Early Childhood Education Center

Family Handbook 2026-2027

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This handbook shares important guidelines and procedures related to the program. Please read this information carefully and sign the handbook receipt to indicate you have been informed of our rules and protocols. If you have questions or concerns about the information, please contact your child's teacher or the program director.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center provides a high-quality early childhood care and education program that allows each child the respect and opportunity to develop physically, socially, intellectually, and emotionally to his/her full potential.

PHILOSOPHY

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center provides a high-quality early childhood care and education program that allows each child the respect and opportunity to develop physically, socially, intellectually, and emotionally to his/her full potential. The classroom is a mini-society and teaching should reflect and establish the skills and talents necessary for each child to reach his/her full potential. The teacher and center staff will strive to assure that the learning environment is one which is loving and secure. The environment will also provide avenues for future success in the larger technological, international society. Our teaching will reflect a high regard for each child's uniqueness with respect and understanding of societal and cultural diversity. This is done with sensitive, caring staff working in partnership with parents and families.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been determined for the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center:

*To provide opportunities for our children to develop an understanding of self and others through developmentally appropriate activities, which encourage the development of physical, emotional, and social skills and intellectual growth.

*To provide a program both indoors and outdoors which fosters optimal growth and development through opportunities for exploration and learning while protecting and enhancing the health and safety of the children and adults.

*To provide a program where parents are kept well informed about daily events at all times and are encouraged to be both observers and participants in their child's development.

*To provide a staff that is caring, recognizes and meets the needs of the children, and promotes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

*To provide a qualified Director who effectively attends to the needs of the children, parents, and staff, and conducts systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the program and staff in meeting these objectives

PROGRAM

Programming will include Infants (six weeks – 18 months), Toddlers (18 months –36 months), Preschool (3 year olds) and Pre-K (4 & 5 year olds), plus opportunities for mixed-age group activities.

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center uses The Early Learning Guidelines: Nebraska's Birth to Five Learning and Development Standards. These guidelines are based on research and evidence about child development and practices that result in the best outcomes for young children. The document provides information related to seven domains or areas of learning and development: Social & Emotional Development, Approaches to

Learning, Health & Physical Development, Language & Literacy Development, Mathematics, Science and Creative Arts.

Another program used is Second Step; a universal, classroom-based social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum designed to increase kids' school success, promote social-emotional competence and self-regulation, and decrease problem behavior. This curriculum promotes early learning in the classroom, school readiness, and social / life success by directly teaching students the skills to learn, be empathetic, manage emotions, make friends, and solve problems. These skills are taught through puppet scripts, real life pictures, games, and songs. The second step skills language is incorporated throughout the Early Childhood Education Center expectations for students in all classrooms.

At the center we use The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos® and The Creative Curriculum for Preschool® as a framework for our educational programing. Creative Curriculum focuses on: Developing confidence and creativity to help students use their critical thinking skills. Offering a variety of studies for students to investigate exploration and discovery as a way of learning. Showing growth in six areas of development when used as an assessment tool and is linked directly to our GOLD Assessment.

Classrooms utilize the GOLD assessment to evaluate the children's progress of development in the areas of Social-Emotional; Physical; Language; Cognitive; Literacy; Mathematics; Science and Technology; Social Studies; The Arts; and English Language Acquisition. This ongoing assessment tool will also be used to help plan learning activities based on the developmental needs of the children. Each child's progress will be reported to their parents or guardians in the fall semester and spring semester.

The Center will incorporate social skill development strategies designed by the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid model is a framework for promoting social emotional development in infants and young children through the use of positive behavior supports. This model provides support for children learning social competence and addresses challenging behaviors that may occur in the classroom.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Each classroom follows a daily schedule to provide a consistent and predictable routine for the children. See the Daily Schedule for your child(ren)'s specific age group. These are posted in each classroom.

Infant and Toddler programs will be planned using the Creative Curriculum to assure the individual needs of each child are met in the areas of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Children will be exposed to a variety of experiences to enhance growth and development in these areas, to include being read to. Children will participate in self-directed, center-based play. This approach encourages learning through child directed, hands on experiences. We believe this is the best way to tailor our program to meet each child's individual needs and to encourage each child to successfully develop to his/her full potential. Families will receive a monthly center activity calendar via e-mail to inform them of upcoming themes and activities.

The daily schedule for the Toddler 2's, 3's, Preschool and Pre-k will include: large motor activities, both indoor and out; fine motor activities, with manipulatives in the pre-math area and with a variety of table toys; sensory play in water and sand tables; discovery and exploratory activities in the science and social science areas; language development in the reading & listening center, writing center, and dramatic play area; social skills in the dramatic play and puzzles and games areas. There will be multiple times when they will be read to and have the opportunity to read books themselves and also music and movement activities. The children will engage in a variety of small and large group activities designed around the thematic integrated curriculum, the Creative Curriculum. The Second Step curriculum will also be used to help foster appropriate social skills for the transition into a public-school program. Just like the younger classrooms, families will receive a monthly center activity calendar via e-mail to inform them of upcoming themes and activities.

