



Early Childhood Education Program

PARENT HANDBOOK

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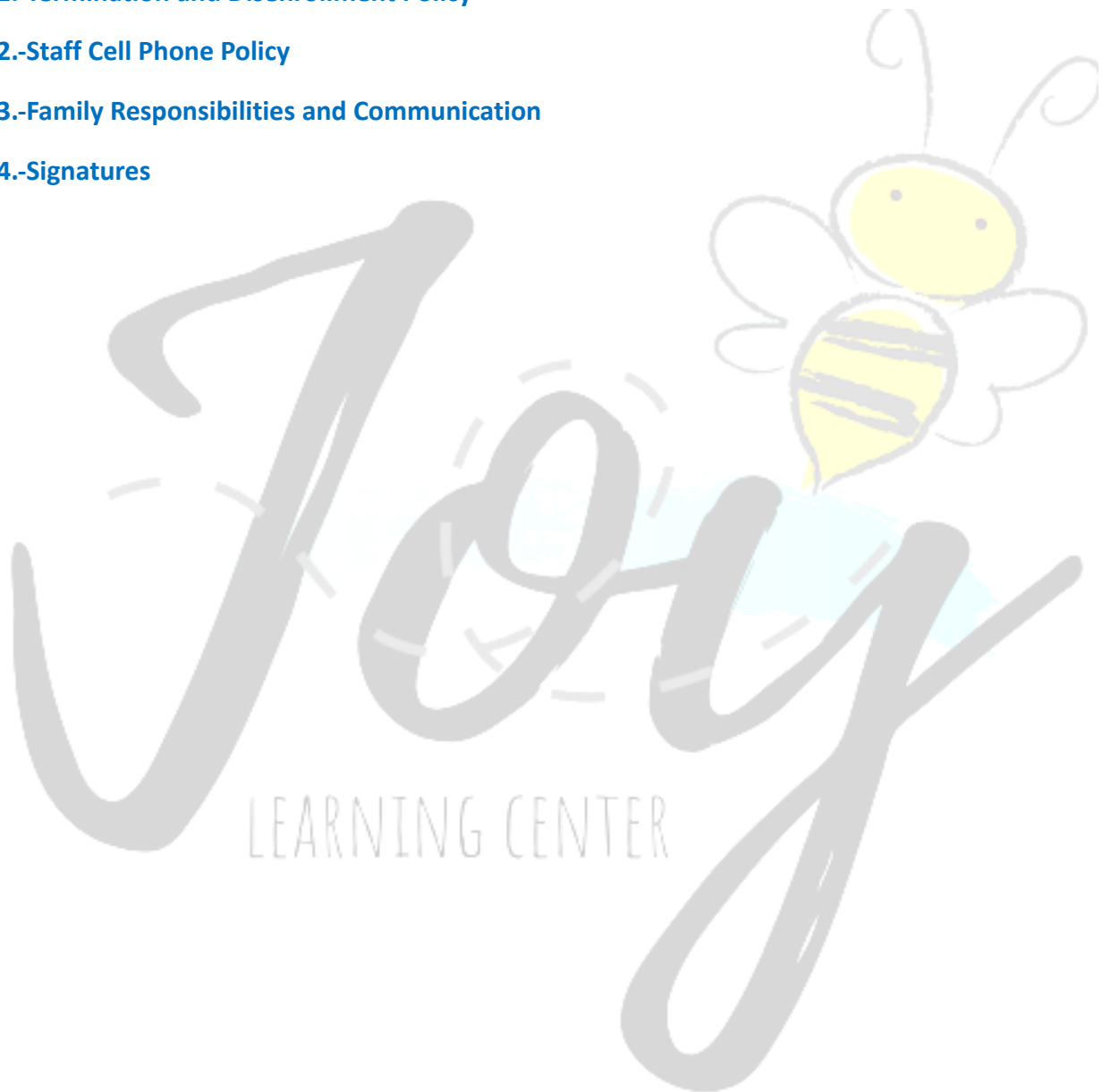
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WELCOME

Dear Family,

It is an honor to warmly welcome you to Joy Learning Center and the NM PreK program. We are pleased that you have chosen to be part of our educational community, and we are committed to providing your children with a caring, safe, and enriching environment where they can learn, grow, and fully develop.

Our mission is to offer high-quality early childhood education that fosters the integral development of each child, respecting their pace, interests, and needs, and recognizing the importance of the family as the child's first teacher. We work to create an inclusive environment where all children and families feel welcome, respected, and valued. We want you to feel like part of our educational team. That is why we will review this handbook together and invite you to ask questions and share any concerns you may have. Open and constant communication is essential to ensure the well-being and success of each child.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education and care. We are confident that this will be a year full of learning, discoveries, and positive experiences for the whole family.

Sincerely,

Director: Nancy Alarcon

Administrator: Alejandra Alarcon

Joy Learning Center

ABOUT US

Philosophy

Joy Learning Center focuses on Early Childhood Learning, providing tools for growth, development, and socialization so that each child has an equal opportunity to succeed when entering school. The center offers healthy and nutritious meals so children can learn, grow, socialize with peers, and have fun at the same time. All children and their families are valued and welcomed, with opportunities to participate in various events and activities while respecting their cultures, beliefs, abilities, and circumstances. Communication with parents is our top priority, as it is the key to a successful childcare partnership.

Mission

At Joy Learning Center, we provide a safe, clean, and welcoming environment where children can develop in a well-rounded way. We promote fun and educational experiences that foster learning, socialization, and emotional growth. In addition, we provide balanced and nutritious meals that contribute to each child's health and well-being.

