



The Institute of Child Development FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025 School Year

WELCOME

Dear Families,

We are delighted to welcome you to the **Institute of Child Development (ICD)** family! As you embark on this exciting journey with us, we want to ensure that you feel informed, supported, and part of our vibrant community.

Our **Parent Handbook** serves as a valuable resource, providing essential information about our philosophy, policies, and goals. It outlines the framework within which we nurture and educate your precious little ones. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

1. **Philosophy and Goals:**
 - Our mission is to provide high-quality education and care for children aged **8 weeks to 5 years**.
 - We serve as a model early childhood program, supporting academic, curricular, and research purposes.
 - Your child's growth and development are at the heart of everything we do.
2. **Program Details:**
 - **School Hours:** Monday to Friday, from **8:00 am to 5:00 pm**.
3. **Health and Safety:**
 - Ensure your child has a current physical examination and immunization record.
 - We welcome children living with special needs and provide reasonable accommodations whenever possible.
4. **Family Engagement:**
 - Our open-door policy encourages your active participation in daily activities.
 - We value your feedback and encourage questions—please don't hesitate to ask.
5. **Enriching Experience:**
 - The early childhood years are both exciting and challenging. We're here to support you.
 - Together, we'll create a positive care and educational experience for your child.

Please take the time to read the Parent Handbook carefully. If anything is unclear, feel free to reach out. We look forward to partnering with you and celebrating your child's growth and milestones.

Welcome to our program!

Warm regards,
ICD Staff Members

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Institute of Child Development

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| The Institute of Child Development requires children to have an updated record of their immunizations on file. Please refer to the chart at the end of the handbook to see the required list of immunizations for your child’s age group. If students are not up to date on immunizations, we must submit an exemption form to the Oklahoma State Department of Health for their records and maintain this form in your child’s file. If your child is missing any immunizations and appears to show signs of any illness that is vaccine-preventable, he or she will not be allowed in the classroom/at school until symptoms have subsided and you provide a doctor’s note for return. This includes, but is not limited to, varicella (chicken pox), pertussis (whooping cough), etc. This is for the safety of our families with young infants, other students, and those who are not able to be immunized for medical reasons. | 18 |
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ABOUT US

Philosophy

At the Institute of Child Development, we attempt to foster social, emotional, cognitive, creative, and physical development in each child. We believe it is only through a balanced educational approach attending to each of these domains that a child will optimally develop. We believe two major goals of early childhood education are to help children achieve autonomy and self-control. We attempt to foster autonomy through self-selected center times, child prepared snack and service, and by encouraging children to be responsible for their personal needs and wants. Self-control is encouraged as children are taught to be responsible for their actions and behaviors and are encouraged to examine their consequences.

The teacher's role at the Institute is to serve as a guide, a resource, and a facilitator for the child. By this we mean the teacher facilitates a child-centered environment by initiating activities and projects for children which are developmentally appropriate, purposeful, meaningful, and foster learning through self-selected play. Children will learn best through a process of discovery, enabling them to build theories about how their world operates. The teacher acts as a guide when she questions the child, encouraging him or her to think more deeply about a problem or situation. The teacher acts as a resource person for children, offering suggestions if needed, yet encouraging children to develop ways to solve problems for themselves and to take responsibilities for their actions. We believe peer interactions are critical in helping children develop socially, creatively, physically, emotionally and cognitively. Through peer interactions children construct cognitive and social knowledge, acceptance of others, and an appreciation of individual/cultural difference

PROGRAM GOALS

Through our program, children will experience the following:

1. a psychologically and physically safe environment that encourages individual growth and development;
2. opportunities to develop autonomy, independence and self-help skills;
3. experiences that build pro-social behaviors, classroom community and empowerment;
4. encouragement to explore a variety of learning modalities through a wide array of materials and planned curriculum experiences;
5. opportunities to explore , develop, and appreciate critical thinking and creativity through the arts and self expression.

Mission

In addition to providing the best, most developmentally appropriate care and education for your child, the Institute has several additional reasons for existence -- to promote parent education and participation, to serve as a laboratory school for the sophomore, junior, senior, and masters level students majoring in early childhood education, and to provide opportunities for faculty and graduate students to conduct research related to the development and enhancement of young children's growth.

Certification

Our Center is an Oklahoma DHS Licensed Center

We are also NAEYC Accredited

And hold a 5 Star QRIS Rating

Definition of Family

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

Hours of Operation

Child care services are provided from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and we follow the OU Academic Calendar.

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, immunization records turned in and enrollment fee paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

An enrollment fee of \$50.00 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age.

