Child Development Center

Family Handbook

2016-17
# Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION ............................................................................. 4  
Contact Information .................................................................... 4  
Mission Statement ....................................................................... 5  
Program History .......................................................................... 5  
Philosophy .................................................................................. 5  
Licensing ...................................................................................... 6  
Confidentiality ............................................................................. 6  
Accreditation ............................................................................... 7  
Eligibility ..................................................................................... 7  
OPERATING PROCEDURES ............................................................ 7  
Operating Hours .......................................................................... 7  
Holidays ....................................................................................... 8  
Arrival Procedures ....................................................................... 8  
Departure Procedures and Late Fee Policy .................................. 9  
Cell Phone Use ............................................................................ 9  
Building Security ......................................................................... 9  
Documentation ........................................................................... 10  
FEES ............................................................................................. 10  
Application & Registration Fees ............................................... 11  
Tuition .......................................................................................... 11  
Dependent Care Pre-Tax Benefits Program .............................. 12  
Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Fees ........................................ 12  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM .............................................................. 13  
Program Design .......................................................................... 13 

Updated August 2016
Curriculum and Assessment ........................................ 13
Transition ........................................................................ 14
Program to Program .................................................. 15
Program Evaluation ................................................... 15
Outdoor Policy .............................................................. 16
Inclement Weather Procedure ....................................... 17
Field Trips ..................................................................... 18
Positive Guidance and Discipline ............................... 18

HEALTH AND SAFETY .............................................. 19
Emergency Treatment .................................................. 19
Health Information ...................................................... 20
Minor Injuries ............................................................... 20
Dress and Personal Needs ............................................. 20
Building Emergencies ................................................ 21
Administration of Medication ....................................... 21
Child Illness ................................................................. 22
Meals ............................................................................ 23

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT .......................................... 24
Family Communication ................................................ 25
Parent Advisory Council (PAC) ................................. 26
Parent Resources and Translation ............................ 27
Withdrawal from the Program .................................. 27
Child Abuse and Neglect ............................................ 28

SIGNATURE PAGE .................................................... 29

Updated August 2016
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Virginia Commonwealth University Child Development Center (VCU CDC). This Family Handbook is designed to be a resource to all families. It includes general information about the operations of the CDC, the policies and procedures that govern the CDC, and applicable University information.

Please note that there have been changes to the following policies:

Licensing: Page 6
Application & Registration: Page 10
Tuition: Page 11
Child Illness: Page 22

After reading the Handbook in its entirety, please sign and return the back page verifying your understanding of its contents.

Contact Information

Physical Address: 1128 Floyd Ave, Richmond VA 23284
P.O. Box 842510
Phone Number: 804-828-7377
Fax Number: 804-828-6991
Web page: www.soe.vcu.edu/cdc

Office Numbers:
Director: 828-5892
Assistant Director: 828-7464
Family Liaison: 828-1542
Center Coordinator: 828-1541
Kitchen: 828-0159

Classroom Numbers:
G1: 828-1769  102: 828-2083
G2: 828-1781  201: 828-4967
101: 828-2082  202: 828-2113

Updated August 2016
Mission Statement

The mission of the VCU CDC is to provide high quality, developmentally appropriate care and education for the children of faculty, staff, and student families, and to serve as a learning lab for student learning experience, faculty research, and community outreach.

Program History

The VCU CDC was established over 100 years ago and was originally known as the Belle Bryan Nursery. Funded through a trust fund from Belle Bryan, the benefactor requested the school be located in a place that would be available to serve families in need. In 1971, VCU recognized that many of the patrons of the center were employees of the University and realized the need to establish a childcare training center in the Richmond area. On September 1, 1971, the School of Education assumed responsibility for the operation of the center.

The VCU CDC was originally housed on the MCV campus until it was relocated to its present location in 1993 to make way for the Biotech Research Center. The older center was razed in May 1994. With assistance from the School of Education and support from the VCU Foundation, the new center was relocated to a renovated building that had housed the Sacred Heart Elementary School. The exterior architectural integrity of the building was preserved, including the granite signs over the doors of the East and West entrances.

Philosophy

The VCU CDC has a philosophy of play-based learning. Founded upon the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct, it is the responsibility of the CDC to provide high quality early childhood care and education to children in a safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive environment.

We believe children learn through play and through strong relationships with the adults in their lives. The CDC uses the

Updated August 2016
Creative Curriculum, a research-based curriculum that focuses on the development of the whole child: social, emotional, physical, and cognitive. The curriculum is play-based and constructivist in nature.