It is important children have the opportunity to explore the world around them while in a safe, nurturing environment. Opportunities will be provided for just such exploration, through play, as a part of the daily program. Interest areas are found in each classroom setting and are portrayed in a developmental way that meets age criteria. These interest areas include blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, art, library, discovery, sand and water, music and movement, cooking, technology, and outdoors. Here are some examples of what those areas may look like;

Blocks: Blocks are one of the most valuable learning materials in a preschool classroom. They come in different sizes and shapes. For this reason, when children begin building with blocks, they learn math concepts such as the number of blocks that fill a certain space. They compare the height of their buildings and learn about geometric shapes. When they lift, shove, stack, and move blocks, they explore weight and size. Each time they use blocks, children are making decisions about how to build a structure or solve a construction problem. Children often use blocks to recreate the world around them---a road, a house, the zoo. They work together and learn to cooperate and make friends. Teachers encourage children to talk about what they are doing to promote language development. Teachers also talk with children and ask questions to expand on their block play.

Dramatic Play: During dramatic play children take on different roles and recreate real-life experiences. They use props and make-believe to deepen their understanding about the world in which they live. The ability to pretend is very important to a child's development. Children who know how to make believe develop a good vocabulary, which is important to reading. They learn to cooperate with others and solve problems, are able to think abstractly---all-important skills for success in school. When children pretend, they have to recall experiences and re-create them. To do this, they need to picture their experiences in their minds.

Toys and Games: Toys and games include puzzles, various table blocks, and small construction materials such as Legos, board games, and collections of objects. When children use toys and games, they explore how things work, learn to be creative and use their imaginations, strengthen and control the small muscles in their hands, work cooperatively and solve problems, and learn math ideas and concepts. When children use toys and games in the classroom, teachers encourage them to talk about what they are doing.

Art: Art is an important part of the curriculum. Every day children can find a variety of art materials available on classroom shelves. Drawing, painting, pasting, molding and constructing are not only enjoyable but also provide important opportunities for learning. Children express original ideas and feelings, improve their coordination, learn to recognize colors and textures, and develop creativity and pride in their accomplishments by exploring and using art materials. When children are engaged in art activities, teachers talk to them about what they are doing and ask questions that encourage them to think about their ideas and express feelings. Teachers say things that will encourage children to be creative and confident.

Library: A library area is an important part of the classroom and of a child's life. It's where children gain the foundation for reading and writing. It's also a place where children can relax and enjoy the wonderful world of children's books. Teachers encourage children to look at books, to listen to audible stories, to retell stories, and to scribble and "write" throughout the day. Sometimes children dictate stories to teachers, which are recorded as books. Teachers read stories to children every day. Reading introduces new ideas, helps children learn how to handle problems that come up in life, and mostly encourage them to develop a love for books. As children listen to teachers read, their own reading skills begin to develop.

Discovery: Young children have many questions about the world around them. A discovery area is a place where children can explore and investigate to answer their questions. Children observe, experiment, measure, solve problems, take things apart, and explore the materials and living things that are displayed. When children are in a discovery area, they do what scientists do---ask questions, plan and conduct investigations, gather information, construct an explanation, and communicate findings. They also learn important concepts in science as they study

plants, animals, magnets, properties of materials, light shadows, how things work, rainbows, our body, our senses, how they move and change, and more. In addition to learning science content, they learn how to solve problems together and how to communicate with others.

Sand and Water: Both sand and water are natural materials for learning. When children pour water into measuring cups, they are exploring math concepts. When they drop corks, stones, feathers, or marbles into a tub of water, they are scientists exploring which objects float and which sink. When they comb sand into patterns, they learn about both math and art.

Music and Movement: There is a lot of singing and creative movement in the Early Childhood programing. Singing and moving to music gives the children a chance to hear and appreciate different kinds of music, express themselves through their movement, and practice new skills. Children love the daily time for singing together and it helps them learn to cooperate in a group.

Cooking: When children cook they have an opportunity to learn about nutrition, to be creative, and to prepare their own healthy snacks. Cooking teaches a lot of academic skills, too. When children learn to follow picture recipe cards, they develop skills they need to read and write. Measuring 1 cup of flour and pouring $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of lemon juice into batter gives them a lesson in math. When children cook, teachers talk about what they are doing and why. Children become scientists, observing what happens to flour when water is added and predicting how high a muffin tin should be filled so the batter doesn't overflow. When special foods are prepared from each family, a child learns to appreciate a variety of cultures.

