

PARENT HANDBOOK

Institute of Child Development
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education
University of Oklahoma

Director – Rebecca Waggoner
Assistant Director- Kitty Sylvester

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Institute of Child Development. Our primary goal is to provide your child with the very best educational opportunities during the early childhood years. We have prepared this booklet to let you know about our goals and policies.

OVERALL GOALS

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 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. Your child may be the subject of a student's observations, in order to help foster his/her understanding of child development and teaching practices. For the typical, undergraduate early childhood education student assignments, your permission for these assignments is assumed. In the case of formal research projects, your permission will always be requested and the project explained to you before your child is involved.

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.

CURRICULUM

Using Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines, best practice, and observation, 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.

During the day, the schedule provides a large block of time for children to select activities, explore the materials, engage in projects/investigations, and construct their knowledge of the world. They may choose to do this independently or with a classmate(s). We believe and support the idea that children may learn from more experienced others, whether it is a peer or adult. Teachers also use this time (and other times of the day) to give individual, small group, large group lessons.

The children's responsibility to the classroom and other class members provides numerous opportunities to develop social skills and other autonomous behaviors.

ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN

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.

INSTITUTE HOURS

All classes operate from 8:30 - 11:30 am. Please respect our opening/closing times and try to be as prompt as possible. The times before the children arrive and after they leave are

critical and devoted to our undergraduate students as this is a laboratory course for them at the University of Oklahoma. We will not open our doors to students until promptly at 8:30 and we will need all children picked up prior to, or promptly by 11:30 so that we can respect our preservice teachers' time. Should pick up times become a problem, we will reach out to you to discuss a better alternative to your current pick up routine.

We will follow the University of Oklahoma calendar. Classes at the Institute will begin one week after the OU students begin and will end the last day of class before finals week.

WEATHER and EMERGENCIES

We follow Norman Public School's and/or the University of Oklahoma's policy in case of inclement weather (NPS schedule **ONLY** for weather closings) and we will close if **either or both** of these agencies close. This information is available on local radio and news stations in the morning. In case of fire, the children are to be evacuated from the building. In case of tornado, the children will be evacuated to an interior corridor. Your child's teacher is responsible for the care of your child until you are able to pick him/her up. In a situation such as a tornado, the child will remain with the teacher until the tornado alert is over. You should arrange to pick up your child immediately after the danger alert has subsided. Children will be released only to parents unless other people are specified on enrollment.

- If the NOAA Storm Prediction Center issues a Particularly Dangerous Situation alert (PDS) for our area and if we have time to safely relocate all staff and children from the center, we will go to Huston Huffman Fitness Center which sits just north of our building. Huston Huffman Fitness Center is our designated shelter in the event of a PDS, and is one of a few buildings on campus that are deemed by OU to provide the highest level of protection in such a situation.
 - Once we've relocated to Huston Huffman Fitness Center, we will contact you to let you know of our relocation and will wait for you to pick up your child at Huston Huffman Fitness Center, when it is safe to do so.
 - **We will only relocate if the PDS is issued for our area and if we have time to safely relocate all staff and children from the center.**
- In the event that a storm comes upon the center and there is insufficient time to relocate, we will remain in the center and take shelter in our weather refuge area. A map of these locations is located in each classroom. Once the severe weather has passed, we will contact you and alert you to the plan for the rest of the day.

We realize that communications are critical in the event of an emergency. Please know

we will make every effort to contact you when it is safe to do so after the severe weather has passed. If we are unable to reach you, or you are unable to reach our center, we want to assure you that your child will either be at our center or at Huston Huffman Fitness Center.

There are times at which we do not go outside for health and safety concerns. During wind warnings (or anytime we feel there is too much wind and the potential for wind to cause damage by blowing things or causing limbs to fall from trees) children do not go outside. If there is a risk of tornado activity or severe storms approaching children remain inside. Outside time is cancelled if there is extreme temperatures (high or low) or high humidity. Brush fires can cause particles, smoke, and chemical gasses to pollute the air. When there is evidence of air contaminates, children remain inside.