Licensing

Joy Learning Center has a team of highly qualified professionals. Our teachers hold all required certifications and continue their professional development through ongoing courses and training. The staff member in charge of the kitchen also holds up-to-date certifications and participates regularly in training related to nutrition and food safety. Joy Learning Center is a quality center, recognized with a 5-star distinction, actively participating in the FOCUS continuous improvement program as well as the state PreK New Mexico program. Both teaching and administrative staff maintain current professional credentials and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to educational excellence and the holistic development of children.

Definition of Family

At Joy Learning Center, families are the heart of our community. We deeply value their trust, participation, and collaboration in their children's education. We believe that a close and respectful relationship between the center and families strengthens children's development and creates an environment of mutual support. For us, each family is a key partner in raising happy, safe, and well-prepared children for the future.

Parent Communication and Extended Absence Policy – ECECD

Consistent attendance and ongoing communication between families and the center are essential to ensure health, safety, and continuity of care for all children.

*Families are responsible for notifying the center of any absences and maintain communication regarding their child's enrollment status.

*In the event of extended absences and lack of communication, the center will follow these procedures:

*If a child is absent for more than 5 consecutive days without notice, the center will make reasonable efforts to contact the family through phone calls, text messages, and/or email to determine the reason for the absence.

*If a child is absent for more than 10 consecutive days without any communication, the center will continue follow-up attempts and document all efforts made to contact the family.

*If a child reaches 15 consecutive days of absence without any response from the family, this will be considered a lack of communication and possible abandonment of care.

*After multiple documented attempts to contact the family, the center reserves the right to administratively withdraw the child from the program due to non-attendance and failure to maintain communication.

*All communication attempts and attendance records will be maintained in the child's file as part of the center's compliance with ECECD Licensing requirements.

*The center may fill the child's spot as needed to maintain proper enrollment and staffing ratios.

*Re-enrollment after withdrawal is not guaranteed and will depend on availability and program approval.

*This policy is intended to ensure compliance with ECECD Licensing regulations, maintain accurate attendance records, and support the safe and effective operation of the center.

*Failure to maintain communication with the center regarding a child's absence may result in termination of enrollment.

Attendance and Schedule Compliance Policy

In accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations, all families are required to follow the schedule agreed upon at the time of enrollment.

Each child's approved hours of attendance are based on enrollment agreements, staffing, and classroom ratios. Parents/guardians must adhere to their assigned drop-off and pick-up times.

Any changes to a child's schedule must be communicated to and approved by administration in advance. Schedule changes are subject to availability, staffing, and compliance with required child-to-staff ratios.

Failure to follow the approved schedule, including repeated early drop-offs, late pick-ups, or unapproved schedule changes, may result in additional fees, denial of care for that day, or review of enrollment status.

This policy is in place to ensure proper supervision, maintain required ratios, and support compliance with ECECD Licensing standards.

Hours of Operation

We are open Monday through Friday, offering extended hours from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. to support families who require care before and after school hours.

All families are welcome to request before- or after-school care. If you need this service, the administration is available to provide the necessary information about the process, which is managed through the ECECD program. In addition, families may also request access to the vacation program if services are needed during school breaks. This benefit requires a separate application process, also handled through ECECD.

Holidays

The center will be closed on the following days during the school year:

JANUARY- MARTIN LUTHER KING

FEBRUARY-PRESIDENTS DAY

APRIL-FRIDAY OFF FOR SPRING BREAK

MAY-MEMORIAL DAY

JULY-SUMMER BREAK-INDEPENDENCE DAY

SEPTEMBER-LABOR DAY

OCTOBER-COLUMBUS DAY

NOVEMBER-THANKSGIVING BREAK

DECEMBER-WINTER BREAK

Additional closure dates may be added during the school year; all will be communicated in advance.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, the center may close or delay opening. Families will be notified immediately through the established communication channels.

Refusal of Care Policy

Joy Learning Center reserves the right to refuse care for any child at any time to ensure the health, safety, and compliance of the program in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations.

Care may be refused under the following circumstances, including but not limited to:

- The child shows signs of illness or does not meet the health requirements for attendance
- Required supplies (diapers, wipes, clothing, etc.) are not provided
- The child arrives outside of their approved schedule or after the latest arrival time
- Non-payment or unresolved account balance
- The child's behavior poses a safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff
- The family fails to comply with center policies or procedures

The center reserves the right to make the final determination regarding a child's attendance on any given day.

Liability and Assumption of Risk Policy

Joy Learning Center provides a safe and supervised environment in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations. However, parents/guardians acknowledge that participation in daily activities, including indoor play, outdoor play, and normal child interactions, carries an inherent risk of minor injury.

By enrolling their child, parents/guardians agree that:

- The center is not liable for minor injuries (such as bumps, bruises, or scratches) that may occur during normal daily activities
- All reasonable safety precautions and supervision will be provided at all times

- Families accept the inherent risks associated with group care settings

The center will always document and report incidents as required and provide appropriate care when injuries occur.

This policy is intended to clarify expectations and protect both families and the center while maintaining compliance with ECECD standards.

Incident Reporting Policy

Joy Learning Center will document all incidents involving children in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations.

An incident report will be completed for situations including, but not limited to:

- Injuries requiring attention
- Behavioral incidents involving other children
- Unusual or unexpected events affecting a child's well-being

The following procedures apply:

- The incident will be documented on the same day it occurs
- Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible
- A written report will be provided for review and signature at pick-up or within a reasonable timeframe
- All reports will be maintained in the children's file for documentation and compliance purposes

The center reserves the right to determine the level of detail shared to protect the confidentiality of other children and staff.