The staff wants every child to feel comfortable and at ease as school begins. For this reason, we encourage parents to stay with their child as long as they feel necessary during the initial weeks of the semester so that each child has a chance to become acquainted and make friends before the parent's departure. **When you do leave, please make sure your child knows you are leaving—this helps to build trust between you, your child, and the school environment.** Special plans may be made for the first day as well -- such as a shorter day and smaller groups -- to enable the child to feel at home as soon as possible.

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

Inclusion

The Institute of Child Development believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

Non-Discrimination

At **The Institute of Child Development** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs,

or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Family Activities

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

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

Confidentiality

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

Staff Qualifications

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

| Position Title | Education/Certification | Experience |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------|
| Lead Teacher | Bachelor's degree in early childhood education | 2 years |
| Teacher Assistant | Associate degree in early childhood | 1 year |
| Teacher Aide | Highschool Diploma/GED | 6 months |

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

We prohibit families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting) during the school year. Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **The Institute of Child Development**.

Child to Staff Ratios

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

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

| Age | Child to Staff | Maximum Group Size |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| ≤ 12 months | <u>3 to 1</u> | <u>6</u> |
| 12-24 months | <u>4 to 1</u> | <u>10</u> |
| 2 year-olds | <u>6 to 1</u> | <u>12</u> |

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|
| 3 year-olds | <u>9 to 1</u> | <u>18</u> |
| 4 year-olds | <u>9 to 1</u> | <u>18</u> |
| 5 year-olds | <u>9 to 1</u> | <u>18</u> |

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications. Daily communication via the Brightwheel app will be provided about your child’s day. This will include antic notes about what happened in the classroom that day, as well as any one-on-one messages needed for you family. Infant and Toddler communication will also include feeding and diapering notes.

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

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

Parent Resource Table. Our parent resource table (located in the front of the school) provides printed information, ideas and experiences meant to enhance parents understanding of learning and development.

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

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

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

Open Door Policy

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

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

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

Publicity

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

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

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

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

Curricula & Assessment

The Institute of Child Development uses a Reggio Emilia inspiration project based approach as well as the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines, best practice, and observation to help teachers design curriculum based on the needs, interests, skills, and relevancy to the children. Activities are designed for a variety of abilities and are changed, rotated, and adapted as may be necessary for a child. The use of open-ended materials support a variety of learning skills and abilities. We have numerous materials that can be rotated to meet children's needs.

Assessment is ongoing throughout the year in the lab classroom for all children. The teachers, interns, and undergraduates routinely look at children's development in all domains using a variety of tools. Anecdotal records provide that snapshot in time of a specific behavior or incident; checklists to gather quick bits of information are often employed when assessing milestones; running records are employed to gain rich detail about behavior. Specific tools, for example, in literacy assessment or social skills, etc. may be used to collect additional data. When observation and other informal tools indicate atypical development, parents are called and a formal screening or evaluation is planned. Formal tests are not administered at the Institute.

Data collected on children is the responsibility of the individual collecting information. All students are instructed about issues of confidentiality*, locking files, not leaving confidential information unattended in the classroom, use of confidential information and the disposal of confidential information.

During the spring semester, undergraduate students are all enrolled in a class: Teacher, Parent, Child. As part of their work for the class during the semester, they are required to create a complete portfolio on one child at the ICD to be given to the parents upon completion. This process involves home visits, classroom observation and assessment, parent interviews, child assessment, and goals. The students practice and formal instruction leading to the spring semester has prepared them for this undertaking. This information is shared and incorporated

for individual planning as appropriate with the adults leading the child's group. Parents have input into this authentic type of assessment process.

Results are shared with parents and the input of parent information in creating a complete picture of the child is important. Parent conferences are offered two times a year and any other time a parent or teacher may feel one should take place. The opportunity for daily information exchange with parents facilitates the gathering and sharing information.

As a daily practice we also gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

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

Developmental Screening

The Institute of Child Development uses the multiple developmental checklists and tools to assess and screen for development. To coincide with curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatment. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving parents/guardians and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider and health, education, and early intervention consultants.

Outings and Field Trips

Weather permitting; we may take walks around the campus. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in your initial meeting with your child's teacher..

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

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

Transitions

Purpose

Transitions are an integral part of our preschool program. They provide opportunities for learning, socialization, and emotional development. This policy outlines our approach to managing daily, home to center, classroom, and elementary transitions to ensure a smooth and positive experience for children, families, and staff.