Licensing

As part of a state agency, the VCU CDC is exempt from licensing. The CDC voluntarily complies with all licensing regulations and stays informed of changes in the regulations. Copies of the *Virginia Licensing Standards for Child Development Centers* are available for review at: [https://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/cdc/intro_page/code_regulations/regulations/standards.pdf](https://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/licensing/cdc/intro_page/code_regulations/regulations/standards.pdf)

All employees are held accountable for adhering to licensing standards.

Confidentiality

It is the VCU CDC’s policy to use the information you provide us about your child in a confidential and responsible way. NAEYC Accreditation Criterion for Health Standard 5.A.1 requires that each child’s health record includes information on those who have access to the child’s health information on file with the VCU CDC. The Criterion for Leadership and Management Standard 10.D.05 additionally requires that the health and safety information in each child’s file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parents or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, on request. NAEYC Program standard 4.A.02 similarly requires that children’s progress and assessment information (e.g. reports generated in Teaching Strategies GOLD) be kept confidential.

As evidenced by your signature at the end of this handbook, you acknowledge and consent that:

1. All VCU CDC staff members and regulatory authorities (such as the health department, NAEYC, etc.) have access to your child’s health and safety information; and

*Updated August 2016*
2. No one, other than VCU CDC staff members (this includes full-time and part-time staff but not volunteers) and regulatory authorities, have access to your child’s health and assessment information unless otherwise authorized in writing by you (or another parent or the legal guardian of my child).

Families have the right to review their child’s records. However, folder examination must be done in the presence of a staff member.

Accreditation

The VCU CDC is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – the nation’s leading organization of early childhood professionals. NAEYC Accreditation has become a widely recognized sign of quality in early childhood education. Approximately eight percent of all preschools and other early childhood programs are currently accredited by NAEYC.

Eligibility

Effective February 1, 2011, all new families wishing to enroll their child at the VCU CDC must meet the following eligibility requirements: A parent and/or custodial guardian must either be a VCU student, full time staff (on a 9 or 12 month contract) or full time collateral or tenure track faculty member (on a 9 or 12 month contract). VCU students must be enrolled at least half-time (6 credit hours for Graduate and Undergraduate students) to be eligible and are required to show proof of student status each semester. Children of parents and/or custodial guardians, who are no longer associated with the University, may remain enrolled in the CDC through the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2013.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

Operating Hours

*Updated August 2016*
The CDC is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. In order to get the full benefit of the program we strongly encourage that your child arrive by 9:00 a.m. Please call and let us know if you will be arriving after 10:00 a.m. so that we can include your child in the lunch count. It is our recommendation that no child remain at the CDC for more than eight hours per day. It is helpful to let the staff have a general idea of your anticipated arrival and pick-up times each day.

Holidays

The VCU CDC follows the University calendar (http://academiccalendars.vcu.edu/) and is closed on the holidays and staff development days listed below. In addition to the dates below, the CDC may be closed on other dates for staff development.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Annual Professional Development - Spring
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Annual Professional Development - August
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Break
- Winter Break
- Fall & Spring Parent-Teacher Conference Days

*Professional Development dates announced yearly

Arrival Procedures

Your child must be accompanied to his/her room on arrival and be within sight and sound at all times.

There is a passenger loading zone at the Morris Street entrance and four visitor spaces in our parking lot to use when dropping off and picking up your child. Please use your VCU distributed parking pass when in the parking lot.

Updated August 2016
Departure Procedures and Late Fee Policy

The CDC closes at 5:45 p.m. Children must be picked up and on their way out of the building by that time. There is a late pick up fee of $5.00 per minute after 5:45 p.m. This fee is charged to your account with payment due no later than the next scheduled tuition payment. If your child is picked up late more than five times over the course of the fiscal year (June 30-July 1), the CDC reserves the right to disenroll your child from the program. Families will be given written warning a month prior to disenrollment.

In the event a child is still at the CDC at 6:15pm and we are unable to contact the parent or authorized emergency contact, the child will be released to a Child Protective Services worker with the Department of Social Services.

Your child will not be released to anyone except those authorized individuals listed on your Emergency Contact Form. The CDC will ask you to update your emergency contact forms at the beginning of each academic year. It is your responsibility to update administration personnel if your information changes during the year. Anyone on your pick-up list must provide valid identification.

