



FCDC

family child development center

**PARENT HANDBOOK
2015**

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Mission Statement

FCDC recognizes the value of all children as the foundation of humanity. As a community based nonprofit center, we provide exceptional early childhood education by nurturing the unique potential of every child through active partnerships with parents and families.

FCDC is a nonprofit organization dedicated the care and early education of our community's youngest members. FCDC serves children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age, and provides a wide variety of meaningful learning experiences for each child. Children will experience growth in their social-emotional, physical, language and cognitive development.

FCDC encourages parent participation and a strong working relationship between families and teachers. Suggestions from staff and parents are encouraged and integral to the quality of the program.

FCDC is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (651-296-3971) and is accredited by the National Association for the Education for Young Children (NAEYC). Family Child Development Center has voluntarily participated in the Parent Aware Rating System and earned 4 Stars, the highest possible rating. The Center contracts with Health Consultants for Child Care (952-472-3915) for oversight of its health and safety policies and practices.

History

Our organization was founded in the mid-1970s as a nondenominational child care program that operated in the St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church in Minnetonka, Minnesota. As the Child Development Center outgrew its rented space, it officially changed its name to the Family Child Development Center and incorporated as an independent nonprofit organization in 1990.

PROGRAM OPERATION

Program Services

FCDC is currently licensed to serve 93 FTE (full time equivalent) children: 21 infants, 32 toddlers, and 40 preschoolers in its child care center located at 100 Nathan Lane, Plymouth, Minnesota. FCDC chooses to cap class sizes in several classrooms for the benefit of the children in the program.

FCDC operates the following classrooms:

Infant I – Cuddly Caterpillars

- 9 infants: ages 6 weeks to 9 months
- Staff to child ratio 1:3

Infant II – Darling Dragonflies

- 12 infants: 9 to 16 months
- Staff to child ratio 1:4

Toddler I- Little Ladybugs

- 14 toddlers: ages 16-26 months
- Staff to child ratio 1:5

Toddler II – Growing Grasshoppers

- 18 toddlers: ages 26-36 months
- Staff to child ratio 1:6

Preschool I – Helpful Honeybees

- 18 children: ages 36 months to 4 years
- Staff to child ratio 1:9

Preschool II (Kindergarten Readiness) – Fantastic Fireflies

- 20 children: ages 4 to Kindergarten age
- Staff to child ratio 1:10

Daily breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks are prepared onsite according to USDA guidelines.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Times of Program Operation

Family Child Development Center opens at 6:30 am and closes at 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Children may be at the Center for up to 9 ½ hours during these hours of operation.

Arrival and Departure

Upon arrival to a classroom in the Center, parents and children must wash hands (per NAEYC accreditation standards). Parents must sign in their children upon arrival to transfer responsibility of care from the parent to an authorized FCDC staff member.

Upon departure, a parent must sign out his or her child and inform the child's teacher that they are leaving the center in order to transfer care from FCDC to the parent. Once a child is signed out, he or she is no longer the responsibility of FCDC staff. Children are not permitted to run in classrooms or out of doors. Parents are expected to enforce this rule.

Parents must sign their child in and out each day and accompany them at all times while on FCDC property. Signing in and out is a process that is required by DHS Licensing. Teachers use the sign in and sign out sheets to track the attendance of children.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Registration

Parents must meet with the Child Development Coordinator or the Executive Director prior to enrollment to review enrollment requirements. Completion of the Registration Form and payment of the registration fee and payment of deposit secures enrollment. The deposit for the infant program is one month of tuition and for all other programs the deposit is one week of tuition. Deposits are applied to the child's tuition upon starting the program. The registration fee is nonrefundable. The deposit is refundable only under the following conditions: 1) Parents give 30 days notice and FCDC is able to enroll another child into the program. Upon enrollment, the enrollment packet is given to parents for their review and completion.

Enrollment Forms

When your child's enrollment is accepted, you will receive an enrollment packet. Please review the parent handbook and sign an agreement stating that you will abide by FCDC's policies and procedures. You will be given several enrollment forms, which must be completed prior to your child's start date.

DHS Licensing requirements prohibit the enrollment of a child without a signed physician's statement declaring the status of the child's health and immunization schedule consistent with current medical records.

Parent Orientation and Transition Visits

In order to learn more about your family and to ease your transition to child care, FCDC staff will schedule transition visits for you and your child to visit your assigned classroom prior to your start date. Classroom teachers will contact you to establish your child's transition schedule. During one of your transition visits, parents will be asked to leave their child in the care of FCDC teachers and meet with the Executive Director or Center Director for a brief orientation.

Parent Surveys

After your child has been attending FCDC for 6 weeks, we will send a parent survey home with you to learn more about your initial experience with our organization. Your input helps us continually improve our program.

Affirmative Action Statements

FCDC does not discriminate based on race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions or other school programs.

FCDC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

WAITING LISTS

Order of Priority

FCDC maintains lengthy waiting lists for many of its programs, especially for the infant and toddler programs. Parents are encouraged to enter the waiting list as early as possible. When an opening occurs, the following factors determine priority:

1. Child of an FCDC staff member.
2. Child currently enrolled at FCDC on a part-time basis and seeking full-time enrollment.
3. Sibling of a currently enrolled child.
4. Child on waiting list seeking full-time enrollment.
5. Child on waiting list seeking part-time enrollment.