Daily Transitions

Guiding Principles

1. **Consistency:** We maintain consistent routines to help children feel secure and confident during transitions.

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2. Individualized Support: We recognize that each child is unique and may require different levels of support during transitions.
 3. Communication: We actively communicate with families about daily transitions and involve them in the process.
 4. Positive Environment: We create a nurturing and supportive environment that promotes successful transitions.

Types of Transitions

1. Arrival and Departure:
 - Parents/caregivers are encouraged to spend a few minutes settling their child into the classroom.
 - Staff greet children warmly and engage them in age-appropriate activities.
 - Departure time includes sharing highlights of the child's day with parents.
2. Classroom Transitions:
 - We follow a predictable daily schedule with visual cues (such as a visual timetable) to help children anticipate transitions.
 - Teachers use transition songs, countdowns, or verbal cues to signal upcoming changes.
 - Children participate in cleaning up and transitioning to the next activity.
3. Outdoor Play:
 - Children transition from indoor to outdoor play and vice versa.
 - Staff supervise transitions, ensuring safety and appropriate behavior.
4. Meal and Snack Times:
 - Children wash hands and sit together for meals/snacks.
 - Staff encourage conversation and social interaction during these times.
5. Nap/Rest Time:
 - Children transition to rest mats or cots.
 - Soft music or calming activities help ease the transition.
6. Special Activities (e.g., Circle Time, Art):
 - Staff prepare children for specific activities by explaining what to expect.
 - Visual cues (e.g., a picture of the activity) are used to support understanding.

Staff Responsibilities

- Preparation: Staff plan transitions in advance, considering individual needs and the overall group.
- Observation: Staff observe children during transitions, noting any challenges or adjustments needed.
- Positive Reinforcement: Staff praise children for successful transitions and provide gentle redirection when necessary.
- Communication: Staff communicate with families about daily transitions and seek their input.

Family Involvement

- Families are encouraged to share information about their child's preferences and routines.
- Open communication ensures a collaborative approach to transitions.

Evaluation and Improvement

- We regularly review our transitions policy and make adjustments based on feedback and observations.
- Staff training includes strategies for supporting successful transitions.

Transition from home to center

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

The staff wants every child to feel comfortable and at ease as school begins. For this reason, we encourage parents to stay with their child as long as they feel necessary during the initial weeks of the semester so that each child has a chance to become acquainted and make friends before the parent's departure. **When you do leave, please make sure your child knows you are leaving—this helps to build trust between you, your child, and the school environment.** Special plans may be made for the first day as well -- such as a shorter day and smaller groups -- to enable the child to feel at home as soon as possible.

Transition between classrooms at the ICD

Children are transitioned to the next age classroom in August of each year. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with each other to share best practices that have worked well with your child. Your new teacher will then meet with you at the beginning of the school year to hear about development over the summer and work on a plan for their transition back to school.

Transition to elementary school

When requested we will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a free choice, used to meet a developmental goal, and limited.

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

Multiculturalism

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

Celebrations

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

If you would like your child to share their birthday, please make arrangements a week in advance with your child's teacher. Parents should check with the lead teacher concerning any

potential food allergies in the classroom. Please keep in mind that DHS requirements do not allow homemade treats to be brought to school; treats must be prepackaged and unopened.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants continuously. All staff that work in the infant room have been trained in safe sleep practices. No blankets or soft items are allowed in the crib with an infant younger than 12 months. The only item allowed in the crib is a pacifier (if used), a sleep sack, or if the child is 3 months or younger they may be swaddled.

After lunch, all children participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

Toilet Training

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

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

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

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

Discipline Policy

We have created a discipline policy that reflects our philosophy of positive guidance with children.

Challenging Behavior

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

Each student at **The Institute of Child Development** has a right to:

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

Staff approach each situation on an individual basis taking under consideration each child's development, (including social/emotional, cognitive, and physical). As children mature through time and experienced staff provide the reflection and language to problem solving at the appropriate level of the child's ability and understanding.

At no time will there be punitive actions, either physical or psychological, taken against the child. Time out as a remedy for a child's behavior does not help the child understand his/her behavior or serve any useful purpose. If a child needs to be separated from the group because his/her behavior is a danger to others, a staff person will remove the child and stay with the child until the child is ready to return to the group.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

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

TUITION AND FEES

Important Notice

All payment and fee processing will be completed by our administration. They will be in charge of collecting tuition and other fees and contacting families regarding payment issues. If you have a question or concern regarding a payment or fee, please contact the ICD via phone or email.