Cell Phone Use

In order to encourage meaningful interactions between families and teachers, as well as smooth transitions between families and children, we ask that you do not use your cell phone while at the CDC. Please refrain from talking on your phone or texting while at the CDC.

Building Security

The doors to the building are kept locked at all times, but we still need your help keeping our building secure. For security purposes, all parents must use their VCU ID cards to access the building. Please do so each time you enter the building. As a reminder, when you enter the building, please do not hold the door for those behind you. This is the only way we can insure appropriate monitoring of who comes in and out of the building.

Updated August 2016
If you are VCU faculty, staff, or student, you may have your VCU ID card activated by the Center Coordinator by providing her with the information on your card.

If you are the partner/spouse of a VCU faculty, staff, or student you may receive an Affiliate ID Card in order to access the building. A charge of $20 is required for Affiliate ID cards. Please contact the Center Coordinator to complete the necessary paperwork.

**Documentation**

In accordance with VDSS licensing standards, we must have up to date information on families and children. You will be asked to review family information forms annually. Should any information (e.g. contact information like phone or email addresses, employer, home address, dietary needs, etc.) change over the course of the year, we ask that you inform administration in writing.

**FEES**

For 2016-17, the rates and fees are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition Rate</strong></td>
<td>as of 9/1/16 (set annually)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,050/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>10% sibling discount on lowest child’s tuition</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Fee</td>
<td>$25 fee when application is submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Fee</td>
<td>No registration fee as of 09/01/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Advisory Council Fees</td>
<td>$50/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*To be paid per child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Payment Fee</td>
<td>$10 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Considered late after the 16th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Pick Up Fee</td>
<td>$5 per minute after 5:45pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Updated August 2016*
Application & Registration Fees

There will be no registration fees as of 09/01/2016. There will be a $25 application fee beginning 09/01/2016.

Tuition

Tuition rates will be set annually, and will go into effect at the beginning of each fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2017). Beginning 9/1/15, the tuition rates are “locked in” at the time of enrollment. For families with more than one child, there will be a 10% discount for the oldest child.

To ensure increased revenue to meet increasing costs, tuition likely will be increased each year; however, to prevent any individual child’s tuition from increasing during attendance, families will “lock in” their rate at the time of enrollment.

The first month’s tuition is due BEFORE the first day your child attends. Tuition is paid monthly and is not pro-rated. It is a flat fee; therefore, there are no deductions for vacations, illness, holidays or other days that the CDC may be closed. Tuition is payable by check, credit card, or money order. We cannot accept cash or post-dated checks. VCU employees have the option of participating in payroll deduction to automatically pay tuition on the 1st and 16th of each month. We strongly encourage all VCU employees to participate in payroll deduction.

The Assistant Director is responsible for billing and payments, and questions about your accounts.

Other tuition policies include:

- Tuition payments are due on the first of each month and will be considered late after the 16th.

- There will be $10.00 late fee posted to your account each day after the 16th – except for those who participate in payroll deduction. If your tuition is late more than five times over the course of the fiscal year (June 30-July 1), the CDC reserves the right to disenroll you from the program. Families will be given written warning a month prior to disenrollment.

Updated August 2016
• Payments should be put in the payment box on the first floor. A receipt will be prepared for you for your records.

• Tuition is assigned according to the child’s date of entry.

• If more than one child in a family is enrolled, a 10% sibling discount will be applied to the child with the lowest tuition.

• If a family leaves VCU, their tuition will increase $100/month if they choose to remain enrolled for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Dependent Care Pre-Tax Benefits Program
(Flexible Spending Accounts)

The CDC supports participation in the Pre-tax Dependent Care Flexible Reimbursement Program (Flexible Spending Accounts) available to full-time VCU employees. Participation is elective and must be set up in the University Human Resources Benefits Office at 804-827-1770. Annual receipts will be distributed in January.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Fees

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is responsible for depositing and distributing the annual activity fee of $50.00. This fee is due and payable to the PAC at the same time as the annual registration fee in September. The fee should be dropped in the PAC mailbox located in the front stairwell. The PAC fee is due for every child enrolled and is non-refundable. The PAC fee will only be waived if you have registered your child/paid the fee after May 1st.

The money is used for a variety of activities that enrich the children’s experience at the CDC; for example, special classes or activities, equipment for the classrooms and playground as well as teacher appreciation or any other expense deemed appropriate by the PAC.

