

A.C Center Inc.



Parent Handbook

Revised (04/2016)



1804 ST. JOHNS BLUFF RD.S JACKSONVILLE, FL 32246

TEL. OFFICE: (904) 642-1164, FAX: (904) 642-0717

Email allenchildrencenter@yahoo.com

www.allenchildrencenter.com

Parent Handbook

PHILOSOPHY

The Allen Children Center believes children learn by doing. They learn by playing, experimenting, exploring and testing. Learning is meant to be a natural, HAPPY experience. The learning experience offered to children should help increase the skills of problem solving, thinking, reasoning and creating. Children need the opportunities for growth and stimulation in areas of development: physical, language, social, mental and emotional. Children's developing potential should be challenged, exercised and supported. When children feel secure and confident with themselves they are free to explore and discover

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOURS OF OPERATION

6:30 A. M – 6:00 P.M

TODDLER ROOM CLOSSES AT 6:00 P.M

OPEN DOOR POLICY

A.C. Center maintains an open door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents will have immediate access without prior notice to the center.

In situations where there is custody or domestic issues the following will apply:

*The center must be provided with the most recent certified copy of court order and any amendments to the order, i.e. custody order, restraining order, or a protection order from abuse.

*The center will follow the orders of the court. Deviations from the court order will only be made if there are written instructions from the custodial parent/s (joint custody will require both parent signatures).

*If there is not a copy of a court order or a copy has not been provided to the center then both parents will have equal access to their child. By law the center may not deny access to child by parent without a court order.

*If there is a verbal or physical conflict the Center will contact the police.

Parents, please make sure you list on our enrollment form all of the family/friends allowed to pick up your child, as we will not release any child to anyone that is not on your list or that does not have written permission from you (parent/guardian). A password will be required for anyone not on the contact pick up list.

Allen Children Center Programs:

Toddlers – one years old – Classrooms open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 6:00p.m.

Two-year old Pre-School

Three-year old Pre-School

Four-year old Pre-School: If your child will be 4 by Sept. 1st, they will qualify for our VPK Program, which is free.

Four-year old Extended Day: This program provides service for working parents who need service before and after the VPK Pre-School. Four-year old non VPK Pre-School

Five-year old non VPK Pre-School

Kindergarten, grades 1-5: Public Schools; transportation furnished, BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL. NON-SCHOOL DAYS

THE ALLEN CURRICULUM

We use the “Wee Learn” curriculum, which is faith-based curriculum. Our Curriculum fosters individual growth by providing numerous opportunities for exploration, manipulation, and child-initiated choices. Through our program, children develop critical cognitive skills such as conversation, classification, cause and effect, sequencing, and logical thinking. Consistent with the guidelines established by the State of Florida’s Early Learning Coalition, our curriculum is both age appropriate and flexible enough to accommodate individual differences in needs, abilities, and interests. Our classrooms are divided into a variety of interest areas (e.g., art, dramatic play, reading, science, table toys and mathematics) that are designed with definite boundaries to permit small group interactions. Our VPK Pre-School classes are staffed 1 to 11. If the classroom has more than 11 a credentialed aide is added. If you would like to learn more about our curriculum please visit www.weelearn.com.

PARENT / GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSABILITIES

We believe that parents have rights and that their concerns are reasonable and important.

A Healthy Learning Environment

- Parents have the right to know that their child will be safe at school, both physically and emotionally.
- Parents have the right to know that all children will be treated fairly regardless of race, creed, national origin, economic status, gender, or age and that each child will be treated as an individual.
- Parents have the right to know that the staff is experienced and trained in child development.
- Parents have the right to know that any negative or cruel behavior among students or between students and staff will not be tolerated.

Clear, Courteous Communication

- Parents have the right to be treated with courtesy by all members of the staff.
- Parents have the right to participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child’s school progress and welfare.
- Parents have the right to visit schools and classes.
- Parents have the right to know that they can approach a staff member with a concern and that the staff member will listen carefully and will do everything possible to address the issue

Information on School Policies

- Parents have the right to information on academic requirements of the school program.
- Parents have the right to inspect their child’s record and respond to any statement.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal school policies.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal administrative decisions.