Technology: Computers and I-Pads are learning tools for children. Children learn to be comfortable with technology, beginning reading and writing skills, math skills and concepts such as counting, how to express themselves creatively, and how to solve problems and begin to do research. Teachers encourage children to work at the computer in pairs or small groups. This helps children learn from each other and develops their social skills at the same time.

Outdoors: Physical exercise and fresh air are important for children's health and well-being. Teachers take children outdoors every day so they can run, jump, swing, climb, and use all the large muscles in their bodies. They run around, breathe in the fresh air, look at the clouds, or catch a ball or a bug. Children lie on the ground and watch clouds and birds, or they climb high and look down. Teachers talk to children about the things they see, hear, touch, and feel so they become aware of changes in the weather, the seasons, the growth of plants, and the animals. Playing outdoors can help children learn to notice and appreciate changes in nature, to discover how water puddles after a rain and disappears when the sun comes out, to follow shadows around, and to use their body in increasingly skillful ways.

Writing: The writing center is another way to develop language and literacy through meaningful experience. Young children experiment with writing by drawing, copying, stenciling, tracing, labeling, and inventing their own spelling. A print rich classroom environment motivates children's interest around written language. The writing area provides children with a means to document their ideas, thoughts, and experiences. All levels of writing are applauded!

TRANSITIONING TO A NEW ROOM

When it becomes time for a child to move to a new room, parents will receive a Room Change Notice. This notice will give parents important information about what to expect when their child moves to the new room. It will give parents information about their child's new daily schedule, items requested to be brought, and who their child's new teachers will be. In the weeks prior to the actual room change we will have the child meet the new teachers, visit the room, and even participate in activities in the new room in small time increments. For our Preschool (3 year)

class and Pre-K (4 & 5 year) class they will progress to the new room based on their age. This will correlate with the July 31st date that schools use to distinguish placement into the school system. For example, if your child turns 3 on or before July 31st, they will be in the Preschool (3 year) class. If their birthday is after July 31st, they will remain in the Toddler 3 class. If your child is 4 on or before July 31st, they will be in the Pre-K class. If their birthday is after July 31st, they will be in the Preschool (3 year) class. If you have questions, please reach out.

CENTER LOCATION, HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

LOCATION

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center is located at 2121 College Avenue. Having the center on the UNK campus does allow parents to conveniently visit their children while working or attending classes. The location also enables faculty to use this facility as an observation site for students studying all aspects of child development.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Center will be in operation 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday. The Center will be closed on the following days: **Subject to change in accordance with university updates and weather-related disruptions.**

Independence Day— July 3rd & July 6th
Professional Development/Teacher Work Days—August 3rd & 4th
Labor Day—September 7th
All Staff Professional Development/UNK EC Conference—September 18th
2-hour early Holiday Dismissal—November 25th
Thanksgiving Break-November 26th & 27th
2-hour early Holiday Dismissal—December 23rd
Christmas Break- December 24th-January 4th
New Year's Day—January 1st
Professional Development/Work Day—January 4th
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—January 18th
All Staff Professional Development Day—February 19th
All Staff Professional Development Day—March 19th
2-hour early Holiday Dismissal—March 26th
Professional Development Day—April 9th
Memorial Day—May 31st

SPECIAL/WEATHER CLOSINGS

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center closes when the University of Nebraska at Kearney campus closes. This may be due to inclement weather or special circumstances. This may include full or partial days; 9:30am opening (2hour late start). Information will be distributed via Procare text, email, television, internet, and radio.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Parents must complete all forms in the Enrollment Packet, including the Child Care Contract. A $50.00 non-refundable deposit per child is required to attain enrollment. Enrollment is on a first come, first serve basis.

CENTER WAITING LIST

In the event that the Center enrollment is at capacity, families wishing to enroll will be asked to complete the waiting list form located on the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center web page on the UNK website <unk.edu/plambeckcenter>. When there is an opening in a room the Director will find a child to fill the opening by starting at the beginning of the waiting list looking for a child in the same age group of the opening and schedule needs. The waiting list priority is based on the date the family submitted the waiting list form and is based on age.

TITLE XX ENROLLMENT AND REQUIREMENTS

Families that enroll their children at the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center who receive Title XX aid for their childcare expenses must meet the following requirements:

1. A Provider Authorization from your case worker for the enrollment fee and childcare reimbursement must be received at the Center prior to your child(ren) attending. Families will be notified when their authorization is due to expire and will be responsible to contact their case worker to renew their authorization period.

2. Family Fees designated by DHHS are due by the 5th of the following month, payable to the University of Nebraska at Kearney with "Childcare" written in the memo line of the check.

3. If a family goes past their 5-day absence mark they will be responsible for paying the daily "drop in" rate for their child(ren).