INSTITUTE STAFF

The director and assistant director serve as head teachers supervising children's programs, consulting with and supervising all adult students participating in the program, and conferring with parents at regular intervals. They also do all the purchasing and record keeping. These teachers hold master's degrees in early childhood education. There are undergraduate early childhood education students who work with the children on a rotating basis in their junior year of pursuing their degree towards teaching certification.

ELIGIBILITY

All pre-kindergarten age children (ages 2 - 4 by 9/1) are eligible to enroll. Children who have reached kindergarten age, that is five years old on September 1, are not eligible (developmental considerations considered).

APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT

Application forms may be obtained by visiting our website (<http://www.ou.edu/education/centers-and-partnerships/institute-of-child-development>) or by calling 325-1641. Applications should be turned in to the Institute or mailed to

820 Van Vleet Oval, Norman Ok 73019 Rm. 114

ICD Preschool will be moving on August 15th 2022 to

2727 Asp Ave, Norman, Ok 73072.

During this transition time applications can also be emailed to

Rwaggoner@ou.edu

Submission of an application places a child on our wait list for enrollment if the classes are already filled.

SELECTION OF CHILDREN

In the interest of fairness, and as much as possible, children are enrolled according to the date by which their applications are received. Consideration of siblings will be determined as follows: priority to siblings of currently enrolled children. Siblings of current families will then be notified of admission and may accept or reject admission at that time. A \$50.00 non-refundable enrollment fee will be required to secure a child's enrollment. If families choose not to enroll the child, the application will be discarded, and another name will be chosen from the waiting list and that family will be contacted. Names of children for whom space is not available are left on the waiting list. It is the parent's responsibility to notify us of changes of address or contact information.

DROPPING/WITHDRAWING ENROLLMENT

If a family decides to remove their child from the Institute at any time, they must notify both the director and assistant director via email, two weeks prior to the intended drop date. Doing so permits your billing account to be prorated and allows the school to enroll a student from the wait list. Accounts for families who do not provide two weeks written notice via email of withdraw will not be prorated.

ENROLLMENT AND TUITION

Upon enrollment for the semester, your family will be charged a \$50 non-refundable deposit (per child) to hold your child's spot. This payment will go towards your second tuition payment if you continue to attend our program. We use this deposit to fill a spot should a family decide not to join the program.

When you submit the expanded enrollment packet, you will be given the opportunity to elect a payment schedule. All billing and payment is done through the Bursar's office. All

payments are due on the 25th of the month. Bursar penalties, will accrue after the 26rd day of the month that the payment is due. These policies are subject to change. To be aware of up-to-date bursar policies please contact them when you have specific questions.

How to Pay Your Bursar Account

Credit card payments are only accepted online at <https://one.ou.edu> for families that are either enrolled or work at the university, or have completed the authorization agreement in the enrollment packet. The University of Oklahoma students and employees who choose to pay their Bursar account with a credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express or Discover) instead of cash, check or money order may incur a convenience fee for use of the service. A convenience fee covers charges assessed by credit card associations for providing the service.

To avoid paying a convenience fee, accounts can also be paid in the bursar's office using cash or checks. Electronic check payments will not incur a convenience fee.

Checks can be made out to The University of Oklahoma and mailed to
1000 Asp Avenue, Norman, Ok 73019.

Please put your account number, ID number and OU ICD Preschool in the memo section of your check when mailing it in.

Return Checks

The Office of the Bursar requires that all forms of paper check payment be written to "The University of Oklahoma" and endorsed by the issuer. Any checks that are returned to our office because of failed payments such as insufficient funds, closed bank accounts and stop payments will be charged a return item fee in addition to the face value of the check.

Any balance on the account past that date is subject to monthly interest.

We are able to accept childcare subsidy payments from the Department of Human Services, and would be more than happy to do so. You will need to contact your local DHS office for eligibility requirements.

Refunds are made in accordance with the following policy: A portion of the semester fee will be refunded only if the child is withdrawn before October 1 and March 1 of each semester. The amount refunded will reflect the date of withdrawal and will be calculated by the director

and submitted in writing to the Bursar's Office for the refund payment. Withdrawal after these dates will require the full semester tuition obligation. To get a prorated refund there must be a notification in writing through email to the director and will require a 2 weeks' notice from the email date.