Your Responsibilities are to

- Be involved in your child’s education and learning;
- Let the teacher know you are concerned and interested in your child and his Progress;
- Set goals with the teacher and share in decisions about your child’s care;
- Share information about the child and home that may affect behavior;
- Discuss problems and concerns with the teacher first;
- Show appreciation for teachers;



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- Continually upgrade your parenting skills and understanding of children;
- Volunteer to assist the teacher in some way;
- Follow the child care program's policies and reread contract and parent manual Regularly;
- Keep your child home when sick unless sick care is provided;
- Read to your child and spend time talking and playing together.

TUITION INFORMATION/FINANCIAL POLICY

Fees are based on a reserved time and not on actual time that a child spends at the center. There will be no reduction in the basic rate should a child not be in attendance at the center for the contracted time. Parents will also be billed for all days including holiday, sick, emergency closings, teacher training, and vacation days. Current tuition rates are posted on the parent information board.

Your child's weekly tuition is due on Monday. It will be considered late after 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday and a late payment fee of \$10.00 will be automatically billed to your account. No Service will be given until payment is made. Upon enrollment or re-enrollment, registration fee of \$40.00 is charged. Your weekly tuition is based on a 10-hour day. We also charge a \$30.00 fee for non-sufficient checks.

Late Pickup Fees:

There will be a fee of \$1.00 per minute to your account if your child remains in our care past the above posted times.

AUTHORIZED PICK-UP / EMERGENCY PICK-UP/CLOCKING IN/OUT POLICY

Only authorized persons listed on the Authorized Persons for Pick Up form are permitted to have access to your child and to remove your child from the center. Individuals must be at least 18 years and over.

The Florida Department of Children and Families requires all parents to check their child in/out of their childcare facility daily. In order to make this as simple as possible, we use a computerized time clock. Upon enrollment, you will be given a four- digit number. Directions are as follows:

THE TIME CLOCK SYSTEM AND MANUAL ELC SIGN-IN BOOK

Everyone must clock out as well as clock in; otherwise, the system will automatically register out the day as 6:30p.m. This will record that a child stayed over 10 hours that day.

Please push your numbers in slowly and read your screen's information as you do so. The clock will not work if you did not clock out the previous day. You will need to notify the front desk for assistance in order to clock in for the day.

If you enrolled under the ELC tuition assistance program you must sign-in on the ELC sign-in book located at the front desk. ELC will not accept the electronic system. ELC only pays us for three (3) absences. Your account is billed after 3 absences.

If you are enrolled in the VPK program you may use the electronic system. We are not paid after three (3) absences (refer to your VPK attendance policy). IN CASE OF COMPUTER MALFUNCTION A SIGN-IN SHEET FOR THE DAY WILL BE AT THE FRONT DESK. TRY TO GET HELP AT THE FRONT DESK. TRY TO GET HELP AT THE FRONT DESK FIRST. IF UNAVAILABLE, THEN YOU CAN SIGNIN MANUALLY.



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DISCIPLINE POLICY/BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

We recognize that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. We do not allow the use of corporal punishment by caregivers. Instead, we use the re-direction method. This is a method of presenting a different activity, giving the child opportunities to choose another area or stay with the current activity, which helps the child gain self-control through learning appropriate behavior, and avoids conforming to adult standards. We urge you to discuss any specific concerns with the re-direction method with the Director. We do not allow bullying, fighting or verbal abuse. Our Executive Director handles these issues. If this does not work, the parent is called in for a conference. If the behavior continues we ask you to find another school. We use the same policy for our school age. You will receive a "Discipline Policy for School Age Children" in your enrollment packet for Before/After School Care. If you do not receive this please ask the front desk for one. Each of our classrooms is equipped with exciting, challenging, and educational materials. We strongly encourage children to leave their own toys at home due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, or loss. We cannot be responsible for items brought from home.

ENROLLMENT & MEDICAL FORMS

We must have a completed enrollment form before we can give service. All the information on the form must be completed. In the interest of your child's health, and the health of all children enrolled in our center, you are required to submit your child's current physical and immunization record no later than 15 days after your enrollment date. You can obtain these from your child's doctor or from the Florida Department of Health, if you do not have a current local physician. Please beware that the Department of Children and Families does not allow us to give service past 30 days if we do not receive these records. They must be updated to be in compliance with the state law.