FCDC STAFF

Professional Training

FCDC teachers complete background studies as a requirement of their employment. Each teacher has also completed certifications in pediatric first aid, pediatric CPR and Shaken Baby Syndrome. Additionally, infant teachers complete Sudden Infant Death Syndrome training annually.

Each year, FCDC staff members are required by state law to complete relevant training equal to 1-2% of annual hours worked. FCDC provides ongoing professional development opportunities throughout the year that are mandatory for our teaching staff. Staff development days are included in your weekly tuition and are listed under **Days Closed** in this handbook.

Staffing Composition

Administration

- 1 Full Time Executive Director
- 1 Full Time Assistant Director
- .5 FTE Child Development Coordinator
- .5 FTE Finance Manager

Food Program

- 1 Full Time Cook

Infants

21 infants ages 6 weeks to 16 months
6 Full Time Teachers
1 Part Time Teacher
1 Part Time Assistant Teacher
2 Part Time Aides

Toddlers

32 toddlers ages 16 months to 33 months
6 Full Time Teachers
1 Part Time Assistant Teacher
2 Part Time Aides

Preschool

38 preschoolers ages 33 months to 6 years
4 Full Time Teachers
1 Part Time Teacher
2 Part Time Aides

Parents Hiring FCDC to do Private Child Care

FCDC supervises its employees and programs within the confines of its facility and sponsored programs. Employees of FCDC are not supervised during their off-duty hours and FCDC is not responsible for personnel or their actions if employees choose to babysit for FCDC families. FCDC administrators cannot make recommendations or arrange babysitting between FCDC employees and families. Parents must also coordinate babysitting arrangements with FCDC employees during their off-duty hours.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Data Privacy and Confidentiality

Family Child Development Center obtains and uses information about children to assist in the planning of our educational program, and in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Human Services Child Care Licensing Division. Access to such information by third parties is limited and controlled in accordance with legal rights of data privacy.

Federal and state law allows parents and guardians to inspect and review official records, files, and data relating to their child. This includes all material that is incorporated in the cumulative record.

Access to records is limited to the following:

- Parents or legal guardians of children.
- Authorized FCDC personnel.
- State or federal agencies as required by law, including the Hennepin County Community Services Department.
- Accrediting organizations.
- Other third parties who secure the written permission of the parents or legal guardian.

Parents and guardians have the right to obtain information about records kept on their child. They have a right (upon presenting proper identification) to see their child's records and to have the contents of those records explained within a reasonable time after their request. They have a right to receive copies of their child's records.

The responsible authority for the records at Family Child Development Center is the Executive Director. He/She will be responsible for determining what records are to be kept and who has access to them. If you have any questions regarding data privacy, contact the Executive Director at 763-545-7271.

Food Program

FCDC participates in a federal food program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Meals that are served at FCDC must meet all the nutritional requirements established by the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program. FCDC then receives federal cash assistance that covers some of the costs to serve healthy meals to your children. (Please see **Program Services** section for additional information regarding the USDA.)

Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack are provided to all children in the full time program. Please notify us if your child has any food allergies. Our staff and cook keep a list of children with restricted diets in their classrooms and in the kitchen. (Please see **Special Diets** section for additional information.)

For children in the infant program, FCDC provides *Up & Up* (Target Store) brand formula with iron, milk, cereal and other foods. Parents must provide formula if they wish to use a brand other than the *Up & Up* brand. Upon arrival each morning, parents will be asked to fill out the top section of the daily report with information regarding eating, feeding and general behavior. Staff will continue to fill in the form for the day with information on food consumed, behavior and activities participated in. State law requires us to accept infant food under the following circumstances only:

- Unopened formula will be stored at the Center following DHS Licensing guidelines.
- Canned formula can be opened and filled at the Center, as requested.
- Formula or baby food, once opened, must be refrigerated immediately and used the same day.
- If formula or breast milk is heated and not used within the hour, it will be discarded.

FCDC prepares all food on site and a hot lunch is offered daily. We ask all children to try the foods prepared. No child will be forced to eat meals or snacks. Often, the encouragement to try new foods invites the child to be in control.

Birthdays are a special time for all children, and they may celebrate their birthdays at the Center. Any family wishing to provide cake, cupcakes or cookies should bring only foods that have been prepared commercially. In accordance with state law, homemade snacks will not be served. If the family chooses a nutritional food item, it will be served at snack time. Non-nutritional foods will be given to children in addition to snack served by FCDC.

FCDC is a peanut sensitive environment and we do serve peanuts or peanut butter. We also ask that parents check the food content labels on all food brought to the Center. Treats containing peanuts, peanut butter or peanut oil can be hazardous to children who have an allergy to peanut products. To be safe, we request that all food brought to the Center contain a label with contents. If items are bought from a bakery, and do not have any labels, please request one.

Special Diets

Parents of children with special dietary needs must consult with the Child Development Coordinator and/or cook regarding substitutions. If your child has an intolerance or allergy to a USDA Child Care Food Program required food (such as milk), a Special Diet Form must be completed, signed by your child's health care provider and submitted to FCDC.