TUITION, FEES AND PROCEDURES FOR PAYMENT

TUITION

Tuition rates are based on your child's age and program classification. When a child reaches an age that qualifies them for a different tuition rate, the new rate will become effective on the first day of the month in which the child's birthday occurs, regardless of the specific birth date within that month.

For example, if a child turns four years old on June 18, the applicable tuition rate for the new age group will take effect on June 1. Families will be notified of any applicable rate changes through their regular billing statement or other center communications.

Families will be required to enroll in the Direct Debit program to process tuition rates. The monthly tuition will be debited out of the enrolled checking account on the 5th of each month, unless the 5th falls on the weekend, then the balanced will be taken on the following Monday.

a. In the event the Direct Debit is returned due to insufficient funds, a $30.00 fee will be added to the family's account and the balance must be paid within 5 days of notification.

ABSENCE POLICY

If your child is going to be gone for a scheduled activity or due to illness, please let us know by calling the center at (308)865-1576. For additional information please see the (ILLNESS & EXCLUSIONS).

LATE PAYMENT POLICY

All tuition, fees, and parent financial obligations are due according to the tuition payment schedule. Any balance not paid by the due date may be assessed a late fee of $15.00. Accounts with outstanding balances may be subject to additional collection efforts, and continued failure to maintain a current account may result in suspension or termination of childcare services. For families receiving Title XX childcare assistance, any required family fee remains the responsibility of the parent and is subject to this policy. The Center reserves the right to waive late fees in extenuating circumstances at its discretion with the VCBF approval.

RETURNED CHECK/DEBIT FEE

There is a $30.00 charge on ALL returned check/debit pulls. If the Center receives a returned check/debit pull, they will then not be able to continue debit pulls or take checks for a minimum of 60 days. All payments will need to be made via cashier's check, money order, or cash.

LATE PICK-UP FEES

Children picked up after 5:30p.m. will be charged $1.00 per child for every minute after the closing time. If late more than three (3) times, that fee will be increased to $2.00 per child per minute. This fee is **due upon pick-up**. The Center has no choice but to call appropriate authorities if a child has not been picked up by one-half hour after closing and if no relative or emergency person can be located.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

PARENTS OF PEC

The Parents of PEC will meet once in the fall and once in the spring to discuss items related to Center programming. Upcoming events and activities are discussed as well as classroom reports. All parents are invited to attend and participate in the parent group. There is also time for parent questions and specific parent activities.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held twice during the school year. One in the fall and one in the spring. These conferences are designed to keep communication lines between the parents and teachers open. During the conferences teachers and parents will discuss developmental assessments of the child, transition to a new room, day to day concerns, and any other issues the parent would like to discuss with their child's teacher.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Please abide by the following rules so we may provide the best possible service and care for your child(ren).

Your child must always be brought into the Center and taken to their classroom by the parent. When leaving the Center, please make sure your child's teacher is aware that you are taking your child.

Whenever a change occurs in the family's information on file, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide the current information to the Center. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services licensing procedures require accurate, updated files. Each academic year, your child's teacher will give you a contact information card for you to update. This will help ensure all information is up to date and correct for families.

All immunizations must be current and documented on the child's file **within the first 30 days of his/her starting date.** Please notify us as your child receives additional immunizations.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please notify us in advance or by 10:00 a.m. that morning.

Please dress your child appropriately for the Center. Make sure clothing is comfortable and washable. Provide warm clothing, boots, hat, and mittens in winter. Outdoor play is very important. Each child should plan on outdoor play when the weather permits. Sunscreen and a water bottle need to be provided by the family for each child.

Please provide a backpack for your Preschool & Pre-K students and take to and from school daily. This helps prepare students for the school routine.

Please provide an extra set of clothing (pants, shirt, socks, and underwear) in case your child spills or someone else spills something on their clothing. Bring these to the Center as soon as possible, clearly marked with the child's name.

All supplies (extra clothing, etc.) must be clearly marked with the child's name and stored in his/her cubbie.

All blankets and pillows for nap time must be provided by the family. Blankets and pillows will be sent home each Friday to be laundered.

If your child has borrowed clothing from the Center, please launder them and return them as soon as possible.

Parents may visit children anytime during the day. Feel free to email or call the director if you have any questions about a visit or would like to schedule a visit.

Children must be picked up on time. We realize emergencies can cause parents to pick up their children later than scheduled. If this happens, please call so we can make the proper arrangements (See LATE FEES). Children will not be dismissed until the parent/guardian comes into the Center to check them out.

Please feel free to share any information about your child that is important for staff to know via email or by phone to your child's teacher and the center director.

If your child is to be picked up by someone other than the parent/guardian, the Director or staff must be notified either in writing or verbally. We will not release any child to any person not known to us. Please have anyone other than yourself, bring a picture i.d. to the Center with them when picking up your child.