DROPPING ENROLLMENT

Should your family situation change, and you need to leave the ICD Preschool, we request a 2 weeks-notice in writing prior to dropping our program. This notice will allow us the time we need to fill the spot. The refund for your unused tuition will begin 2 weeks from your notification date.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Routine conferences are held each semester to discuss the development of your child. Conferences may also be held intermittently throughout the semester, as need arises; they may be initiated by either the teacher or parent. Please let us know if you need any special accommodations for a conference such as a translator or a special time to meet.

Evening parent meetings are planned during the year as well. We encourage parents to participate as much as possible in these events. Periodically, a newsletter will be sent out to inform parents of program activities. A variety of resource items are available to parents on a bookshelf located in the entrance lobby, which include books on a variety of parenting and child development topics.

We would like to encourage parents to visit our classroom during the year to share occupations, hobbies, or other things of interest with the children. If you have a particular hobby or item of interest to share, please see your child's teacher to schedule a time to share with the class.

During the year your child's teacher may plan special activities for parents to attend. Please watch your email and check for notices on the sign in tables. We welcome you to the observation booth at any time – see OBSERVATION below. On rare instances, the booth may be closed for a special class observation. Parents are welcome at any time!

VISITORS

The Institute of Child Development permits children to visit who are not enrolled in the

program only on very special occasions and at the discretion of the staff. This must be cleared in advance with your child's teacher/director. Parents are welcome to visit the Institute during operating hours.

CHILD'S INITIAL VISIT TO SCHOOL

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.

ARRIVING AT THE INSTITUTE

Upon arrival at the Institute, you will sign your child into the program. Each child is greeted by a teacher as parents bring him/her to the door and an informal health check as well as a friendly greeting will take place. We ask parents to bring their child to the door to give us an opportunity to share information. You may occasionally have something to tell us about your child, and we occasionally have bits of information or handouts we need to share with you.

The lead teacher should be informed if someone other than a parent will be picking up your child from school. This person's name must be on your emergency list that you filled out upon enrollment. Children will be released only to designated guardians unless other arrangements have been made in advance with one of the directors. If your child is going home with another parent of our program, please notify the lead teacher of your arrangement.

TRANSPORTATION

We do not take trips that require transportation due to strict licensing requirements that are hard to meet under our circumstances. We will occasionally take walks, and if it is out of sight of the school, we will inform you in advance of our plans.

The one exception to this is if the National Weather Center declares a Potentially Dangerous Situation in regards to severe weather in the area. In this case, we will either close, or relocate to our designated shelter area in the Houston Huffman Center. The OU Cart system will

transport us from the preschool, to the Huffman Center.

MEDICAL RECORDS

All medical records pertaining to your child are kept in a locked file and are accessible only to those authorized for access. This includes administrators, parents, and regulatory agencies such as Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

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.

If child(ren) has a special medical or dietary needs, this needs to be written on the original application and explained to your child's teacher and the director. We are an inclusive environment at the ICD, and we do our best to accommodate for many physical and intellectual disabilities to the best of our ability, as well as for special dietary needs during our snack time.

HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES

In order to protect the other children, please keep your child at home if he or she shows any of the following symptoms: elevated temperature over 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, heavy nasal discharge (as distinct from a clear, runny nose), red throat, reddened eyes, excessive sneezing, coughing, listlessness, sudden loss of appetite, rash, or undue irritability. If such conditions are chronic, please discuss them with the director at the time the child is enrolled at the Institute. **EVERY CHILD SHOULD STAY AT HOME AND REST FOR APPROXIMATELY 24 HOURS AFTER ALL SYMPTOMS HAVE SUBSIDED.** This is a DHS policy and not only serves as protection for your child, but also for the other children and

staff in your child's classroom. 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.