Parent requests for vegetarian or religious/cultural substitutions are accommodated to a practical degree for feeding a large population of young children within government and program guidelines.

Field Trips and Transportation

Field trips and supervised walks in our neighborhood are part of our enrichment programming at FCDC. Children enjoy connecting with our larger community and exploring additional resources available outside of our facility. Parents are often invited to accompany their child on special off-site field trips.

Infants and toddlers will explore the area surrounding FCDC using strollers or wagons, and older children will walk. Infants and toddlers will only participate in in-house field trips hosted at FCDC or on its property. Information regarding field trips will be posted in your child's classroom and your signature will be required in order for your child to participate in an in-house or off-site field trip. A first aid kit is taken on all field trips, along with your child's emergency form, daily attendance sheet and a cell phone.

Rented school buses are used for off-site transportation to preschool field trips. Bus transportation is provided by a bus company. The rental vehicles are driven by licensed drivers provided by the company from which the vehicles are rented. FCDC maintains appropriate insurance coverage for field trips.

If your child's group has left for a preschool field trip when you arrive at FCDC, it is your responsibility to await their return or to take your child to the field trip site. You will not be allowed to leave your child in a different classroom or age group until the preschool children arrive back at the center.

Outdoor Activities

FCDC classrooms will have scheduled, daily outside play time. During the winter months, FCDC requires that the temperature must be above 15° F (including wind chill) to be able to go outdoors. It is the policy of FCDC that all children who are well enough to be in attendance are well enough to participate in outdoor activities. If children are dressed appropriately, weather conditions should not pose a risk of illness to them. Children cannot be excused from the outdoor portion of the FCDC program.

FCDC must follow the labeled administering guidelines for the use of sunscreen. For a nominal fee, FCDC will provide the sunscreen to be applied to your child during the months of May through September. If you wish to provide a different brand of sunscreen, it will be labeled with your child's name and used only for him or her. FCDC cannot provide a substitution if your child runs out of his or her individual sunscreen.

Air Quality

Air quality is checked daily. When the air quality is in the unhealthy for sensitive groups range, a teacher may use discretion to allow the children to play outside no longer than 15 minutes. When the air quality reaches the unhealthy groups range, children will not be allowed to play outside.

Clothing

We urge you to have your child dressed in washable and comfortable play clothes, which he or she can manage as independently as possible. The range of activities each day makes comfort and wash-ability a prerequisite to full participation. It is advisable that each child brings a complete change of labeled clothes, including underwear and socks, to be left at the Center. Please make sure all extra clothing for your child is checked each season and fits comfortably.

To ensure your child's safety, rubber soled shoes that fasten are strongly recommended. Flip-flops, Crocs, or open-toed sandals are dangerous for children to wear at FCDC. We ask that you refrain from sending your child to the Center in these types of footwear.

Holidays and Celebrations

Holidays are special times of the year when people set aside work to come together with family, friends, and community to recognize a new year, a change of season, a religious rite, a life event, or the contribution of significant people. At FCDC, we feel these events are important to the children and families and offer our staff a unique opportunity to broaden the children's cultural awareness and sensitivity. Upon enrollment, each family will complete a Holiday Questionnaire that will remain in your child's file throughout his/her time at FCDC. Teachers will refer to that questionnaire to learn more about your preferences about how holidays are explored at FCDC.

It is our intent to learn equitably about a broad spectrum of traditions and cultures. FCDC staff and teachers will not provide religious education or display religious symbols in the classroom. However, children and their parents may share their own individual holiday experiences with teachers and other children without censure.

We strive to use parents, staff and community resources to reflect the diversity our children will experience as they explore their place in the larger community. Families will be kept informed of activities through the monthly newsletter and curriculum plans posted in the classrooms and will be invited to play an active part in our program. It is our goal to form a partnership with the FCDC families and actively seek your knowledge and opinions when developing our curriculum. Families are encouraged to share their culture and traditions with their child's classroom at any time during the year. We also ask that families communicate directly with teachers if they have a concern about a particular holiday and how it may be presented in the classroom.

Personal Items

Children are welcome to bring things from home to share with the group on regular sharing days. FCDC cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to these items. We ask the help of parents in encouraging the child to bring only those toys that can be easily shared. Ask your child's teachers for ideas in this area. Please label all items and all bedding that is brought to the Center. We advise each child to have a labeled bag for transporting all belongings. All bedding items will be sent home at the end of each week for cleaning.

PROGRAM POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Curriculum

FCDC uses *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos* and *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. The curriculum is a nationally recognized research-based system that offers comprehensive resources to help early childhood educators build exceptional high-quality programs.

Assessment and Screening

FCDC uses *Teaching Strategies GOLD Online Assessment Tool*, which includes a developmental continuum assessment system. Teachers use the developmental continuum to observe children in the context of everyday routines and experiences to assess children's current level of development. Teachers use these observations to plan for each child and the group. As teachers learn about each child's strengths, interests and developmental timetable, they use the information to build responsive relationships and offer experiences that promote each child's development and learning.

FCDC also uses a variety of assessment and screening tools, including the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3)* and *Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE)*, which are used as needed.

Unmarked copies of FCDC's assessment tools are available for review.