It is the parents' responsibility to communicate with the staff about any health/medical problems your child may have.

Open communication between home and the Center promotes the growth and security of the child. You are encouraged to call, email, or send notes to the Center staff whenever a question arises. Please read all parent calendars, newsletters, emails, and other information sent home daily or in a "Friday Folder".

Parents are responsible for checking Procare messages on a regular basis, as Procare serves as a primary communication tool for the center. Important information regarding classroom activities, center updates, and announcements will be communicated through this platform.

All parents are expected to treat **all center staff** with respect and professionalism at all times. This includes tone and language in both spoken and written communication. This policy exists to ensure that every staff member feels valued and is treated with dignity in a professional environment. To enforce this policy, a **three-strike system** will be in place:

1. Verbal reminder of the policy
2. Written warning
3. The family will be removed from the program

Failure to comply with all or any of these parent responsibilities may result in the termination of the family's enrollment at the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parking stalls are available on the south side of The Plambeck Center or in the parking lot. You may also park parallel on the west side of the center. Due to traffic and children going in and out we ask that you maintain **low speeds** and park **appropriately**. All children must be brought into the center by a parent/guardian. Children must be taken to their classroom when arriving, and the parent/guardian must inform the classroom teachers when they are taking their child.

WITHDRAWAL

If you no longer require childcare, please provide two weeks written notification of your child's last day in program.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center uses positive guidance and redirection of the child's behavior. The goal of discipline is to help children build their own self-control; and to modify behavior that is socially unacceptable or non-productive in nature. Discipline is guidance and learning, not punishment. Techniques used will be applied in a way to maintain or enhance the child's self-esteem. Consequences will immediately follow the behavior. Talking with children after they gain self-control will help them understand why the behavior is undesirable. A child may be asked to take a break or have a cool off time, if the child is having a hard time controlling their behavior. These are used just to stop the behavior and let the child gain their composure. Discipline of a child shall be administered by the staff as follows:

The use of discipline shall not be humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful.

Discipline shall be consistent and individualized for each child and appropriate to the child's level of thinking.

It shall be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior.

It shall not be associated with food, rest, toilet training, or isolation.

A variety of discipline techniques will be used, as not all techniques always work with all children. These will include:

-Pyramid Model-Positive Behavior Supports
-Tucker Turtle Social Story
-Super Friend-Social Story
-Redirection
-Behavior Modification
-Break Time
-Calm Down Cube
-Calm Down Box Strategies

In the event a child has to be removed from the classroom setting and has not regained control after 15 minutes or has caused bodily harm to another child or teacher, the parent will be notified, and the incident will be documented. In the event that two (2) documented incidents occur in one day, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day. In the event that the child develops a behavior pattern that disrupts the classroom on a regular basis, the parents will be contacted to meet with the classroom teacher and Director to develop a mutually agreeable plan to address the behavior. In the event that a child causes bodily harm to another child, depending on the severity of the incident, the child may be sent home for the remainder of the day. The Early Childhood Education Center reserves the right to remove any child or family from the program based on the child's compatibility with the Center.

BITING POLICY

Biting is a behavior that is both age and stage appropriate for children under the age of 3 years. Even in high quality settings, where staff is vigilant, a variety of activities are available, and all preventative strategies are used, biting may still occur. Understanding the reasons for biting, taking the necessary preventative measures, and communicating with families will hopefully bring an end to the problem. We understand the frustration from both sides of a biting incident and our staff works very hard to ensure that the biting incident is handled in a way that respects both families involved in the incident.

We handle biting incidents as follows. The child who is bitten is attended to immediately. We take the child to a quiet area and examine the wound and comfort him or her. The Teacher and the child who bit the other child, clean the wound thoroughly and put ice on it to prevent swelling. If the skin is broken, we contact the parent to let them decide if they wish to seek medical consultation. After the child is taken care of, we focus on the biter. We tell the child in a firm voice "no biting" or "biting hurts" to communicate the seriousness of the child's act. We also explain how to touch others gently and demonstrate acceptable behaviors. If the incident happens repeatedly, we have the child continue to help the child that was hurt, but the attention given to the biter may vary to avoid establishing a predictable and routine pattern, which might become positive reinforcement to the biter.

An incident report is completed for both the child who was bitten and the child who bit. With respect to confidentiality, we do not report the specific names to the parents. Some of the strategies the staff may use to prevent biting incidents from happening include:

- We give children wet wash cloths, biting rings, or "chewy's" for biting on. This reduces the sensitivity to their teeth and gums, satisfies their biting needs and reduces the likelihood that they will bite other children.
- We stay close to children who are in a "biting phase" and try to be ready to Intervene quickly before an incident occurs.
- We encourage children to use simple words to communicate their wants and needs. Each time there is a

conflict, we remind the child how to say, "Stop", "No", "Don't", and "Please".