Updated August 2016
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Program Design

The building that houses the VCU CDC has three floors. Its unique design influences the educational program somewhat. Rooms G1 and G2 are designed for the younger children approximately 16-36 months old. Rooms 101 and 102 are for children approximately 30-42 months. Rooms 201 and 202 are for children approximately 36 months-Kindergarten entry. There is some age overlap on each of the floors to provide for developmental transitions. Rooms G1, G2, 101, and 102 have diaper changing accommodations. Children in rooms 201 and 202 must be toilet trained. The CDC enrolls approximately 68 children. The number of children per classroom is shaped by adult:child ratios according to guidelines set forth by the Virginia Department of Social Services and is influenced by more stringent ratio recommendations from NAEYC.

Curriculum and Assessment

The CDC uses Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos, and The Creative Curriculum for Preschool. The two curriculums are comprehensive approaches that help teachers with the classroom environment, activities, and how to work with children on different developmental levels. Each curriculum includes a continuum of 38 learning and development objectives (social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, the arts, and English language acquisition, when appropriate) to help guide planning so that all aspects of development can be achieved. This creates the solid foundation for future development in all domains.

CDC teachers also utilize Teaching Strategies GOLD®, an online assessment tool, to assist them in monitoring each child’s growth and development. Using The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum as a guide, teachers maintain individual portfolios and complete checkpoints for every child. The portfolios include up-to-date developmental checklists from Teaching Strategies GOLD®, on-going assessment information,

Updated August 2016
and work samples. All CDC teachers hired before March 2012 attended a day-long training in the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD.

Children’s portfolios are shared with parents during the scheduled Parent-Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. The conference in the fall is planned to discuss initial assessment and observations of the children. The conference held in the spring provides an opportunity for families and teachers to discuss progress throughout the year.

*Developmental Concerns: If a family has concerns about a child’s development, they should reach out to the Family Liaison.*

In addition to ongoing assessments completed via Creative Curriculum, the Ages and Stages®, and Ages and Stages: Social Emotional® assessment tools are available for teachers and parents when specific needs arise.

**Transition**

Since the CDC tries to maintain full enrollment, the majority of transitions will happen in late summer/early fall as older children leave the CDC for kindergarten. Spaces to move children during the program year occur primarily through attrition.

Transitioning a child from one classroom to another will be determined by age, developmental readiness, availability of space, and other factors such as length of time in the classroom. In accordance with NAEYC standard 10.B.15, we aim to keep each child in his or her classroom placements for at least 9 months to a year. Depending upon a child’s age at entry, s/he may experience up to 3 transitions. While most classroom placements will be 9-12 months, children who start at the CDC under 2 may have at least one placement that is 2 years.

The transition process begins as teachers inform the Family Liaison of a child’s readiness to move into the next classroom. After identifying the child(ren), the Family Liaison will review any available openings and discuss the possibility of transitioning with the family. Transitions are typically planned about a month in advance.

*Updated August 2016*
A typical transition schedule for a child between classrooms would include:

- Day 1: Visit new class for circle time and outside time.
- Day 2: Visit new class for the entire morning, including lunch.

A typical transition for a new incoming child would include:

- Family Liaison will work with the family on their child’s transition to set up a schedule before the start date that works for the child and makes the transition as smooth as possible.

**Program to Program**

As children prepare to move from the CDC to another program such as a kindergarten or another childcare center, our goal is to make the transition as smooth as possible for both the children and their families. The Family Liaison will work with the family and staff to determine the best way to help the child transition to the new setting. Information regarding Kindergarten transition will be shared annually. See Withdrawal Section pg. 30.

**Program Evaluation**

Program evaluation is continuous and takes place on a formal and informal basis. This includes strategic planning and feedback from the community. Staff, parents, and members of the VCU community are encouraged to provide feedback regularly and assist with problem solving issues regarding program operation.

Families and staff are asked to evaluate the program annually using the NAEYC accreditation materials in addition to those developed by the CDC. The evaluations are done anonymously, and are summarized and reviewed accordingly. An evaluation summary will be shared with employees, parents and appropriate VCU officials. These results are the basis of an

*Updated August 2016*
improvement plan to correct deficiencies, meet the needs of the families, and improve services for all.

During a year when the program is seeking re-accreditation, a more comprehensive evaluation takes place. This process affords the program an opportunity to review every aspect of its operation in an organized manner. Goals and objectives are established based on the results of these evaluation as well as information gathered at parent and staff meetings and during committee work.

The CDC is engaged in a strategic planning and continuous quality improvement process that began in 2014. Family feedback is important to this process, and we hope you will take advantage of opportunities to participate.