Guiding Children's Behavior

FCDC teachers and staff model expected behavior, and use behavior guidance techniques to assist children in learning pro-social and self-regulation skills. When negative behavior occurs, teachers will redirect the child. Teachers will suggest alternatives or, with very young children, help children move to other areas and materials. Verbal praise and acknowledgement of success will assist the child in learning how to take responsibility for his or her actions.

Our goal is to help children problem-solve by identifying their feelings, stating their needs, and using their words (when age-appropriate). If a child's behavior becomes disruptive or hurtful, he or she will be removed from the group to a different activity, remaining in sight and sound of teachers at all times. All separations will be noted in the classroom log and information will be shared with the child's parents.

Most often, redirection and teaching replacement skills to children is all that is needed, but occasionally staff need to take additional steps to ensure everyone's safety. The **Harmful Behavior Policy** is in place for those occasions.

Harmful Behavior Policy

Providing a safe and healthy environment for all children is a high priority at FCDC. During early childhood years, it is common for children to engage in or experiment with behaviors that may be hurtful to other children in the classroom. Often, these behaviors are developmentally appropriate to the age of the child. Children usually are motivated to engage in these hurtful behaviors to gain attention from the adults and children in the room, when they have insufficient problem solving and social skills, when they lack verbal skills to relay needs and wants, when they experience frustrations in the group setting, or when they are feeling sensory overload.

FCDC teachers usually can identify a child's motives for hurtful behavior and take steps to stop the behavior and keep it from happening again. Teachers assist the child by teaching coping, language, or social skills, making changes to the environment to address sensory needs, and helping the child replace inappropriate attention gaining behaviors with appropriate techniques.

It is our experience that hurtful behaviors are often isolated incidents or are relatively short-lived. However, in some cases, the hurtful behaviors are not developmentally appropriate for a child's age and repeated instances do require additional intervention.

Anytime a child engages in hurtful behavior that is not developmentally appropriate three or more times in one day, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day. This is to provide an appropriate and safe environment for all children.

FCDC Procedures When a Child Persistently Engages in Harmful Behaviors That Are Not Developmentally Appropriate

When teachers observe hurtful behavior of a significant, persistent or longer-term nature, they will seek input from the Child Development Coordinator. When this is necessary, FCDC follows the process outlined below:

1. Referral to Child Development Coordinator:
 - Classroom teacher makes referral to the CDC when they feel a child is presenting behavioral, developmental, physical, language, emotional, social, or cognitive concerns that extend beyond what would be typical in the peer group
 - CDC and staff meet to clarify concerns about child
 - Staff requests parental permission (via written form) for CDC involvement
2. Information Gathering about Child's Needs:
 - CDC makes 2 or 3 observations of the child
 - Staff and CDC complete developmental checklist
 - CDC and staff meet to discuss results of observations, checklists, assessment tools

3. Meeting with Parents:
 - CDC, teaching staff and parents meet to discuss concerns, begin settings goals and objectives for child, identify methods of intervention by the teachers and determine what parents can do at home to support the process
4. Writing the Individual Education Plan (IEP):
 - CDC writes IEP to outline goals, objectives and methods of intervention
 - CDC reviews IEP with staff to clarify methods of intervention
 - CDC shares copy of IEP with parents
5. Implementation of IEP:
 - Staff may continue to collect information via journals, biting log, or harmful behavior log
 - CDC supports staff and child both in the classroom and by working with the child one-on-one outside the classroom
 - CDC and staff communicate (written and verbal) progress to parents on regular basis
6. Progress Tracking:
 - CDC and staff meet at least quarterly to assess child's progress and redefine goals
 - CDC, staff and parents meet as necessary to share information, discuss any ongoing concerns, and celebrate success of the child
7. Use of Outside Resources:
 - CDC helps coordinate interventions by outside resources
 - Outside resources employed by parents (child's doctor, private therapy) are asked to share information. CDC can help coordinate efforts of all agencies

Sometimes, even with outside services, FCDC may not be able to meet the needs of an individual child. A child's behavior may pose a threat to the physical and emotional safety of the other children and the teaching staff can no longer assure the safety of all the children in its care. When FCDC has exhausted all available program, staff, community and professional resources, and a child is continuing to engage in harmful behaviors toward others, FCDC may determine that our Center is no longer the right environment for that child.

When a child must be excused from care at FCDC, the Director and Child Development Coordinator will meet with the family to set the date for termination. FCDC may also be able to provide a list of possible options for the family's childcare needs.

Children with Special Needs

FCDC has a part-time Child Development Coordinator on staff to work with children who present a special need: food allergy, medical or health need, behavioral or developmental or other special need. When a child with special needs is enrolled, or we identify that a currently enrolled child has special needs, teachers and the Coordinator will meet with the parents to plan for the child. Appropriate resources within the center and the community will be identified and shared with the family. FCDC staff will work with parents to adapt the program to the child's needs and provide a written

individualized education plan. If you have any questions our staff can assist with, we encourage you to share those with us at any time.

Referral Process

A teacher makes referral to FCDC's Child Development Coordinator when they feel a child is presenting behavioral, developmental, physical, language, emotional, social, or cognitive concerns that extend beyond what would be typical in the peer group. The CDC and teachers meet to clarify the concerns about the child. The teacher will inform the parents of his/her concerns and request permission, via written consent, for the CDC to complete observations of a child.