This policy ensures proper documentation, communication, and compliance with ECECD requirements.

Typical Daily Activities

At Joy Learning Center, children participate in a structured daily schedule designed to support their overall development. Daily activities include circle time, center-based learning, small group instruction, outdoor play, meals, rest time, and guided transitions.

Circle Time

Circle time is a structured group activity where children come together to build social, language, and listening skills through songs, storytelling, discussions, calendar review, and introduction of daily learning concepts in an engaging and interactive way.

Learning Centers

Children engage in hands-on learning through the following classroom areas:

*Reading Area – Supports language development, early literacy skills, and a love for books through storytelling and independent reading.

*Math and Science Area – Encourages problem-solving, exploration, counting, patterns, and discovery of the natural world.

*Blocks and Manipulatives Area – Develops fine motor skills, spatial awareness, creativity, and early math concepts through building and hands-on materials.

*Art Area – Promotes creativity, self-expression, and fine motor development through various art activities and materials.

*Dramatic Play Area – Supports social-emotional development, imagination, and role-playing through real-life and pretend scenarios.

*Outdoor Play

Outdoor play provides children with opportunities to develop gross motor skills, explore their environment, and engage in active, healthy play while promoting social interaction and physical well-being.

Special Days and Birthday Celebration Policy

Joy Learning Center recognizes special occasions, including children's birthdays, as meaningful opportunities to celebrate in a positive and inclusive environment.

To ensure the health, safety, and routine of all children, the following guidelines apply:

- *Families who wish to celebrate their child's birthday at the center are welcome to do so with prior coordination and approval from administration.
- *Parents or family members may bring snacks or treats for the celebration if they choose to do so; however, it is not required.
- *Birthday treats such as cake or cupcakes will be served after naptime to minimize disruption to the daily routine and to support children's well-being due to sugar intake.
- *Any parent or visitor attending a celebration may remain at the center for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.
- *At the conclusion of the visit, it is recommended that the parent or visitor take their child with them, as extended separation after a visit may be emotionally difficult for the child. Exceptions may apply if the parent needs to return to work.
- *All visitors must follow center policies and always remain under staff supervision.
- *The center reserves the right to limit or reschedule celebrations to maintain classroom structure, ratios, and overall program operation.

This policy is intended to provide a safe, organized, and enjoyable experience for all children while maintaining compliance with program standards.

Typical Daily Activities

At Joy Learning Center, children participate in a structured daily schedule designed to support their overall development. Daily activities include circle time, center-based learning, small group instruction, outdoor play, meals, rest time, and guided transitions.

Typical daily routines may include handwashing, restroom breaks, and diaper changing in accordance with established health and sanitation policies. These routines are implemented consistently throughout the day to support hygiene, safety, and independence.

Children are also provided with scheduled mealtimes to support proper nutrition and routine, including:

Breakfast: 8:30 AM

Morning Snack: 10:30 AM

Lunch: 12:30 PM

Afternoon Snack: 3:00 PM

Supper: 5:00 PM

All mealtimes and care routines are conducted following the center's health, safety, and licensing regulations.

Diapering Policy

Joy Learning Center follows ECECD Licensing regulations for diapering procedures to ensure the health, safety, and comfort of all children.

Diapers are checked frequently and changed at least every two (2) hours, or immediately when soiled or wet. All diapering procedures follow proper sanitation guidelines, including the use of gloves, handwashing, and disinfecting of the diapering area after each use.

Families are responsible for providing an adequate daily supply of diapers for their child. On average, children may require approximately 5–7 diapers per day during a full-day schedule (8–10 hours), depending on the child's age and individual needs.

The center will notify families when diaper supplies are running low. Failure to provide necessary supplies may impact on the child's ability to remain in care for the day.

Parent Responsibility at Pick-Up

Once a child has been signed out and physically released to a parent or authorized adult, the responsibility for the child immediately transfers to that individual.

At that moment, the parent or authorized adult assumes full responsibility for the child's supervision, safety, and well-being while on or off the center premises.

Child Release and Authorized Pick-Up Policy

Joy Learning Center prioritizes the safety and well-being of all children. In accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations, the following procedures apply to the release of children:

Children will only be released to parents or individuals listed on the authorized pick-up list provided by the parent or legal guardian.

Any individual picking up a child must be prepared to present valid identification (ID) upon request. Identification may be required at any time to verify authorization.

The center reserves the right to refuse release of a child to any individual who is not listed as an authorized pick-up person or who cannot provide proper identification.

In situations involving parental separation or divorce, Joy Learning Center will follow legal documentation on file. Only a court order or legal document signed and issued by a judge, that specifically restricts a parent's access will be honored.

In the absence of such legal documentation, both parents will be considered to have equal rights to pick up the child, and the center will not deny release to either parent.

It is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian to provide the center with any updated legal documentation regarding custody or restrictions.

This policy is in place to ensure compliance with ECECD Licensing requirements and to protect the safety and legal rights of all children and families.

Child Safety Concerns and Investigation Policy

Joy Learning Center takes all concerns related to child safety seriously. Any allegation or concern involving staff conduct will be addressed promptly and professionally.