Outdoor Policy

Outside time is important part of our curriculum. Children need to be outside daily. Even when it is cold, children need to work their large muscles, release energy, and get some fresh air. Medical experts say that being outside, even on a cold day, is better for children than spending the whole day in a warm room exposed to everyone’s germs. Because of licensing requirements and staff/child ratio issues, we are not able to keep individual children inside when his/her class is outside. If a child is well enough to attend the CDC, he or she needs to be able to participate fully in the day’s activities, including going outside.

Decisions on outside time are based on recommendations made by the Child Care Weather Watch (http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hcci/common/pdf/weatherwatch.pdf) and daily air quality forecasts provided by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Air/AirQualityForecasting.aspx). The following guidelines determine whether or not the children are taken outside to play:

- If the temperature is below 32°F, and/or in the event of rain or snow, the children will only go outside for 15 minutes. Teachers are asked to use discretion and consult with administrative staff if they have questions.

Updated August 2016
regarding whether or not children are to go out on a particular day.

- Children will go outside for a minimum of 45 minutes to 1 hour every morning and afternoon according to each classroom’s regular schedule, provided it is 32ºF or higher. We are required to offer one hour of outdoor play every morning and afternoon, weather permitting.

- Families are required to provide appropriate clothing for their child(ren). On cold days, children should be sent to the CDC with a warm coat, hat, and gloves or mittens. They should wear clothing that is layered for warmth in cold weather. They will bundle up when they go outside.

- If the temperature is higher than 32ºF, but the wind chill factor brings the temperature below 32ºF, the children will stay in their classroom or use the multi-purpose room according to the schedule for that room.

- Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk will be identified by announcements from local health authorities or through ozone alerts. Such air quality conditions shall require that children remain indoors where air conditioners ventilate indoor air to the outdoors. Children will not play outdoors when local health authorities announce the air quality is unhealthy.

- Children will be protected from the sun by using shade. You must provide appropriate sunscreen for your child(ren). If you would like the staff to administer sunscreen, please complete the MAT Written Consent Form. During physical activity in warm weather, children will be well-hydrated and given the opportunity to drink water before, during, and after the activity.

**Inclement Weather Procedure**

All announcements regarding facility closings will come through VCU Alerts and may not specifically mention the VCU CDC. When it snows or severe weather exists, the CDC follows the same schedule as announced by the University. During times of
threatening weather conditions, you are advised to stay tuned to any of the major area radio and/or television stations. You may also call 828-6736 (OPEN) for information about University closings, delayed openings or early closings. Please note that specific closing announcements will be made for the University’s Academic Campus, separate from other state agencies. The VCU CDC is considered a part of the class schedule for the University’s Monroe Academic Campus. For additional information, please go to www.vcu.edu/alert.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the curriculum and include walks around the neighborhood and campus, picnics in the park, visits to places like Maymont Park, the Pumpkin Patch, Richmond Metro Zoo, and the Children’s Museum. We welcome your suggestions for trips. Parents are encouraged to attend field trips as their schedule permits.

The CDC makes arrangements with an outside commercial carrier for field trips which require transportation. On occasion, staff and families may transport children in personal cars. The required child-staff ratio will be maintained at all times during all field trips. Safety measures, such as, but not limited to accountability for children before, during and after a trip as well as children remaining seated while on the bus will be adhered to at all times. Families will be notified in writing of any upcoming field trips requiring transportation (bus, cars, etc.).

Positive Guidance and Discipline

The staff of the VCU CDC believe that positive guidance and redirection are excellent teaching processes that allow children to develop responsibility for themselves. This helps children develop independence and self-reliance. Inappropriate behavior is dealt with through positive guidance, a process that includes:

- Expecting and accepting behavior that is appropriate to the child’s developmental level;
- Helping children use words and appropriate behaviors to express their feelings;

Updated August 2016
• Learning simple techniques for resolving conflicts;
• Directing or redirecting children to appropriate activities and behaviors; and
• Setting limits that are clear, fair, consistent, understandable and developmentally-appropriate.

All staff at the Center must use calm and quiet voice tones and speak to children in a manner that is understandable for them. Teachers are expected to be role models so that the children learn appropriate ways of dealing with anger, frustration, and conflict. In accordance with NAEYC required criteria 1.B.09, at no time will physical punishment, psychological abuse, coercion or verbal abuse be used as a behavior management tool. When necessary, a child may be given time to calm down and re-group by being separated briefly from the group.