Teachers, parents and the CDC work together as a team to share information, create a plan and involve outside community resources, if necessary.

Mandated Reporting Policy

Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect. **All FCDC staff members are mandated reporters under state law and are required to report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect.** This responsibility of reporting cannot be shifted to a supervisor or to anyone else at the licensed facility. If FCDC staff has reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, they will immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to Child Protection Services of Hennepin County at 612-348-3552 or local law enforcement at 763-509-5160 and to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at 651-431-6600. FCDC staff will call 911 in they know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger.

If the report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but involves possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or rules that govern the facility, FCDC will call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at 651-431-6500.

A report to any of the agencies listed above will contain information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. Reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within the facility, the report will include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.

Any oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

FCDC is prohibited to retaliate against any mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatments of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Any FCDC staff who knows or has a reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, this staff member who fails to report maltreatment that is serious and or reoccurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing

direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

Community resources are available to you as difficulties arise in child rearing: Hennepin County Crisis Hotline 612-873-3161.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent Participation

We welcome your participation and involvement in our organization. FCDC invites all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language to participate in FCDC's programming and volunteer opportunities. There are different levels of volunteer commitment available: we welcome you to become engaged in your child's early education at FCDC!

Parents as Leaders (PALs) Team

The PALs Team is made up of parent volunteers who help to plan social and educational events for families at FCDC. Parent representatives coordinate special events (kindergarten workshops, silent auction fundraiser, etc.) and staff appreciation efforts. Parent representatives also provide insight and feedback to the Executive Director regarding FCDC policies and programming. If you are interested in joining this dynamic group, contact the FCDC office for more information.

Two-Way Communication

To ensure effective communication between parents and FCDC staff, and to promote connections between home and our center, teachers complete daily information sheets for infants and toddlers. Daily sheets allow parents to give a summary of their child's morning before arriving at FCDC. While at the center, teachers document bottles, meals, diaper changes, potty training progress and other critical information. Parents are encouraged to call the center during the day to check on their child or to speak directly with a teacher.

Infant, toddler and preschool teachers email their weekly lesson plans and monthly newsletters to parents. Preschool teachers also use email to share a re-cap of learning activities and periodic updates on classroom activities. Teachers may also send email reminders, but do not check their email frequently throughout the day. If you have an immediate concern or questions, we recommend calling your child's teachers at 763-545-7271.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

FCDC designates formal conference times throughout the year.

Typically, infant conference dates are scheduled according the following schedule:

- 4-6 months and 8-10 months (dependent upon enrollment dates of an infant)
- 12 months and 15 months

Toddler and Preschool conferences are schedule 2 times per year, in August and February.

FCDC recognizes that each child and family have individual needs. We encourage parents to contact teachers if additional conferences are needed. Teachers may also contact parents if they feel additional conference time would assist in planning for your child.

Board of Directors

The Family Child Development Center is a nonprofit organization, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Parent representation is an integral part of FCDC governance. Each board member serves a two-year term. If you are interested in learning more about the FCDC Board of Directors, please contact the Executive Director.

Visitors

FCDC receives requests from visitors to observe our program. It is our policy that visitors must check-in at the front office and sanitize their hands when entering a classroom.

- FCDC has an open door policy and invites the parents of enrolled children to visit at their convenience. However, you may want to speak with your child's teachers about the classroom schedule.
- Tours and waiting list parents must arrange a tour in advance by calling FCDC. Regular tours are led by the Executive Director and the Child Development Coordinator.
- Community tours are scheduled with the Executive Director. FCDC staff members accompany all visitors during tours.
- Non-enrolled children who have attended kindergarten are considered a school age child and cannot be present at FCDC, according to state licensing standards. The exception to this is when a child accompanies a parent or staff person into a classroom to drop-off or pick-up an enrolled child.

FCDC reserves the right to deny visitation to anyone at any time for the purpose of protecting the rights of children, parents and staff.

FEES AND PAYMENT

Payment Policies

FCDC is a nonprofit organization which relies on tuition payments for a majority of its operating expenses. Prompt and regular payment of tuition fees is expected.

All checks for tuition payments should be made payable to Family Child Development Center or FCDC. These payments should be put in the tuition payment box in the office each week, no later than 6:00 pm Tuesday afternoon. Any payments made later than this need to be arranged with the Finance Manager in advance. **No cash or credit cards accepted, please.**

Tuition fees are based on the enrollment schedule rather than actual attendance. Sick days, vacation days, holidays, staff development days and emergency closings are considered to be part of the enrollment schedule.

All children in the full time preschool, toddler, and infant programs participate in 24 weeks of music classes (September to May) offered by the MacPhail Center for Music. These classes are included in the cost of your tuition. Your child's teachers will share notice of additional fees for the field trips and other events with you.

Non-Sufficient Funds Policy

FCDC will charge parents a \$30.00 fee for any check returned by a bank due to non-sufficient funds. A late charge may also be applied to the account.

Late Fee

A \$25.00 fee will be charged **each week** that the tuition payment is late. This charge will be automatically added to the account. Prior agreements must be established with the Finance Manager for payment of tuition on a bi-weekly or monthly schedule.