- We provide a generous variety of toys and materials that encourage children to stay involved. Since a large number of incidents occur when children fight over toys, we try to provide duplicates of favorite toys so children will not be tempted to fight.
- We use a lot of praise when children are playing cooperatively with one another.
- We may have the child "visit" another room to break the routine of the biting.
- We consult with parents of habitual biters to find out what strategies they are using at home to help eliminate the behavior.

TERMINATION OF CHILD CARE FOR BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

The child's adjustment to the program and the appropriateness of this particular child-care arrangement for an individual child may not be in the child's best interest. If we do not feel our program is meeting the child's needs, or because of concerns we might have for the Center, we reserve the right to terminate the childcare arrangement on a timeline that is in the child's best interest.

HEALTH POLICIES AND CARE OF ILL CHILDREN

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Health Regulations are regulated by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. For the protection of all children enrolled in the program, the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center requires all children attending the center to be current in receiving the following immunizations recommended by the Center for Disease Control.

*DTaP *Polio *Hib *PCV13 *Hepatitis B *MMR *Varicella

Families are required to submit their child's current immunization records at the time of enrollment and any time their child receives new immunizations. (See **ENROLLMENT PACKET**) Exemption from this requirement is only allowed for children that have a medical reason not to receive an immunization. In that event, a parent may submit documentation by a licensed medical physician that immunization is not appropriate for stated medical reason.

Plambeck Center Staff are not required to be immunized.

ILLNESS EXCLUSIONS

Parents will be called to pick up their child(ren) from the Center and the child must remain out of the Center for at least **24 hours** if:

*The child has a fever of **100.3°** or higher.
*The child has diarrhea for the **second time** during the day.
*The child vomits.

The child should be **kept home** if he/she:

*Continues to have any of the above symptoms without the use of over-the-counter medications.
*Has a heavy nasal discharge either green or yellow in color, which disrupts normal activity.
*Has symptoms of a virus.

*Has open sores or liquid filled sores, considered to be contagious, associated with a virus.
*Has other signs of illness (earache, stomachache, reddened eyes, rash, etc.)
*Is unable to participate in the normal daily activity/routine.
*Requires one on one care from the care provider.

**These Illness Exclusion mandates are based on recommendations from the CDC (Center for Disease Control), American Academy of Pediatrics, and Mayo Clinic.

** Failure to comply with Center Illness Exclusion policies will result in the termination of the family's enrollment at the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center.**

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Disease Incubation Period	Rules for Attendance
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: 3-7 Days	Child must be fever free for 24 hours and all sores must be dried and scabbed over with no new sores arising.
Herpangina: 3-7 Days	Child must be fever free for 24 hours and mouth sores must be healed over and no new sores arising.
Chicken Pox: 14-21 Days	Child must be absent until sores are scabbed over and dry.
Impetigo: 4-10 Days	Prescribed medication and 48 hours. Child must be absent until area is clear.
Lice or Crabs (Pediculosis): 7-10 Days	Child must be absent until treatment; Child must be checked before allowed to return.
Measles: 8-14 Days	Child must be absent for 7 days after rash appears.
Mumps: 12-21 Days	Child must be absent until all swelling disappears.
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): 24-72 Hours	Prescribed medication and 24 hours. Child must be absent until 3 doses of medication are given.
Ringworm (Tinea Infections): 10-14 Days	Child must be absent until treatment and negative under Wood's Lamp Test.
Rubella: 14-21 Days	Child must be absent for 4 days.
Scabies: 4-6 Weeks	Prescribed Medication and 24 hours.
RSV: Varies per case	Child must be absent for at least 5 days
Rotavirus: Varies per case	Doctor's permission required
COVID/Coronavirus: Varies per case	Child must be absent 3-5 days from onset of symptoms & symptom free to return.
Clostridioides difficile (C. diff): 2-90 Days	Child must be absent until they have control of their stool and been through the appropriate round of antibiotics.

If an illness is not listed, please check with the Center Director for a course of action. The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center will report cases of certain communicable diseases to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and to the parents as soon as the disease is diagnosed by a physician.

MEDICATION

Medication should be given at home, if possible. Our staff shall give or apply medication either prescription or nonprescription, only with prior permission and written instructions from the parent and physician. All medication must be signed in daily on the Medication Permission Form in the Health Room. Medication must be in the original container, stored according to the directions, clearly labeled for a named child with time and amount of dosage, and returned to the parent or destroyed when no longer needed. The Center will not share prescribed medication. The Center shall maintain a record as to the time and amount of medication given or applied. Labels of non-prescription medication (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, cough medication) must list dosage instruction by age **and** weight of the child. If the label does not list specific directions, a physician must sign an Over-the-Counter Medication Permission Form. Medication must be given directly to the staff upon arrival. Children should not be allowed to carry the medication in or out of the Center, nor should medication be left unattended.