Upon receiving concern, the center will:

- *Conduct an internal review, which may include video review, staff interviews, and documentation
- *Take appropriate precautionary measures, including temporary staff reassignment or suspension if necessary
- *Cooperate fully with ECECD Licensing and any external agencies involved
- *The center will not make assumptions or determinations of fault without evidence and will follow a fair and objective review process.
- *Families are expected to report concerns directly to administration so that they may be addressed appropriately.

*All investigations will be handled confidentially to protect the privacy of the children, families, and staff involved.

*False, misleading, or unverified claims may impact on the center's ability to maintain trust and will be addressed appropriately.

Video Monitoring Policy

*Joy Learning Center utilizes video monitoring systems in classrooms and common areas for safety and supervision purposes.

*Video recordings are used as a tool for:

*Monitoring classroom interactions

*Supporting internal reviews and investigations

*Ensuring compliance with safety standards.

*Recordings are reviewed by administration when necessary and are kept confidential.

*Video footage will not be released to families; however, it may be reviewed by Licensing or authorized agencies as required.

*The presence of video monitoring supports transparency and accountability within the center.

Parent Communication and Reporting Policy

*Families are encouraged to communicate any concerns directly with administration in a timely manner.

*Concerns should be reported as soon as possible to allow for an accurate and effective review. Delayed reporting may limit the center's ability to fully investigate a situation.

*The center will document all reported concerns and follow appropriate procedures to review and address them.

*The center is not responsible for conclusions made outside of the documented review process.

Respectful Conduct Policy

*Joy Learning Center is committed to maintaining a respectful and professional environment for children, families, and staff.

*All families are expected to:

*Communicate respectfully with staff and administration

*Avoid making accusations without following proper reporting procedures

*Refrain from disruptive or confrontational behavior

*The center reserves the right to terminate services if a family's behavior compromises the safety, professionalism, or integrity of the program.

Confidentiality Policy

*All matters related to children, families, and staff are confidential.

*Information regarding incidents, investigations, or staff actions will not be shared with other families.

*The center will only release information when required by Licensing or authorized agencies.

*Families are expected to respect the privacy of others within the program.

Handling of Complaints

All complaints regarding our childcare services are documented by the Director and/or Administrator using a complaint intake form and recorded in a complaint log. This log includes concerns related to both program operations and staff conduct.

Staff-related complaints are reviewed and addressed by the Director. All relevant information is documented in the complaint intake form, and appropriate actions may be taken, including but not limited to additional training, disciplinary action, suspension, or termination of employment.

If a complaint involves regulatory concerns or requires external review, individuals may be referred to the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) Licensing Division at (505) 841-4800, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Enrollment Procedures:

The following forms will be completed and submitted to Joy Learning Center before any child's first day of attendance. All information in these forms will remain confidential and will be shared with other caregivers only as required to meet the needs of the child:

- 1) Family Registration Form completed by parent/guardian.
- 2) Emergency Medical Authorization
- 3) Discipline Policy
- 4) Permission to photograph
- 5) Transportation Agreement
- 6) Child Care Agreement

Open-Door Policy

We welcome family participation in our program. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are welcome to visit during regular program hours. The infant classroom welcomes parents/guardians to attend to or feed their child as needed.

An open-door policy does not mean that doors will remain unlocked. For the safety and protection of all children, all exterior doors will always remain secure.

Our staff will always make every effort to communicate with families; however, as their primary responsibility is the supervision and care of children, extended conversations during program hours may not be possible. If a longer discussion is needed, families are encouraged to schedule an appointment. To protect the privacy and well-being of all children, the center maintains the following guidelines:

The privacy and confidentiality of all children enrolled in the program is a priority.

At times, children may feel uncomfortable with unfamiliar visitors in the classroom environment. For this reason, families may be asked to wait in the front area of the center before entering classrooms. Final decisions regarding entry remain at the discretion of the parent/guardian, while staff will guide based on what is developmentally appropriate for the group.

Photography or video recording inside the center is not permitted to protect the privacy of other children.

Families may take photos only of their own child and must receive staff approval beforehand. No other children may appear in any photos or recordings.

Photography or recording of staff members is not permitted without their prior consent.

These guidelines are in place to ensure a safe, respectful, and developmentally appropriate environment for all children, families, and staff.

Curriculum and Assessment

In our Early Childhood Education Program, we use the curriculum approved by the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD), which is designed to support the holistic development of children in the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social areas.

The curriculum is implemented as part of our weekly planning, serving as the foundation for the activities, routines, and learning experiences carried out in the classroom. In addition, we conduct daily observations and periodic assessments to tailor teaching to each child's individual needs.

As part of our assessment process, we also use the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 tools, which allow us to identify the strengths and developmental areas of each child based on their age. This information helps us adjust our strategies and provide more individualized and effective instruction.

Progress and results are shared periodically with families during the school year through conferences and weekly notes on their child's development.

Developmental Screenings

In our Early Childhood Education Program, we conduct developmental screenings as part of our commitment to early detection and individualized support for each child.

We use standardized tools such as the ASQ-3 (Ages & Stages Questionnaires®) and the ASQ:SE-2 (Social-Emotional), which allow us to observe and monitor developmental achievements and expected milestones for each child's age. These assessments are aligned with our curriculum and integrated into regular classroom practices.

Based on the results, we share observations with parents or guardians, and, if necessary, provide information about resources for further evaluations, early interventions, or specialized treatments.

This process is conducted collaboratively, with active family participation and, when appropriate, in coordination with the child's primary healthcare provider, as well as health, education, and early intervention consultants.

Developmental screenings are only conducted with the written consent of parents or legal guardians, and results are handled with complete confidentiality.