Nonpayment of tuition may result in termination of child care services. Uncollected payments may be referred to a collection agency, which may result in legal action.

Vacation Policy

Because licensing regulations require that FCDC staff classrooms based on the number of children enrolled, our costs remain constant, even though your child may be absent for a few days. The amount of vacation days available to you is directly related to the enrollment schedule of your child. It is our policy to allow a child to take a number of days he or she attends each week every six months as vacation or sick days.

For example, if your child attends five days a week, you are granted five discounted days off every six months; if your child attends four days per week, you are granted four discounted days off every six months. During your child's vacation time, tuition is charged at half the normal rate. Time off may be accumulated if you do not take it in a six-month period, but may not be used in advance. Days off can be accumulated to a maximum of two-week's worth.

Families requesting discounted tuition may complete a Vacation Request Form and submit it to the office two weeks in advance of the planned vacation. If you would like to use time for sick days, please let us know the first day that your child is back at FCDC. Vacation days are non-transferable from one sibling to another. Vacation days may not be used in lieu of tuition.

Enrollment Withdrawal

When you wish to discontinue enrollment at FCDC, a written notice must be provided to the Executive Director at least two weeks prior to your child's last enrollment day. The parent or guardian is responsible for and agrees to pay the two-week tuition once notice of withdrawal from the center is given. Teachers will make every effort to make your child's last day at FCDC very special.

Program Notice of Termination

In the event that any of the following situations occur, enrollment may be terminated at FCDC:

1. Nonpayment of tuition by parent or legal guardian.
2. Failure to provide the required health, immunization, special medical updates and emergency information.
3. Inability of FCDC staff to care adequately for or to meet the child's needs.
(Please see **FCDC Procedures When a Child Persistently Engages in Harmful Behaviors.**)

Late Pick-Up Policy

FCDC's building closes at 6:00 pm. Therefore, you should be in the building to pick up your child prior to closing. If you pick up your child after 6:00 pm, you will be charged a late pick-up fee. The late pick-up fee should be paid directly to FCDC. Please do not pay the staff directly. We will invoice your account for this time and give you a bill. Fees will be assessed as follows:

1. A five-minute grace period will be given.
2. Beyond five minutes, \$10.00 will be charged for pick up between 6:05 and 6:15 or fraction thereof.
3. Any time beyond 6:15 pm will be charged at \$5.00 for each five minutes or fraction thereof.

If possible, please call when you know you will be late. A late pick-up charge will still be assessed, but we won't worry about you and will be able to reassure your child regarding the time you will arrive.

It may be distressing for your child to remain in the classroom or another area after all of the other children have been picked up by their parents. The closing staff will make every effort to reach the parent and other names provided on the child's emergency form to ascertain who will pick up the child and by when.

Emergency Situation

In the event of sudden illness, accident, hospitalization or other circumstance, and a parent is unable to contact FCDC and is unable to pick up their child and we have been unable to contact parents or other emergency contacts listed on the emergency form by 6:15 pm, we will assume an emergency situation exists.

FCDC will first contact the Plymouth Police Department. After assessing the situation, the Plymouth Police Department will become responsible for the transportation of the child to a responsible party. If no responsible party can be located, Plymouth Police Department will officially involve Child Protection.

FCDC's insurance policy does not allow staff to transport or take children home with them.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Permission Form and Emergency Contacts

By Minnesota state law, a child cannot be admitted to a child care center until a completed Emergency Form is received. You cannot leave your child at FCDC until the office has received your child's completed emergency form.

You must keep the information on your child's emergency form current. It must be updated whenever anything changes, and at least once per year. If we attempt to contact you **in the case of an emergency** and are unable to reach you within a half an hour because no one answers at any of the numbers you have provided or if your information is outdated, incomplete or incorrect, your child's emergency contact will be called and must pick up your child.

The emergency form must be signed by you because it authorizes FCDC to seek emergency treatment for your child if necessary. You will be notified in all cases of an emergency requiring medical attention. In case of emergency, your child will be taken to North Memorial Hospital, unless otherwise noted by parent on the permission form. Transportation will be billed to the parent for these charges.

Medication

Parents are encouraged to give as many doses of medication at home as possible. Prescription and over the counter medication may be given to your child while at the Center, provided the medication is in the **original labeled container** and all dosing instructions are provided. All prescription medication must be brought in the original labeled pharmacy container and must be dated with a current date. Sample medications without a prescription label will not be administered at FCDC.

For over the counter medications, we must follow the dosage guidelines given on the label. Any changes in the dosage outside what is recommended on the label must have written instructions from the child's doctor.

When a medication must be administered, a written authorization form must be filled out by the parent to administer any medication. These forms can be obtained from the office or your child's teacher.