In the event an EPI pen is required for a child at the center, the parents must submit a Student Asthma/Allergy Action Plan completed by the parent and Health Care Provider. A long-term medication form must also be completed and kept near the EPI pen in the Health Room.

POLICY ON INFANT SLEEPING POSITION

The U.S. Public Health Department and the American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommend that infants be put to sleep on their backs to reduce the chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). All infants at The Plambeck Early childhood Education Center will be put to sleep on their backs in beds. A note from a physician, detailing the medical reason, will be needed if a parent requests their child to sleep in anything other than a crib. We do allow sleep sacks, with arms until the child starts to roll, without arms after the child starts to roll.

NAP/REST TIME

We provide cots and sheets for each child who naps. Families are responsible for bringing a blanket and pillow for their child. Naptime is scheduled daily and fluctuates between 12:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. for children in the Toddler, Preschool, and Pre-K room. Adjustments to sleep time can be made as needed. Infants nap as needed. We ask all children 3 years and younger to sleep or rest during the scheduled Nap time. Children ages 3 and older have shorter rest time with the option of utilizing our "Non-Napping Room". This is a room where the students go that are not nappers. They will have 15 minutes of quiet relaxation and then extended center and learning opportunities.

ACCIDENTS

Scratches and scrapes are inevitable when children play or as they are learning to walk and are becoming more mobile. Minor accidents will be treated properly, immediately, with lots of care and attention, and an accident report completed. If a serious situation should arise, the parents will be notified immediately.

EMERGENCIES

In the event the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called. If need warrants, the child will be taken to the hospital emergency room if parent or emergency contact person cannot be reached. Parents must keep emergency phone numbers and addresses current.

NUTRITION POLICIES

MEALTIME POLICY

The children will be served breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and a snack in the afternoon. Please be aware of the children's eating times as we will not be able to serve children meals at times other than the scheduled mealtimes. If you are planning on bringing your child after the scheduled mealtime, please plan on feeding your child before you come to the Center. Lunches will be catered by Sodexo. Monthly menus will be posted in the Center and sent home via e-mail.

Meals will be served at the following times:

Breakfast-8:30am-9:30am

Morning Snack-9:30am-10:30am

Lunch-

11:30am-12:15pm Infant/Toddlers

12:00pm-12:45pm Preschool/Pre-K

Afternoon Snack-2:30pm-3:30pm

ALLERGIES AND FOOD REACTIONS

If your child has food allergies, the center allergy forms are required for him/her to receive alternative food options while at the Center. The center provides nutritious alternates for the children based on the appropriate meal patterns. Families are welcome to bring their own alternate food, if they prefer.

PROVIDING YOUR OWN LUNCH

If a family chooses to provide their child's own food for lunch for reasons other than diagnosed food allergies, the meal must meet the USDA requirements per licensing regulations. If only one component of the meal is brought, the child may still participate in school lunch program. If the family chooses to bring the entire meal, the meal must include all the required components and serving sizes for the USDA requirements. The meal must include a meat or meat alternate, a grain, a vegetable, and a fruit. Serving size is dependent on the child's age. Please check with the Center director for required serving sizes per age. If the food brought for the child's lunch does not meet the required meal regulations, the center will provide the missing component(s). Please do not send Candy or food considered not nutritional (jello, snacky items). The food brought for the child's meal must also be prepared and ready to serve.

CHILD SAFETY CENTER POLICIES

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Under Nebraska law, staff members are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. We are required to report any and all suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE

In case of a fire at the Center, the staff shall determine the safest route of exit and quickly and quietly lead the children to that exit and out of the building to the access road north of the building. The staff are required to always keep a count of the children in their care. In compliance with State regulations, we conduct fire drills monthly. A direct access line to the local fire and police departments is active.

TORNADO DRILL PROCEDURE

In case of a tornado warning, the staff shall quickly and quietly lead the children to our safe rooms at the center. Children will be instructed to assume the "crouch and cover" position. Infants will be covered with blankets. It shall be the staff's responsibility to keep the children calm during these drills. In compliance with State regulations, we conduct a tornado drill four times a year.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event the Center is required to evacuate the premises, the children will be taken to a safe location. The children will remain in the designated evacuation location until either the parents pick their child up or we can return to the Center. A notification message via email and text will go out to all parents notifying them of the evacuation. Parents will be required to pick their children up if we are not able to return to the Center within an hour after notification.

SECURITY

At the center all exterior access doors are always locked. Parents and Staff will be given access to the building on their UNK badges or a Plambeck access card. These access cards will come from the Director only. The double doors leading to the classrooms will be locked at all times. Access cards will allow parents and staff to access this area. In the event that an access card is lost at any time, please notify us as soon as possible so we can get it deactivated. University Campus Security will be notified immediately in circumstances detrimental to the Center's children, parents, or staff. New access cards are a $10 fee.

