University of Central Oklahoma emergency procedure guide is located near exit door. Our program follows the university emergency guidelines.

## **MEDICAL / EMERGENCY FORMS**

Failure to provide current medical information for your child's file may result in disenrollment from the center. We also are required to have emergency and medical forms on file. We ask that you update these forms several times a year. Update forms will be sent home with newsletters.

## **UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

The Child Study Center is a laboratory for the university to train future early childhood and child development specialists. Students participate at the center in many capacities. Students observe children from the observation booth as well as in the classroom. They are learning about the children's stages of development and the teacher's methods of working with the children. Some students are required to plan activities that are approved by our teachers and then implemented with the children under the supervision of our teachers. Please be aware that children may be referred to in a report, photographed or involved in an observation activity. All the college students are instructed about confidentiality and the right of the child in choosing not to participate. Permission forms to photograph or video a child is to be signed by parent/guardian. All students are required to have a background check before working in the Child Study Center. To read more about the position statement of ethical conduct for early childhood professionals issued by NAEYC go to [www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct](http://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct).

## **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

State law requires the staff of this child care facility to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-522-3511. Every person having reason to believe that a person or child-placing agency is engaging in the crime of trafficking in children must report the matter promptly to the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control.

## **CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR / EXPULSION POLICY (1E.1) (3 B. 2) (10 B. 20)**

At times, children may demonstrate behaviors that cause harm to other children. If this should occur, the Child Study Center staff will inform the family and/or arrange a conference to discuss plans for problem solving the situation. Procedures for challenging behavior will be prevention, close observation, assistance with language and direction and lastly intervention by the teacher. The cozy cube is a safe place for children to gain control. It is used voluntarily and never used as a “time out” space. Staff will continue to observe the children and document any atypical behavior to detect patterns. We will work with your family to correct the behavior. We may suggest other resources for observation and evaluation with parental permission. If the outside evaluation requests the need for special needs accommodations, the Child Study Center will provide the accommodations as long as they are an undue hardship as outlined in the American Disabilities Act (ADA). If the parents decline to pursue another evaluation and the problem continues, the enrollment of the child will be re-assessed. Safety of the child(ren) will be of utmost importance. If after a period of time, depending on the risk to other children’s welfare or safety and the child’s behavior does not improve, the center may not be able to accommodate the child.

### **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Occasionally, the Child Study Center may have volunteers in the classroom. For example, there may be a student who wants to learn the operations of a classroom. All volunteers will be provided an orientation to the Child Study Center, made aware of emergency procedures and comply with requirements. All volunteers will be supervised by the classroom staff and never left alone with the children.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

Parents are asked to speak with their child’s teacher if a concern arises. If the concern cannot or is not met by the teacher, the concern should be taken to the director. The director will set a conference with parents and teachers to address the parent’s concerns. Our goal is to meet the needs of the children and their parents on all levels of care. If the issue is not resolved, please contact the Faculty Administrator, Dr. LaDonna Atkins, at 974-5354.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity.