The FCDC procedure for administration of medication is:

1. Wash hands
2. Check to see that Medication Form has been completed and signed.
3. Before administering medication follow these 5 RIGHTS:
 - RIGHT child
 - RIGHT medication
 - RIGHT time
 - RIGHT dose
 - RIGHT route (by mouth, eye, etc.)
 - RIGHT child's medication record
4. Administer medication
5. Return medication to proper storage out of children's reach
6. Wash hands
7. Record on child's medication record and sign form

Exclusion of Ill Child

FCDC is not a licensed "sick care program." For the protection of all children and staff, we ask your cooperation with our exclusion procedure for sick children. If your child has been ill and has had any of the symptoms listed below, the child

must be kept home for at least 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared **without the aid of fever reducing medication.**

Sick children are excluded from FCDC for an appropriate amount of time due to the following three reasons:

1. **Prevent the spread of communicable diseases** – The Department of Human Services requires that we exclude a child or staff with an illness or condition that the Commissioner of Health determines to be contagious and a physician determines that the child has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others (see itemization below).
2. **Comfort of child** – The child must be able to participate in all regular daily activities with a reasonable level of comfort. If a child is unable to participate in these activities, please keep them at home.
3. **Maintenance** – A child should not be brought into the center if they require more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and care given to other children.

FCDC will follow the exclusion guidelines listed below which are referenced from the *Infectious Diseases in Child Care Settings: Information for Directors, Caregivers, and Parents or Guardians* prepared by the Hennepin County Community Health Department, Epidemiology Program. We must exclude a child with any of the following conditions:

Illness	Exclusion from Center and Return to the Center
Chickenpox	May return after all blisters have dried into scabs and no new blisters have started in the last 24 hours; usually 6 days after rash starts
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)	May return 24 hours after starting the medication when (pus) drainage and/or fever, or eye pain is present, or a medical exam indicates that a child may return.
Diarrhea (Infectious)	May return 24 hours after the diarrhea has stopped. If the child has a loose stool and has other symptoms of illness, we immediately exclude. If the child has one loose stool, but no other symptoms, we will wait to see if other symptoms develop and/or the child has additional loose stools and then exclude. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools compared with a person's normal pattern, along with decreased stool form or stools that are watery, bloody, or contain mucous.
Fever	Axillary (armpit) temperature of 100° F or higher; when accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms or illness. Measure temperature before giving medications to reduce fever. May return after fever is gone for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication.
Impetigo	May return 24 hours after starting treatment and sores are drying or improving.
Lethargy	May return when the child is alert, energetic and able to participate in normal activities, including going outside.
Lice	May return after first treatment is completed and no lice are seen
Rash	May return after a physician indicates that symptoms are not that of a communicable disease
Respiratory Infections	May return after a child is free from fever for over 24 hours without fever reducing medication and is well enough to participate in normal activities, including going outside.
Ringworm	May return 24 hours after starting treatment
Scabies	May return 24 hours after starting treatment
Streptococcal Sore Throat	May return 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment

Vomiting	May return 24 hours after the vomiting has stopped. Vomiting is defined as two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours.
Signs or symptoms of possible severe illness	Unusually tired, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child; should be evaluated by child's physician to rule out severe illness

If a child arrives and appears ill or complains of illness, the teacher will request that the parent take the child home. If your child becomes ill while at the Center, he or she will be removed from the classroom, taken to the office and the parent(s) will be called to take the child home as soon as possible. The office is not the ideal place to care for a sick child and is considered temporary exclusion. The child must be picked up from the center within one hour from when the parent(s) are contacted. If the parents are not reached within 45 minutes, the emergency contacts will be called. Emergency contacts will be contacted immediately after parents in the case of an emergency (e.g., broken bone, high fever, serious allergic reaction).

If your child contracts any contagious disease (diagnosed by a physician), such as Whooping Cough, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Chicken Pox, Hepatitis, Meningitis, Head Lice, Scabies, Impetigo, Pink Eye, Strep Throat or Scarlet Fever, it should be reported to the Center as soon as possible. FCDC will do a posting to notify other parents that their child(ren) may have been exposed to a contagious disease while at the Center.

If your child is well enough to be at the Center, we must assume that he or she is well enough to go outdoors for large muscle time. If your child is not well enough to participate in programming, please keep your child at home.

Accidents and Injuries

Appropriate supervision of children is the most important responsibility of FCDC teachers and staff. Each staff member is responsible for implementing accident prevention measures and for maintaining supervision of children at all times.

Parents can expect to receive an Accident Report any time their child is hurt at FCDC. The form is completed in duplicate: one copy will be sent home with a parent and one copy will be included in your child's file in the FCDC office. The report describes the injury, the circumstances (time, location, etc.) regarding the accident and the response of FCDC staff. Parents will be contacted if the injury requires immediate emergency attention.

A Head Injury Report will also be completed if a child sustains a blow or bump to the head so that signs of a concussion may be monitored by parents.

Injuries that require medical attention must be reported to the Center within 24 hours. FCDC will also notify DHS Licensing of any injury that requires medical attention.

FCDC reviews its Risk Reduction Plan annually, and makes improvements and changes to its facility, property and programming to reduce the risk of injuries for children and staff members. A copy of the Risk Reduction Plan may be requested from the office.

Health Record Information

In accordance with state regulations, FCDC must maintain a medical record for each child enrolled.

- The Healthcare Summary Form is to be completed and signed by your child's physician and returned to us within the first thirty days of enrollment. This form must be updated each time your child transitions to a new age group.
- An Immunization Form must be completed by the parents and returned before the child may begin attendance. Immunization forms should be updated each time your child receives additional vaccinations as required by law.