Fees are paid on a monthly basis, based on the contracted schedule. Some important features of this fee schedule are the following:

1. Annual tuition rates are based on the contracted schedule. The annual tuition rate is divided equally per month and billed on a monthly basis.
2. Your annual tuition rate is assessed based on the classroom program in which your child is enrolled.
3. Charges are based on the contracted enrollment schedule. You pay for the schedule you have contracted, whether your child attends or not. This includes inclement weather, emergency closures, family vacation days, and days your child is home sick. Even if the school is not open the full month to tuition is still due. It is calculated for the time your child will be here and then broken up into

10 monthly payments.

4. There is a 5% discount for each additional sibling enrolled during the same contract year.
5. Tuition rates and fees are subject to change. Families should anticipate a rate increase with each new contract year.

Tuition Rates 2024-2025 school year

Juniper Classroom (Infant)

| Schedule | Annual | 10 Monthly Payments |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|
| Full-Time - MTWRF | \$12,000 | \$1,200 |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-------|
| Three Days - MWF | \$7,760 | \$776 |
|-------------------------|---------|-------|

| | | |
|----------------------|---------|-------|
| Two Days - TR | \$5,800 | \$580 |
|----------------------|---------|-------|

Maple Classroom (Toddler)

| Schedule | Annual | 10 Monthly Payments |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|
| Full-Time - MTWRF | \$11,440 | \$1,144 |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|

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|-------------------------|---------|-------|
| Three Days - MWF | \$7,400 | \$740 |
|-------------------------|---------|-------|

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|----------------------|---------|-------|
| Two Days - TR | \$5,520 | \$552 |
|----------------------|---------|-------|

Redbud (Two)

| Schedule | Annual | 10 Monthly Payments |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|

| | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Full-Time - MTWRF | \$10,920 | \$1,092 |
|-------------------|----------|---------|

| | | |
|------------------|---------|-------|
| Three Days - MWF | \$7,040 | \$704 |
|------------------|---------|-------|

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|---------------|---------|-------|
| Two Days - TR | \$5,280 | \$528 |
|---------------|---------|-------|

Willow (Three)

| Schedule | Annual | 10 Monthly Payments |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|

| | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Full-Time - MTWRF | \$10,400 | \$1,040 |
|-------------------|----------|---------|

| | | |
|------------------|---------|-------|
| Three Days - MWF | \$6,720 | \$672 |
|------------------|---------|-------|

| | | |
|---------------|---------|-------|
| Two Days - TR | \$5,040 | \$504 |
|---------------|---------|-------|

Oak (Pre-K)

| Schedule | Annual | 10 Monthly Payments |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------------|

| | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Full-Time - MTWRF | \$10,000 | \$1,000 |
|-------------------|----------|---------|

| | | |
|------------------|---------|-------|
| Three Days - MWF | \$6,400 | \$640 |
|------------------|---------|-------|

| | | |
|---------------|---------|-------|
| Two Days - TR | \$4,800 | \$480 |
|---------------|---------|-------|

Additional Fees (nonrefundable)

- Enrollment Fee (annual): \$50
- Supply Fee (August & January): \$100 each semester
- Building Access Cards: \$30 per card (subject to change)

Payment for this contracted schedule is required every month (by the 15th) August-May whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather.

Payment

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due monthly by close of business on the 15th of each month.

A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$50 is due annually this fee will not be pro-rated.

How to Pay

All payments will be made online at the ICD online store. You will receive an email each month with your invoice and directions on how to pay.

Late Payment Charges

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

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$5 will be added to your next tuition payment for each day that it is late. Repeated late payments will result in child care services being terminated.

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

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per minute will be assessed beginning at 5:00 PM and will be due upon arrival. **Repeated late pick up may result in child care services being terminated.**

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 10:00 AM, please call us at 405-325-1641 We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

Vacation

While we recognize the value of family vacations, the center does not provide credit for vacation days.

Withdrawal

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. This notice will allow us the time we need to fill the spot. The refund of any of your unused tuition will begin 2 weeks from your notification. Accounts for families who do not provide two weeks written notice via email of withdraw will not be prorated.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

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

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

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 8:00 AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

We close at 5:00 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

Cell Phone Usage

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

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

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

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

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after one hour we

have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

Right to Refuse Child Release

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

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring – ALL items must be labeled with your child’s first and last name.