Outings and Field Trips

Weather permitting, we provide 30 minutes of supervised outdoor play twice a day for all children. These activities may include time in the center's playground or short neighborhood walks. Children are always supervised. Authorization for neighborhood walks is included in the enrollment packet signed by each family at the beginning of the school year.

Occasionally, we organize supervised field trips. We invite and encourage families to join their child on these trips, as their participation enriches the experience. For each field trip, a permission slip will be sent home that must be signed and returned before the trip date.

For outings, we ask that children wear season-appropriate clothing and comfortable, safe walking shoes. Sandals and flip-flops are not allowed, as they make walking difficult and increase the risk of accidents.

At all times, both at the center and during outings, the safety of the children and staff is our priority. During transportation, we use proper restraint systems (seat belts) and ensure they are correctly fastened before starting the trip.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, Joy Learning Center will make every effort to remain open and operate on a regular schedule. However, the safety of children and staff is our top priority, and the center may delay opening, closing early, or remain closed if conditions warrant such action.

Weather-related decisions will be based on local conditions and guidance from Albuquerque Public Schools (APS). In cases of severe weather, if APS announces delays or closures due to weather conditions (such as snow, ice, or other natural events), Joy Learning Center will follow the same schedule adjustments.

All decisions regarding delayed openings or closures are at the discretion of the Center's Administration.

Families will be notified of any changes, typically prior to 6:00 AM, through the following methods:

- TS Family App
- Text Message
- Email
- Phone call

The **TS Family App** is the primary communication tool used by the center. It is the responsibility of families to ensure that their account is active and accessible. The center will gladly assist families with setting up or accessing the application as needed.

If the center is open but must close early due to worsening weather or road conditions, families will be notified as soon as possible and are expected to arrange prompt pick-up.

While we strive to remain open to support working families, if closure is necessary due to weather or safety concerns, tuition will not be credited or discounted.

This policy is in place to ensure the safety, communication, and preparedness of all families and staff.

Positive Guidance and Behavior Support Policy

Joy Learning Center follows ECECD Licensing regulations and developmentally appropriate practices to support children's behavior in a positive and respectful manner. The center does not use time-out as a form of punishment.

Instead, staff use positive guidance strategies to help children learn appropriate behaviors, including:

Redirection to appropriate activities

Modeling expected behaviors

Offering choices and problem-solving support

Using calm, respectful communication

When a child needs support to regain self-control, staff may provide a quiet, supervised space within the classroom where the child can calm down with guidance from a teacher. This is not used as punishment, but as an opportunity to support emotional regulation.

At no time will staff use physical punishment, isolation, humiliation, or any form of negative discipline.

Serious Behavioral Concerns Policy

Joy Learning Center is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children. In accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations and developmentally appropriate practices, the center uses positive guidance strategies to address challenging behaviors.

If a child demonstrates behaviors that are unsafe, including repeated actions that may cause harm to themselves, other children, or staff, or significant destruction of property, the center will take the following steps:

Document the behavior and monitor patterns

Communicate concerns with the family in a timely manner

Implement appropriate support strategies within the classroom

Collaborate with families to develop a consistent plan of support

If, after reasonable efforts and interventions, the behavior continues to pose a risk to the safety and well-being of others, the center may determine that it is unable to meet the needs of the child within the group care setting.

In such cases, the center reserves the right to terminate enrollment, following appropriate documentation and communication with the family.

This policy is intended to ensure the safety of all children and staff while maintaining compliance with ECECD regulations and best practices in early childhood care.

Gross Misconduct:

We will communicate to you immediately if your child is frequently and deliberately causing harm to others and/or is frequently and deliberately destructive. This behavior is unsafe and will not be allowed – immediate termination will ensue if the behavior persists.

Lost or Missing Child Policy

Joy Learning Center is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all children. In accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations, staff maintain constant supervision and conduct regular head counts, especially during transitions, outdoor play, and movement between areas.

If a child cannot be accounted for at any time, the following procedures will be immediately implemented:

The Director, Owner, or Person in Charge will be notified immediately.

A thorough and immediate search of the entire premises will begin, including classrooms, restrooms, playground areas, and all indoor and outdoor spaces.

Staff will remain calm and ensure that all other children continue to be safely always supervised.

Additional staff will be assigned to search surrounding areas near the center while maintaining proper ratios and supervision for remaining children.

Staff will remain alert to any unusual or suspicious activity in or around the premises.

If the child is not located within ten (10) minutes, the Director or Person in Charge will contact law enforcement immediately, followed by notification of the child's parent/guardian.

While waiting for emergency responders and the family, staff will continue searching and maintaining supervision for all children.

The Director or Person in Charge will meet with law enforcement and the child's parent/guardian and will coordinate all actions as directed by authorities.

Emergency Preparedness and Drills

To ensure readiness, Joy Learning Center conducts monthly fire drills in accordance with ECECD requirements. Staff and children are trained to respond appropriately to emergency situations, including evacuation procedures.

The designated emergency meeting locations for evacuation are:

Stripes Burritos

Walmart

These locations are used to ensure all children and staff can be safely accounted for during an emergency evacuation.

This policy is designed to ensure immediate response, effective communication, and the safety of all children in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations.

Child Health and Illness Policy

At Joy Learning Center, the health and safety of all children is a top priority. In accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations, children who are ill will not be admitted to the center.

Parents/guardians are required to complete and keep updated the child's medical information form ("Child Information").

Children may not attend the center if they show signs of illness, unless written documentation from a licensed healthcare provider confirms that the condition is not contagious and does not pose a risk to others.