It is essential that you keep us informed about your child's health history, allergies, illnesses, and injuries so that our staff can be aware of your child's needs. Please make a point of informing us when your child develops any new health problems, communicable diseases, or is injured. If your child receives immunizations after enrollment, please update the office with the dates and types of shots given.

Health Consultation Services

FCDC contracts with Health Care Consultants for Child Care to receive monthly health consultation services per DHS Licensing guidelines.

Insurance

Family Child Development Center carries a general liability insurance policy.

Evacuation and Taking Shelter

In order to comply with DHS Licensing requirements, FCDC conducts monthly fire safety drills and monthly tornado drills from April to September each year. A blueprint of the building is posted in each classroom highlighting the exits to the building. FCDC's evacuation plans are included in its Health and Safety Policies and are available for review.

Weather and Emergency Closing

FCDC closes when Wayzata, Hopkins or Robbinsdale Public Schools close due to severe weather. If either or both school districts declare a two-hour late start and no morning kindergarten, FCDC full time care will start two hours late. FCDC closings will be announced through the Instant Alert program, WCCO radio (830AM), WCCO-TV (Channel 4), KSTP-TV (Channel 5) and KARE-TV (Channel 11).

Instant Alert Program

FCDC uses an Instant Alert program to keep parents and guardians informed about safety. Instant Alert for Schools is an essential tool for notification and communication. Within minutes of an emergency (power outage, etc.) or school closing due to inclement weather, FCDC uses Instant Alert to deliver a single, clear message to all parents or guardians by telephone, cell phone, e-mail, pager or PDA in any combination. Instant Alert is internet based, allowing each family to maintain a secure, password protected online profile. You can log into your profile at any time to update your contact information. To access resources about the Instant Alert program, please ask the Executive Director.

Missing Child Policy

The following procedures will be followed in the unlikely circumstance that a child is discovered to be missing:

The Executive Director or Child Development Coordinator will be notified immediately upon the discovery that the child is missing.

A staff person from each area appointed by the Executive Director or Child Development Coordinator will be assigned to search their classroom and other rooms throughout the building as an appointed second group covers the grounds.

If the child is still missing after these immediate searches, the Plymouth Police Department and the child's parents will be contacted.

While waiting for the police, Executive Director or Child Development Coordinator will assign staff to each corner of the property surrounding FCDC. They will continue the search moving clockwise around the area immediate to FCDC's property.

Breast Milk

FCDC supports breastfeeding by:

- accepting, storing and serving expressed human milk for feedings;
- accepting human milk in sanitary containers labeled with the infant's first and last name and storing it in a refrigerator for no longer than 24 hours or in a freezer for no longer than three months;
- providing space for nursing mothers.

Pets

Only domestic, small, easy-to-maintain pets which can be kept in a small covered cage will be permitted as classroom pets. Pets will be kept remote from the food area in an easily cleanable, covered cage. Cages are cleaned on a regular basis in a location separate from food service. Hand washing is mandatory after handling pets or excretions. All pet food and cleaning supplies are separate from food service supplies.

No other outside animals are allowed unless they are approved by administration and are licensed and certified.

Currently, the preschool classroom has a pet rat. Other classrooms may have fish and tadpoles as pets.

Days Closed

Family Child Development Center will be closed on the following days for holiday observance. Specific dates on some of the holidays will be determined each year and stated in the yearly calendar. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed on the Friday immediately preceding the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed on the Monday immediately following the holiday.

- New Years Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

In addition, FCDC closes two days per year for a staff in-service day: President's Day and on the last Monday in August.

Parent Grievance Procedure

Family Child Development Center recognizes that parents may have a grievance that requires assistance to resolve. In the event that a parent has a grievance with a staff person, the parent should discuss the concerns with the staff person involved as soon as possible. If the concerns continue, the parent should meet with the Executive Director and complete a Grievance Form. The Executive Director will schedule a meeting within two working days for the parent(s) and staff person(s) involved to resolve the concerns.

If the above procedures do not result in a workable solution, the parent should request another meeting with the Executive Director, staff person and a member of the FCDC Board of Directors.

Respect for privacy should be considered at all times. Parents and staff are asked not to discuss the situation with other staff and/or persons not involved in the concern.

Important Phone Numbers

Family Child Development Center 763-545-7271
 Amanda Schulz, Executive Director
 Laura Elfert, Assistant Director
 Brenda Shoults, Finance Manager/Child Development Coordinator
 Jin Chang, President, Board of Directors

Department of Human Services Licensing Division 651-296-3971

Community Support Services

Wayzata School District	763-745-5000
Robbinsdale School District	763-504-8000
Early Childhood Family Education	763-504-4170
Hopkins School District	952-988-4097
Harley Hopkins Family Center	952-988-5000
Sight and Hearing Association	651-645-2546
Hennepin County Assistance	612-348-5937
MN Department of Human Services Information Desk	651-431-2000
MacPhail Center for Music	612-321-0100
Resources for Child Caring	651-641-0305
Emergency Food Shelf Network	763-450-3860



Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

(Please sign and return the bottom of this page to the office)

I/We _____ acknowledge that I/we
(please print name(s))

have received a copy of the Parent Handbook, understand the information and policies set forth within this handbook by Family Child Development Center and agree to abide by these set policies.

I also understand that these policies are subject to change by the Board of Directors.

(Signature)

(Date)