- **Infants:** enough clean pre-made bottles for a day’s use, (All bottles must be labeled with your child’s first and last name) at least six diapers per day, a package of wipes, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day. A pacifier, and sleep sac (if applicable).
- **Toddlers:** enough clean pre-made bottles for a day’s use (if applicable), six diapers, a package of wipes, and at least two changes of clothes per day. Once on solid food you may bring some to store at the school. Your child **MUST** have tired the food at least 3 times at home before eating it at school. Once a child is 1 year old they may also bring a blanket for nap.
- **Older Toddlers:** at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program. A lunch in a lunch box with an ice pack and water bottle. A blanket for nap time.
- **Preschoolers:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes. A lunch box with ice pack and a water bottle. A blanket for nap time

Please label all items brought from home with your child’s name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diaper packs, pacifiers, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the center.

Cubbies

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

Lost & Found

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

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity. We have a large number of materials available. If an unsolicited toy is brought from home, the teacher will ask, "Do you want to leave it in your cubby or let your mom/dad take it home?" Please try to help us with this matter. Children are able to

bring their *blankets or other transitional object* but are encouraged (but never forced) to leave them in their cubbies.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

The ICD will provide a morning snack and afternoon snack. Lunch will need to be brought from home in a lunch box with an ice pack in it.

Food brought from home is permitted under the following conditions:

- We are a NUT FREE school. Please check all packaging to ensure it does not contain any nuts or traces of nuts.
- Perishable food to be shared with other children must be store-bought and in its original package.
- Foods should be labeled with the child’s name, even if it is in their lunchbox. This prevents the wrong food being eaten by a child once it is out of their lunchbox.
- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child’s family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.
- Leftover food will be discarded except for foods that do not require refrigeration and/or come in a commercially-wrapped package that was never opened.

| Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch. | |
|--|---|
| Bean & cheese dip Tortilla chips (crackers) Tropical fruit salad Broccoli Milk | Chicken strips Whole Wheat Roll Orange wedges Broccoli Milk |
| Cheese quiche Fresh fruit cup Broccoli Milk | Whole Wheat Macaroni & Tuna Salad Green Beans Carrots Milk |

Food Allergies

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

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

Meal Time

At mealtime the dining table is set with plates and flatware, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can help themselves. Everyone sits around the tables. Children are encouraged to serve themselves from food passed around each table at snack time and their lunch box at lunchtime. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly menus are posted for viewing by parents/caregivers.

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

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until at least 6 months and when able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child’s home or discarded at the end of each day. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child’s name.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be labeled with the child’s name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family.

Children 24 Months and Older

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

HEALTH

Immunizations

The Institute of Child Development requires children to have an updated record of their immunizations on file. Please refer to the chart at the end of the handbook to see the required list of immunizations for your child’s age group. If students are not up to date on immunizations, we must submit an exemption form to the Oklahoma State Department of Health for their records and maintain this form in your child’s file. If your child is missing any immunizations and appears to show signs of any illness that is vaccine-preventable, he or she will not be allowed in the classroom/at school until symptoms have subsided and you provide a doctor’s note for return. This includes, but is not limited to, varicella (chicken pox), pertussis (whooping cough),

etc. This is for the safety of our families with young infants, other students, and those who are not able to be immunized for medical reasons.

Illness

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

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (99°F or higher under the arm, 100°F or higher with forehead thermometer).
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – during the previous 24 hours.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

Children who have been ill may return when:

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

The staff is careful to inform all parents when someone contracts a contagious disease -- so we appreciate notification as quickly as possible when your child has been ill.

Allergy Prevention

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

Medications

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require written permission and instructions signed by the child's primary care physician. The written permission must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and all medications must be in the original container. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.

SAFETY

Clothing

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

Here are some suggestions about the kinds of clothing suited for the Institute:

1. Simple, easily cleaned play clothes are best because our children are involved in many active, creative projects that frequently involve generous amounts of paint, glue, or other materials which may soil clothing.
2. The clothing should be easily managed by the children because this encourages self-reliance (front openings, large zippers, large buttons, elastic waists, etc.).
3. Clothing should be loose and light enough to provide freedom of movement.

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4. In cool and cold weather, our room is comfortably warm so please do not overdress your children; save the warm layers of clothing for outdoor play.
 5. Please send your child in tennis shoes as a general rule. Sandals, cowboy boots and dressy shoes may not be as safe for children's movement.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 100 °F or less than 32 °F degrees.

Injuries

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

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

Biting

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

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

will work together with the families to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Respectful Behavior

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

Smoking

The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

Prohibited Substances

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

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

Dangerous Weapons

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

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

Child Custody

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

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, fire sprinkler system, and rolling cribs. Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis.

Emergency Transportation

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

CENTER POLICIES

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

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

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

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

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

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

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date