If a child becomes ill while at the center, the following procedures will be followed:

The child will be separated from the group in a supervised area.

The parent/guardian or authorized contact will be notified immediately and must arrange for prompt pick-up.

There are no exceptions, as illness can spread quickly among children.

Children must remain out of care until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication, unless a healthcare provider provides written clearance for earlier return.

A child will be excluded from care if any of the following conditions are present:

The child is unable to participate comfortably in daily activities.

The child requires a level of care that compromises the health and safety of others.

Fever: 101°F orally or 100°F under the arm, especially with behavior changes.

Vomiting (2 or more times within 24 hours).

Diarrhea that is not contained or is frequent/uncontrolled.

Persistent coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or unusual lethargy.

Rash with fever or behavioral changes.

Eye discharge (pink eye) until at least 24 hours after treatment begins.

Head lice, scabies, or other infestations until at least 24 hours after treatment.

Impetigo, strep throat, or other bacterial infections until at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics and fever has resolved.

Chickenpox, measles, mumps, rubella, pertussis, hepatitis A, or other communicable diseases, until cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.

Any other condition that may be contagious or compromise the safety of the group.

Parents must inform their child's healthcare provider that the child attends daycare so proper clearance can be given for return.

If a child receives immunizations, parents must provide updated records for the child's file.

Injuries

While every precaution is taken to ensure safety, minor injuries may occur. Staff are trained in CPR and First Aid and will respond appropriately.

Minor injuries will be reported at pick-up.

More serious injuries will be reported immediately, and parents may be advised to seek medical attention.

In case of a severe emergency, 911 will be called first, followed by parent notification.

If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts listed on the child's file will be contacted.

This policy is designed to protect the health, safety, and well-being of all children and staff in accordance with ECECD regulations.

Medication Administration Policy

Joy Learning Center follows ECECD Licensing regulations regarding the administration of medication to ensure the health, safety, and proper care of all children.

General Requirements

Medication will only be administered with prior written authorization from the parent or legal guardian.

All medications must be provided directly to staff and may not be left in the child's belongings.

The center reserves the right to refuse to administer medication if all required documentation is not complete.

Over-the-Counter Medication

Over-the-counter medications must be accompanied by a completed and signed medication authorization form (Medication Log).

These medications are intended for short-term use only and will generally not be administered beyond ten (10) consecutive days unless otherwise directed in writing by a licensed healthcare provider.

Prescription Medication

All prescription medications must:

Be in the original pharmacy-labeled container

Be dated within the past 30 days

Clearly display the child's full name

Include the medication name, dosage, and instructions for administration

Medication Log Requirements

All medications (prescription and over the counter) must be accompanied by a completed Medication Log that includes:

Date of administration

Child's name

Name of medication

Dosage amount and time(s) to be administered

Route of administration (oral, topical, eye drops, etc.)

Reason for the medication

Start and end date of medication

Any special instructions (e.g., take with food)

Parent/guardian signature authorizing administration

Administration and Safety

Medication will only be administered according to the instructions provided on the label and authorization form.

All medication will be stored securely and out of reach of children.

Staff will document each administration of medication in the Medication Log.

The center will not administer expired medication or medication that is not properly labeled or authorized.

This policy is intended to ensure compliance with ECECD regulations and to protect the safety and well-being of all children and staff.

Days and Hours of Operation

Joy Learning Center operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM, except for scheduled closures as outlined in this handbook.

Each child's schedule is based on the hours agreed upon in the enrollment contract. It is important that families adhere to their contracted drop-off and pick-up times, as daily routines, staffing, and classroom activities are planned accordingly.

Arrival

The contracted drop-off time is essential to ensure a smooth transition into the daily routine. If a child arrives more than 30 minutes later than their scheduled time, families are required to notify the center in advance.

For maintaining classroom structure, participation in daily activities, and compliance with program routines, the center will only accept children for arrival until 11:00 AM.

Children arriving after scheduled meal times will not be served missed meals. Families must ensure that their child has eaten prior to arrival or wait until the next scheduled meal or snack time.

Pick-Up

The contracted pick-up time is equally important. Timely pick-up allows staff to properly close classrooms, complete end-of-day procedures, and maintain compliance with staffing requirements.

Late pick-up may result in additional fees as outlined in the center's policies.

Failure to adhere to scheduled hours on a consistent basis may result in a review of enrollment and services.

This policy is in place to ensure proper supervision, consistency in routines, and compliance with ECECD Licensing requirements.

Nutrition Policy

Joy Learning Center participates in a structured meal program to ensure that all children receive nutritious meals in accordance with ECECD Licensing and applicable food program guidelines.

Children are provided with meals and snacks daily based on their enrollment schedule, which may include breakfast, lunch, snacks, and supper.

All meals and beverages, except for infant formula or special dietary items, are provided by the center.

Infant Feeding

Parents/guardians may provide infant formula, or the center may provide formula, depending on the child's enrollment and family preference.

Special Dietary Needs

If a child requires special milk, formula, or dietary accommodation due to medical conditions, the center must receive written documentation from a licensed healthcare provider specifying the need.

Requests based on preference alone (non-medical) cannot be accommodated by the center. In such cases, parents/guardians are responsible for providing alternative food or beverage for their child.

All parent-provided food must be properly labeled and meet the center's health and safety requirements.

Meals and Participation

Meals are served at scheduled times as part of the daily routine. Children who arrive after a scheduled mealtime will not be served that meal and must wait until the next scheduled meal or snack.