Should a child demonstrate persistent challenging behaviors, teachers, families and the director will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child’s inclusion and success. The CDC may also access specialized outside consultants, with parental permission, to observe, assess, and make recommendations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Emergency Treatment

In the event of an injury or illness requiring immediate emergency medical treatment, every effort will be made to contact the family. However, if the family cannot be reached immediately, and treatment cannot be delayed, a teacher or staff member will accompany the injured or ill child to the preferred hospital listed on the Child Health Information form. If the CDC experiences a Center-wide emergency, children will be taken to MCV (1250 East Marshall Street) or the nearest Emergency Room (if not on the CDC premises). The signed Emergency Data Form will accompany the child.

In accordance with NAEYC criteria 5.A.03 & 10.D.09, all full-time teachers are certified to administer basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Several full-time staff have

Updated August 2016
also received *Medication Administration Training (MAT)*. The MAT is a competency-based course approved by the Board of Nursing and Virginia Department of Social Services to train providers who work in child day programs to safely administer medication to children.

**Health Information**

Health and safety information collected from families during the enrollment period are kept in a locked closet in the main office. Please let the CDC know of any updates or changes to your child’s information as soon as possible. The content of your child’s file is confidential but will be made available to teachers, administrators, parents and regulatory authorities, on requests. See Confidentiality Section, pg. 6. Families will be asked to review and initial that the *DSS Child Registration Form* we have (includes parent/guardian information, authorized pick-up names, and emergency information) bi-annually – during the fall and spring Parent-Teacher conference times. Families must notify Administration in writing of any allergies, and must obtain an allergy action plan from their health care provider.

**Minor Injuries**

First Aid kits are readily accessible to all groups and located in each classroom, outside on playgrounds, and on field trips. An incident report is written at the time of the accident describing the accident, injury, and actions taken. Families will be notified of minor injuries at the end of the day and asked to sign the incident report. Examples of minor accidents include: small scratches, cuts, scrapes, bites, splinters, and minor bruises or discoloration of the skin.

**Dress and Personal Needs**

Please supply two complete changes of labeled clothing to be kept at the CDC. We encourage parents to make sure that extra clothes kept at the CDC be appropriate for the time of year and weather. When dressing your child, please keep in mind that children are encouraged to develop self-sufficiency when taking

*Updated August 2016*
care of their bodies and personal needs. Consequently, please dress children in clothes they can put on and take off with little assistance. For instance, it may be difficult for children to use the bathroom independently if they have to struggle to take off or put on body suits, onesies, or overalls.

Please note that while every effort is made to keep children’s clothes clean we do encourage independence during mealtimes and we do use paints, glues, and other materials in our art and science activities that may at times get messy. We recommend that children not come to school in their “finest clothes.”

For children not yet toilet trained, we ask that you maintain an adequate supply of diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream, when appropriate. Teachers will inform you when your child is in need of additional diapers and/or wipes.

**Building Emergencies**

Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Drills for evacuation of the Center are practiced monthly. The CDC also has an emergency preparedness plan in place that was created in collaboration with the VCU Police.

**Administration of Medication**

Medication will only be administered by staff who have participated in Medication Administration Training (MAT). **Any medication administered to children by CDC staff is required to be accompanied by a signed MAT Written Medication Consent Form.**

Administration tools, such as dosing spoons, oral medication syringes, pill crushers and medicine cups must be provided by parents. All tools must be labeled with the child’s first and last name. Over-the-counter medication must be in its original container and be labeled with the child’s first and last names.

Prescription medication should be in a child resistant container. It must have the original pharmacy label that includes: child’s first and last name, authorized prescriber’s name, pharmacy name and telephone number, dates prescription was filled, name of the

*Updated August 2016*
medication, route of administration, dosage of the medication, how often to give the medication and date the medication is to be discontinued or length of time in day, the medication is to be given.

All staff may administer non-prescription topical creams for diaper rash, sunscreen, skin ailments, or bug repellent upon parental request if accompanied by a Non-Prescription Over-The-Counter Skin Product Form signed by a parent. The form will be updated as products change or expire. Expired products will be sent home with families for disposal. If the product has not been picked up within 14 days, the CDC is required to dispose of the product.

In accordance with NAEYC standard 5.A.07, when public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET or an acceptable alternative approved by the public health authority will be used. Staff will apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parent permission (i.e., signed Non-Prescription Over-The-Counter Skin Product Form).