ALLERGIES/ASTHMA

Please inform the lead teacher immediately (upon enrollment) of any food or airborne allergies from which your child may suffer. It is critical for the health and well being of your child that we are well informed of the child's condition and any restrictions placed on the child that will reduce the chances of an allergic reaction. We typically do not administer medication at the Institute, but if it is necessary to control an allergic reaction we must discuss permission and procedures for administration. If your child suffers from asthma, please keep the lead teacher informed of the last treatment and you may also want to leave an inhaler at the school in case your child is in need of another treatment.

MEDICATIONS

Medications are administered only by full-time ICD staff (i.e., the director and assistant director/master teachers), as they have specific first-aid training. This is only to be done in the case of emergency situations (i.e., use of an Epi-Pen/emergency inhaler). We must have written permission, renewed each year, for such medications to be administered. If on-site, these medications are stored in a locked cabinet within the ICD office. **No other medications are administered to children by staff.**

Due to DHS regulations, if your child has diaper rash and needs diaper cream applied, we will also have to have written permission each day that cream is needed. If your physician has diagnosed your child with chronic, recurring diaper rash, we are able to maintain written permission for administration for up to 1 year.

It is the policy of the ICD not to apply sunscreen or insect repellent to students without written permission. **Please apply these to your child as you see fit, as we play outside daily.**

EMERGENCIES

Simple injuries will be cared for by the child's teacher. In the event of a serious

injury, the parents will be notified at once. In most cases, parents are contacted and asked to pick up their child and obtain whatever medical care is needed. However, in extreme emergencies the physician the parents have designated as first or second choice will be called, and if necessary, the child will be transported to the Norman Regional hospital. It is imperative that this information be supplied to the Institute as well as information about who may be called in an emergency in the event that the parents cannot be reached. Treatment cannot be given to your child in the hospital without parental consent; the Institute cannot provide this permission. Please be sure we have your insurance information on your child's health form.

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL DAYS

If you would like your child to share his/her 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.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor activities are beneficial to the children's health and growth. The program is planned to include some outdoor activity every day unless the weather is dangerous or severe. Please send outer clothing appropriate for the weather every day so that your child can enjoy such play to its fullest. A common complaint from children is cold fingers **so please remember mittens, hats and jackets**. If your child is too ill to go outside, please keep him/her at home.

Please send your child with closed toed shoes.

CLOTHING

Please provide a complete change of clothing for your child to keep in his or her backpack. This is especially important because the children are often unhappy about wearing our "spare" clothes if they become dirty or wet. It helps us if you leave the clothing in a small sack with the child's name printed on it. We really appreciate it when parents check on the child's supply of clothing, keeping them appropriate for the season and your growing child! Whenever clothing is sent home, please replace it the next day. If your child wears diapers, please include them in your child's bag.

The children need suitable outer clothing for changing weather each day such as boots, caps, mittens, and long pants. A common complaint from children is cold fingers and we want the children to enjoy outdoor play to the fullest.

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.
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.

OBJECTS FROM HOME

We discourage toys brought from home unless they are specifically requested as a part of the curriculum unit. 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.

DISCIPLINE at the Institute of Child Development

The approach to discipline at ICD is founded in the practice of guidance. When conflict arises, staff work with children to help them develop self-regulation and conflict resolution skills.

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.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is taken seriously at the Institute. It is expected that all information (by and about staff, students, parents, children) will not be shared. For early childhood professionals, ethical practice requires that all information about families and children remain within the program. For parents and ICD staff, pictures, personal information may not be taken from the Institute or shared verbally, electronically, or by any other means with any entity outside the Institute (except mandated reporting). This includes talking about children/families/staff associated with the Institute. Breaches of confidentiality will be reported to university authorities.

Information about children and/or families that is important for lab students at the Institute will be shared only with those needing the information and must remain confidential. All parents sign an observation booth policy upon enrollment.

Only individuals authorized by the parent, policies of the University/program, mandates by authorities such as the Oklahoma State Department of Human Services will have access to children’s files.

Locked files are kept for information of a confidential nature.

Important numbers:

Institute of Child Development 325-1641

Institute fax 325-7146

Director – Rebecca Waggoner

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Institute mailing address:

ICD – attention - Director

820 Van Vleet Oval, Rm. 114

Norman, OK 73019

Assistant Director- Kitty Sylvester

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