MEALS

Good nutrition is critical part of your child's physical, mental and emotional growth. We serve breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. All meals and snacks meet the USDA nutritional guidelines and have been approved by the Food and Nutrition Management of the Florida Department of Education. Menus are posted each week on the bulletin board in our center in the front office and kitchen. Please do not send sugary snacks and sodas to school with your child.

FOOD PROGRAM APPLICATION

We ask you to fill out our food program form attached to your enrollment packet as this enables us to be reimbursed for some of our food costs and serve higher quality meals. Your food form goes directly to the food program manager. We guarantee your income information privacy. Ask for an envelope and enclose your food form and write "food program manager" on the outside.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Dietary Restrictions and Allergies

Please discuss any special dietary needs for your child with the director. Modest accommodations will be made for children with food allergies or who require specific menu items for cultural reasons. For children with severe allergies, staff should contact the director to discuss so that a written plan can be posted in the child's classroom, outdoors, and kitchen and followed by all center staff.



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SICK / INJURED CHILD POLICY

Sick children may not be brought to the center for care. Should your child become ill at the Center you will be called and may be asked to make arrangements to pick up your child within the hour, depending on the severity of the illness. If your child is absent or sent home due to a fever of 100.0 or higher, contagious disease or severe allergy they must be out at least 24 hours and upon returning to the Center, we must have a statement from his/her physician stating that the child is no longer contagious and can return to school.

MEDICINE POLICY

The center is not obligated to administer medication. Will be a courtesy from the center with the director permission only.

INSURANCE

Although we have frequent inspections and regular maintenance of the building and playground equipment, accidents may happen....IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE YOUR CHILD'S ACCIDENT COVERAGE. Our policy is an excess coverage only, which means if your child has an accident you must prove YOU DO NOT have coverage before they will pay the bills.

SEVERE WEATHER

In case of a hurricane or any or any severe weather, we will follow the same procedures as the public school system. However, if after an emergency situation has lifted, and we feel we are able to offer our services to our parents; we will be open for business regardless of the decision the public school system. You may call the school office for a recorded message or speak to the Director or person in charge if you have doubts regarding the situation.

HOLIDAY

We are closed for ALL federal holiday's. Ask the center for specific observed days as they will change yearly. No credit is given for Holidays or observed days.

ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN FOR THEM.

PARENT REFERRAL POLICY

We hope we are able to meet your expectations for your child's care. If we do, please refer friends or co-workers to our service and we will give you a \$50.00 credit towards your child care tuition, after two weeks of their paid enrollment.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING

A.C. Center has an open door policy with all our parents of enrolled children. Parents are not only welcome but also highly encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. Our parents are partners in the education process. We encourage you to visit, join us on field trips and share your skills and talents with us. We are ready to listen and eager to involve you wherever and whenever possible. Parent conferences may be arranged at your convenience. Notices and events of parental interest are posted on the Parent Bulletin Board. All visitors are required to sign in at the front desk before proceeding to the classroom. The Discipline Policy, Standards of Conduct will apply to all volunteers at all times. Siblings of children in the program may not attend when a parent is volunteering in the classroom.



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BIRTHDAY & HOLIDAYS

When your child has a birthday, you are welcome to provide a “treat” for everyone in your child’s class. Please notify the Director and Teacher of your intentions and we will be happy to help and plan a party. For holiday parties, a signup sheet for goodies will be posted at the front desk if you would like to make a donation

TOILET TRAINING

During the important toilet training phase of childhood, it is helpful if home and Center work together. Every effort will be made to coordinate toilet training in our Center with the parents training at home. We will not attempt to begin toilet training until a parent agrees that the time is right to begin. We need you to provide us with at least two complete changes of clothes in a bag, including underwear, with the child’s name on the outside. Check your child’s book bag daily and replenish clothing if sent home soiled.

REST PERIODS

A rest period is scheduled each day to balance the active times. State regulatory agencies establish a designated rest period for Pre-School age children (usually 1 ½ to 2 hours). We encourage your child to rest quietly during that time.

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TRANSITIONS

The children will be transitioned from one activity to another activity during class. This transition will be announced 5 minutes to the children before the transition takes place. Music/Singing will be used to transition the children and help them re-focus and prepare mentally for the next activity. We will also transition the children from one classroom to the next slowly as to help the children adjust to the new environment as well as the other children and teacher. This is done by allowing the child to visit the new classroom for a few hours each day prior to the child moving classes permanently.