Child Illness

Our illness policy is based on Academy of American Pediatrics and recommendations from Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools. You can use the information in the publication here to see if your child is sick and should remain at home: http://reader.aappublications.org/managing-infectious-diseases-in-child-care-and-schools-3rd-edition/1

Your adherence to these policies will benefit everyone. Children, families, staff, and the VCU community all benefit when we can reduce the incidence of illness at the CDC. You can assist us by:

- Promptly reporting any infectious illness of a child or family member;
- Planning for alternative care when your child is sick; and
- Letting your doctor know that your child is in a child development center when discussing his/her health.

Updated August 2016
Children attending the CDC are expected to be able to participate in all activities. Families are responsible for bringing their children to the CDC in good health and capable of participating in all activities. Outside play is an integral part of a healthy day at the CDC. If children are well enough to come to the CDC, they are well enough to play outside. Please do not ask that your child be kept inside.

Children with short-term contagious or communicable diseases are not allowed to attend the CDC. This CDC is not licensed to care for sick children and is not staffed to provide one-on-one medical supervision. Please call the office if your child will not be at the Center due to illness. **If he or she is at home with a communicable illness other than a routine cold, please inform the office of the illness so that parents of other children can be alerted to watch for symptoms.** Families will be made aware of possible communicable illnesses (without identifying individual children) via a memo posted in the classroom and email. We strongly suggest that families make alternative childcare arrangements when children are sick.

When, in the opinion of the Center’s staff, a child arrives ill to the Center, the staff member cannot admit the child. When children become ill at the Center, the Center will immediately notify parents and if necessary isolate children (with staff in main office) until they are picked up. **Families must pick up sick children within one hour of being called.**

Based on recommendations from *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools*, please see the attached signs and checklist to determine if your child is sick and should remain at home.

**Meals**

The CDC serves breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Breakfast is served from 8:30 to 9:00 AM. Lunch is served between 11:45 and noon, and snack is between 2:30 and 3:00 PM.

Because some of the children enrolled at the CDC have food allergies and/or dietary restrictions, it is the policy of the center that children not bring food from home. If you are interested in
bringing in outside food to your child’s classroom, please collaborate with your child's teacher in regards to allergies. Healthy treats such as fruit are always encouraged.

The only exception to the no outside food policy applies solely to children with special dietary needs identified by the child’s physician. Special dietary needs of children are documented during enrollment. Families will be expected to complete the Special Diet Form and provide the center with a written statement from the child’s doctor for special diets. Classroom and kitchen staff will be informed of the special needs before the child’s first day. Any special dietary changes or needs arising after the child enters the program must be brought to the attention of the Administration.

Children will be encouraged in positive ways to eat the food served at breakfast, lunch, and snack. Mealtime is a social time for children, and staff should encourage children to engage in conversation. Classroom employees are expected to provide encouragement by sitting with the children during lunch to initiate conversation about the foods being served and encourage good eating habits. Children should be offered opportunities to try different foods, but never forced to eat. Family style meal service is practiced in all classrooms. The weekly menu can be found on the CDC website at [www.soe.vcu.edu/cdc](http://www.soe.vcu.edu/cdc).

We will provide young toddlers with sippy cups until they are ready for a regular cup. We welcome family input on when they feel their child is developmentally ready to use a non-lidded cup. We encourage you to join your child for lunch. It is a good chance for you to get to know the other children and they always enjoy a visitor. Please let us know by 10:00 a.m. on the day you will be joining us for lunch so that we can include you in our lunch count.

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

We encourage you to become involved in our program! We promote frequent and open communication between parents and the CDC. In addition, we want you to feel free to talk to the staff and teachers anytime. Your teacher is a wonderful resource for information about your child. Our doors are always open! Please.
feel free to contact the Family Liaison for opportunities to volunteer and participate in CDC activities.