Special Occasions

Occasionally, items such as cake, cookies, or other treats may be served during special events such as birthdays or holidays. These will be offered in moderation and in a manner consistent with program guidelines.

This policy is intended to ensure proper nutrition, maintain compliance with ECECD and food program requirements, and support the health and well-being of all children.

Toilet Training Policy

Joy Learning Center supports toilet training as a collaborative process between the family and the center. Toilet training is a developmental milestone and will not be rushed. Children must demonstrate signs of physical and emotional readiness before beginning the process.

The center will assist and support children during toilet training; however, it is not solely the responsibility of the center. Successful toilet training requires consistency between the home and the center, and families are expected to actively participate and reinforce training at home.

During the toilet training period:

Parents/guardians are required to provide pull-ups (e.g., Huggies Pull-Ups or similar). Regular underwear or training pants will not be used until the child demonstrates readiness.

A child must maintain at least two (2) consecutive weeks of consistent bladder and bowel control before transitioning to regular underwear at the center.

If a child experiences regression after transitioning, the center will reassess and may require a return to pull-ups to support the child's success.

The center reserves the right to determine, based on the child's readiness and classroom environment, when a child may transition out of pull-ups while in care.

Staff will use positive guidance, encouragement, and routine to support children through the process in a developmentally appropriate manner.

This policy is intended to promote consistency, protect the child's well-being, and ensure that the process is supportive, realistic, and aligned with ECECD best practices.

Field Trip Policy

Joy Learning Center provides field trip opportunities to support children's learning and exploration in a safe and structured manner. All off-site activities are planned with careful consideration for children's safety, supervision, and developmental appropriateness, in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations.

The following procedures apply to all field trips:

Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of all field trips requiring transportation or special arrangements.

A signed consent form from the parent or legal guardian is required prior to participation.

Adequate supervision will be always maintained, including proper staff-to-child ratios. Additional staff may be scheduled as needed.

Children will be always counted, including before departure, during the activity, and prior to returning to the center.

At least one staff member with current First Aid and CPR certification will accompany the group.

A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and a cell phone will be carried on all field trips.

Staff will assign responsibility for specific groups of children to always ensure close supervision.

Children will be supervised at all times, including during restroom use, and appropriate safety practices will be followed.

For walking trips, staff will model pedestrian safety and use appropriate safety measures (such as holding hands or safety ropes for younger children).

If a child requires medication, authorized staff will be responsible for transporting and administering the medication according to center policy.

Field trips are planned to support the curriculum and provide meaningful, hands-on learning experiences while maintaining the highest level of safety.

This policy applies anytime children are participating in activities away from the center premises.

Release of Children Policy

Joy Learning Center is committed to ensuring the safe and authorized release of all children in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations.

Authorized Pick-Up

Children will only be released to parents or individuals listed on the child's "Child Information" form as authorized pick-up persons.

Parents/guardians must notify the center in advance if an authorized person will be picking up the child.

Any individual picking up a child must present a valid photo ID upon request.

The center reserves the right to refuse release of a child to any individual who is not listed as authorized or cannot provide proper identification.

Custody and Legal Documentation

Joy Learning Center will assume that both parents have equal rights to pick up their child unless a valid court order stating otherwise is provided.

The center must have a copy of any legal custody documentation on file to enforce restrictions.

Without a court order, the center cannot deny release to either parent.

If a non-custodial parent attempts to pick up a child in violation of a court order, the center will contact the custodial parent and follow appropriate procedures, including contacting law enforcement if necessary.

Staff will not engage in physical confrontation and will prioritize the safety of all children.

Safety Concerns at Pick-Up

If a person arrives to pick up a child appears to be under the influence or otherwise unable to safely transport the child:

The center will not release the child.

Staff will contact the parent/guardian or an emergency contact listed on the child's file.

Transportation Safety

For the safety of the child, all children must be transported in accordance with New Mexico state law regarding child passenger safety.

Supplies Policy

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing all necessary items for their child, including diapers, wipes, extra clothing, bottles/formula (if applicable), and any required diaper cream.

All items must be clearly labeled. Families must ensure supplies are always available; failure to provide necessary items may impact on the center's ability to care for the child during the day.

Each child must have a blanket and sheet for their mat. Bedding will be sent home every Friday for cleaning, or sooner if needed. Parents are responsible for returning clean items promptly.

At least one change of clothing must be always kept at the center (more for infants as needed).

This policy supports proper hygiene, comfort, and compliance with ECECD Licensing requirements.

Emergency Evacuation and Disaster Preparedness Policy

Joy Learning Center maintains an emergency preparedness plan in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations to ensure the safety of all children and staff in the event of an emergency.

In any emergency requiring evacuation, the staff in charge will:

Ensure all children and staff are accounted for at all times (head counts before, during, and after evacuation)

Maintain active supervision of all children

Take a cellular phone to allow for emergency communication

Bring emergency contact information and necessary supplies when possible

Evacuation Locations

If an emergency (such as fire, gas leak, or hazardous condition) requires evacuation from the immediate premises, children will be relocated to:

Stripes Burritos

3240 Coors Blvd NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120

If the emergency affects a larger surrounding area, children will be relocated to:

Walmart Supercenter

2550 Coors Blvd NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120

Children will always remain under staff supervision while parents/guardians and emergency contacts are notified for pick-up or further instructions.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff will remain calm and provide reassurance to children

Attendance will be verified continuously during all transitions

Children will never be left unattended

Special Considerations

Special accommodation will be provided for children with individual needs to ensure their safety and well-being during an emergency.