ASSESSMENT TESTING

Screening is a process to determine whether or not a child has any developmental concerns that may require further evaluation and follow-up. Screenings conducted at the center may include vision, hearing, speech/language, nutrition, dental, and overall development. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) will be used at least once per year. Parental consent forms for screening are included in the registration packet.

Parents will be informed of results of screenings either in written form or at the parent-teacher conference time. At home activities may be recommended based on the results of the screenings. If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians. Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

Children at every age level will be screened and assessed using on-going child observations and portfolio assessment for the purpose of identifying developmentally appropriate learning outcomes met throughout the year and creating individualized learning goals based on the results of the observations

and assessments. Additionally, the state-required VPK assessment and Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) checkpoints will be administered for all VPK children three times per year. Results will be shared with parents either in written form or at the parent-teacher conference time.

Each child will have a portfolio which includes a sampling of the child's progress. Depending on the age of the child, these samples may include Ages and Stages Questionnaires, literacy and numeracy assessments, artwork, dictation, writing samples, pictures, anecdotal notes, photos, VPK assessments, TSG documentation, etc. Portfolios for infants and toddlers may also include copies of daily notes, growth charts, and other developmental checklists. Portfolios are to be shared with parents during scheduled parent conferences.

Teaching staff will use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations, individualization, and ongoing assessment of each child. Information will be gathered from teachers and parents.

- Parental consent forms for screening are included in the registration packet. Teachers will obtain a copy of the consent form prior to administering screenings. This copy will be kept in the child's portfolio.
- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) or Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) will be used at least once per year for all age groups. Teachers will complete and score the ASQ or complete the TSG checkpoints. Parental input may also be used to complete the ASQ. The scored ASQ will be kept in the child's portfolio.
- Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings either through a letter sent home by the center director or through written documentation of a parent-teacher conference where results were shared.
- At home activities will be recommended based on the results of the screenings.
- If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians.
- Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

Parent/Guardian Teacher Conferences

All parents/family are invited to attend scheduled formal parent/guardian/teacher conferences to review child's progress and needs and set goals for the child. Conferences will be scheduled at least two times throughout the year for toddlers, and preschool children. Other conferences may be scheduled as needed or as requested by parent or teacher.

Parent Surveys

A.C. Center is interested in your feedback. Anonymous parent surveys will be distributed at least once per year. Your responses will ensure we are meeting the needs of our families.

TODDLERS AND TWOS:

- Change of Clothing
- Wipes
- No Spill Drinking Cup
- Six disposable diapers per day



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- Baby Powder
- Baby Lotion (optional)
- “Blanket” for nap – ***Must be no larger than a beach blanket towel. Please label and pick up each Friday to be laundered.***

PRE-SCHOOL

- Small Book Bag o “blanket” for nap – ***Must be no larger than a beach blanket towel.***

Please label and pick up each Friday to be laundered.

Child Health Emergencies

In the case of accidents and incidents, staff will contact parents and complete an incident report in which both staff and parents sign. This serves as documentation that parents were informed of the accident/incident and any necessary follow-up. It is very important that you make sure that your child’s teacher is aware of changes in phone numbers or emergency contact persons. Please keep this information up to date.

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Requirements

All child care personnel are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with s. 39.201 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.).

* Child care personnel must be alert to the physical and behavioral indicators of child abuse and neglect. “Child Abuse or Neglect” is defined in s. 39.201, F.S., as “harm or threatened harm” to a child’s health (mental or physical) or welfare by the acts or omissions by a parent, adult household member, other person responsible for the child’s welfare, or for purposes of reporting requirements by any person.

Categories include:

- ✓ Physical Abuse or Neglect (i.e. unexplained bruises, hunger, and lack of supervision...)
- ✓ Emotional Abuse or Neglect (i.e. impairment in the ability to function, depression...)
- ✓ Sexual Abuse (i.e. withdrawal, excessive crying, physical symptoms...)
- ✓ * Reports must be made immediately to the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System by
 - * Telephone at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873), or
 - * Fax at 1-800-914-0004, or
 - ✓ Online at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.



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RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

(This page to remain on file in the center.)

I have received a copy of _____ parent handbook and agree to abide by the policies of this center.

Parent of _____ (child's name).

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Director Signature _____ Date _____