Family Communication

Below are a few of the methods we use to communicate with parents and families:

- **Daily or weekly notes** (depending on the age of the child) from the classroom teachers
- **Weekly e-mails and photo journals through Shutterfly**
- **Face to face conversations**
- **Phone calls**
- **Lesson plans** posted outside the classroom door and emailed to parents on Mondays.
- **Classroom Parent Boards** can be found in each classroom. They are a great tool to help families keep up with the latest events, lesson plans, classroom information, and schedules.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences** are held twice a year or at your request. Please feel free to request a conference anytime to discuss concerns and questions about your child.
- **Parent Notices, memos, announcements**, etc. are delivered in a variety of ways: placed in children’s folders, posted on doors or in classrooms, posted on our web site (www.soe.vcu.edu/cdc) or sent through email. We encourage all parents to provide the CDC with their email address, as this is the most environmentally friendly and expedient method of communication.
- **Back to School Night** is held annually during the fall semester.
- **Children’s assessments and portfolios** are reviewed with families during Parent-Teacher conferences
- **Center Newsletter** – *The newsletter is published* quarterly and is a good way to keep up with CDC happenings and current information on parenting. It is sent out via email and posted on our web site.
- **Center-Family Information Board** to the left of the front door includes a monthly calendar, upcoming parenting
workshops, CDC events, and family friendly community events.

- **Staff Messages:** Each staff member has a mailbox located in the office area on the second floor. If you are unable to talk to a staff member, the mailbox is a good method of ensuring that your message gets to the right person.

- **Web page** at [http://www.soe.vcu.edu/cdc](http://www.soe.vcu.edu/cdc).

- **Classroom Participation:** You can participate in your child’s class by:
  - helping or observing in the classroom
  - reading to the class
  - participating in special events, parties, or field trips
  - eating lunch with your child
  - sharing your talents with the class
  - donating materials

**Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**

The purpose of the *Parent Advisory Council* (PAC) is to act as an advisory body to the VCU CDC. Its aim is to promote the welfare of the children in the CDC, home, and community; and to support a true collaboration between parents and the CDC. We strive for families and staff to work cooperatively to establish in each child a firm foundation for the life-long process of learning. PAC will also act as a voice to address the needs and interests of the parents and families of the CDC and will assist in raising funds for special projects.

All families are automatically members of PAC. You are encouraged to attend PAC meetings. Meetings are held on a monthly basis. Child care and dinner is provided. Families may become actively involved in:

- Planning parent meetings;
- Working as a team with the staff to enhance the Center’s program; and,
- Working on projects to provide materials and equipment for the CDC.

*Updated August 2016*
Parent Resources and Translation

The CDC works diligently to provide families with current information regarding community resources (e.g. information on pediatricians, dentists, early intervention), educational programs (e.g. transition to Kindergarten information), family activities (e.g., free family activities around town), parenting workshops and the like. Information is provided in various formats including but not limited to a family resource binder that can be found on the desk on the second floor, the bulletin board by the front door and in each classroom, emails sent to all parents on the CDC list serve, PAC meetings, and the monthly calendar that can be found on the CDC web page and in each classroom.

Several staff members and parents who speak multiple languages have volunteered their services should a parent need a translator for teacher meetings (e.g. open house, parent-teacher conferences, etc.) or other communication. At the time of this printing, the following languages were available: French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Ukrainian, and Polish. Should you require translation services, please notify the Family Liaison.

Withdrawal from the Program

If a family decides to withdraw their child from the program, a withdrawal contract must be completed at least two weeks prior to the child’s last day. If this notice is not given, they will be charged for at least two weeks, even if the child does not attend during that time.

Withdrawing a child from the CDC is just as important as the enrollment process. The child has made friends, developed relationships with the staff, and has adjusted to a daily routine. The child needs to be prepared in advance by parents and teachers that they will be leaving the program.

Children may be withdrawn from the CDC for the following reasons:

- At the family’s request with 14 days’ notice in writing;
- When the child is enrolled in Kindergarten or is no longer eligible;

Updated August 2016
• When the child is picked up late from the CDC on more than 5 occasions over the course of the fiscal year (June 30-July 1);
• When fees have been late on more than five occasions over the course of the fiscal year (June 30-July 1); or,
• When it has been determined by the Director and Staff, with the family, that services are not meeting the needs of the child.

Child Abuse and Neglect

An important factor in providing quality care to young children is ensuring their health and safety by protecting them from abuse and neglect both in their homes and in our care. **We are REQUIRED BY LAW to report suspected child abuse or neglect.** If a staff member suspects abuse or neglect, the following steps will be taken:

1. They will report the concern immediately to the Director;
2. They will write a detailed report of the situation or indicators of the suspected abuse or neglect; and
3. They will comply with all directives from the Director and Child Protective Services as mandated.
SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read the 2016-17 VCU Child Development Center Family Handbook and agree to comply with all policies and procedures set forth herein.

Please sign and return to the Family Liaison.

___________________________
Parent Signature

___________________________
Child’s Name

___________________________
Classroom

___________________________
Date

Updated August 2016