Communication

Families will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so using available communication methods. Parents/guardians are expected to follow instructions provided by the center during emergency situations.

Emergency and Safety Plan

Joy Learning Center maintains an emergency and safety plan in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations to ensure the protection of all children and staff.

Evacuation Procedures

If an evacuation is necessary, staff will:

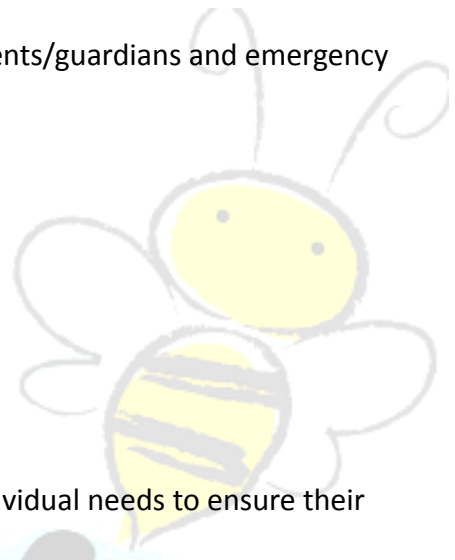
Remain calm and assist children in safely and promptly exiting the building

Maintain active supervision and ensure all children and staff are always accounted for (head counts before, during, and after evacuation)

Bring emergency contact information and a communication device when possible

Leave a visible notice at the facility indicating the evacuation location, if applicable

Follow all posted evacuation routes and procedures



The emergency evacuation plan is clearly posted and accessible at all times. Fire drills and emergency drills are conducted regularly in compliance with ECECD requirements.

Reporting and Child Safety

All staff are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with ECECD and New Mexico state law.

Any suspected abuse or neglect will be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities, including Child Protective Services (CPS).

Staff will follow all instructions provided by CPS regarding documentation, reporting procedures, and next steps.

If a parent or legal guardian is suspected, staff will follow CPS guidance regarding notification and communication.

All reports and related information will be handled confidentially.

Fee Payment and Attendance Policy

Tuition is based on the child's enrolled schedule and reserved space, not attendance. Payment is required regardless of absence, including illness or vacation.

Late payments will incur a \$25 fee per child if not received by the due date, with a three (3) day grace period. After that, a \$10 daily fee will apply. Children may not return until all balances are paid in full.

Payments may be made by cash or check. Returned checks will result in additional fees, and after two (2) returned checks, only cash or approved methods will be accepted.

Failure to make timely payments may result in termination of services without notice.

No credits or refunds will be issued for absences. Payment secures the child's space in the program.

Currently, Joy Learning Center does not require co-payments. However, if required by the State of New Mexico or ECECD, families must comply with any co-payment requirements.

Joy Learning Center does not charge registration fees or additional taxes.

Confidentiality Policy

Joy Learning Center respects and protects the confidentiality of all children and families in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations and applicable privacy laws.

All information related to a child and their family, including personal, medical, and developmental records, will be kept confidential and securely maintained.

Information will only be shared with authorized individuals, including parents/guardians, regulatory agencies, or as required by law.

Staff are prohibited from discussing any child, family, or staff information with unauthorized individuals at any time.

Access to records is limited to authorized personnel, and all staff are required to maintain strict confidentiality as a condition of employment.

Insurance

We reserve the right to provide information concerning Liability Insurance.

Termination and Disenrollment Policy

Parents/guardians are required to provide a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice prior to withdrawing their child from Joy Learning Center.

If proper notice is not given, families remain financially responsible for the two (2) week tuition period, including any applicable fees.

Joy Learning Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment immediately or with notice due to, but not limited to:

Non-payment or repeated late payments

Failure to comply with center policies

Behavior that compromises the safety or well-being of children or staff

Lack of communication or extended unapproved absences

All outstanding balances must be paid in full at the time of disenrollment.

Staff Cell Phone Policy

Joy Learning Center always prioritizes active supervision of children in accordance with ECECD Licensing regulations.

Staff are not permitted to use personal cell phones during working hours or while supervising children, as this may interfere with proper supervision and safety.

Limited Use for Educational Purposes

Cell phones may only be used for approved educational purposes directly related to classroom activities, and only when such use does not compromise supervision or engagement with children.

Personal use of cell phones, including calls, texting, or social media, is strictly prohibited during working hours.

Emergency Use

In the event of an emergency, staff are expected to use the center's designated communication systems, including office phones and emergency alert systems.

Personal cell phones may only be used in emergency situations when no other communication method is immediately available and there is a potential risk to the health or safety of children.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

This policy is intended to ensure the safety, supervision, and well-being of all children while maintaining compliance with ECECD requirements.

Family Responsibilities and Communication

Joy Learning Center values strong partnerships with families to support each child's development, safety, and well-being in accordance with ECECD standards.

Families are expected to:

Stay actively involved in their child's development by communicating important information such as routines, behaviors, health concerns, or changes that may affect the child's experience in care.

Review all communications from the center, including notices, policies, and forms, and return any required documentation in a timely manner.

Maintain supervision and responsibility for their child while on the center premises once the child has been signed in or released to the parent/guardian.

Communicate openly with the center. Questions, concerns, and feedback are encouraged and will be addressed in a respectful and timely manner.

These expectations are in place to ensure effective communication, support each child's success, and maintain a safe and collaborative environment for all families and staff.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT GUARDIAN: _____

DATE _____

SIGNATURE OF DAYCARE PROVIDER: _____

DATE: _____