TRANSPORTATION

At The Plambeck Center transportation will be provided for ages 3yrs-12yrs for field trip experiences. Students under 3years of age will NOT be transported by The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center. All children up to age eight will ride correctly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat. The Plambeck Center will follow all state weight and height requirements.

ADDITIONAL CENTER POLICIES

DRESS CODE

We ask that parents send their children in comfortable, play appropriate clothing. Please refrain from short dresses or have shorts on beneath. We highly recommend children wear tennis shoes or comfortable shoes daily.

FIELD TRIPS

The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center will take occasional field trips to different departments on campus and in the Kearney Community. Parents will be notified prior to each field trip taking place. The Plambeck Center

transportation will be provided for ages 3yrs-6yrs for field trip experiences. Students under 3years of age will NOT be transported by The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center.

VISITORS

You are welcome to visit the classroom at any time. All visitors must register with the office. Please enter quietly and do not talk in a loud manner that would disrupt the atmosphere. Please inform the staff if you have a special talent or interest, you would be willing to share with the children and/or if you can assist with field trips or special projects. We do have observation windows into most classroom areas for your use. Any visitor that is not approved or has not previously scheduled a time with the Director will be asked to leave.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS AND OBSERVATIONS

Students attending UNK may use the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center to complete assignments required for their field of study. Students may volunteer in the classroom, facilitate an activity with the children, work one on one with a child, or simply observe and document activities at the center. Each student will have a completed background check done through the Nebraska Central Registry of Abuse and Neglect and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Central Registry prior to starting their volunteer time.

CHILDREN'S MAILBOXES AND CUBBIES

The Center provides a cubbie for each child attending the Center. These cubies do have a mailbox slot at the top and are to be used for communication between teachers and parents, and a place for children to place their projects they want to take home. We will keep children's extra clothes, blankets & pillows for nap, coats, hats, gloves, and boots in their cubbie. We ask that families periodically organize their child's cubbie and take home any unnecessary items.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special events for children! If you are planning a birthday party at home and wish to invite children from the Center, please do not distribute birthday invitations at the Center. We request that you mail invitations to parents or call them. If addresses or telephone numbers are needed, please contact the Director and she will help you attain this information. If you wish to bring treats to the center, we ask that you contact the director or your child's teacher as we have children with food allergies and want to make sure that all can participate. We will celebrate your child's birthday during the day.

DONATIONS

The Center encourages donations of household items such as tissue, first aid supplies, art supplies, napkins, paper towels, etc. Any donations, cash or materials, made to the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center are tax deductible. Please contact the Director is you would like to make a donation. A receipt can be provided by the Director for your tax records.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

This facility will not discriminate against any child because of ethnic origin, sex, religion, or handicap.

LICENSING INFORMATION

This program is licensed by the State of Nebraska and will comply with the regulations of the State Department of Health and Human Services. Periodic inspections will be conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services and the State Fire Marshal to ensure the center meets or exceeds the standards.

CENTER PERSONNEL POLICIES

STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS:

Director Qualifications- The Director of the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center must meet one of the following requirements:

Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education, or child/youth development;

Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with at least six credit hours in early childhood education, education or child/youth development;

Have an associate degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education or child/youth development;

Have a Child Development Associate Credential;

Have a high school diploma or GED and 3000 clock hours of verifiable experience in organized group activities for children age birth to 13 as indicated by a positive reference from a former employer or supervisor and:

> Have successfully completed six credit hours or 36 clock hours of Department- approved training in administration, early childhood education, education, or child/youth development. Business courses may be included, not to exceed one-half of the credit or clock hour requirement; or
>
> A written, Department-approved plan to acquire at least six credit hours or 36 clock hours of Department-approved training in administration, early childhood education, education, or child/youth development, in a period not to exceed 12 months. Business courses may be included in the plan, not to exceed one-half of the credit or clock hour requirements.

Teacher Qualifications -To be employed as a teacher in a licensed child care center, an individual who is not a certificated teacher must be at least 18years of age and of good moral character, and must meet one of the following requirements:

Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education or child/youth development;

Hold an associate degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education, education or child/youth development;

Have a Child Development Associate Credential;

Have a high school diploma or GED; and

1500 verified clock hours of experience in organized group activities for young children as indicated by a positive reference from a former employer or supervisor;

Submit a written plan for Department approval to acquire at least three credit hours or 45 clock hours of training in administration, early childhood education, education, or child/youth development, in a period not to exceed six months. The licensee must maintain a copy of the written plan and Department approval for Department review.

STAFF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

Director Training Requirements: The Director of the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center will be required to complete the following trainings:

DHHS approved Director Orientation
Safety Training
Child Care Management Training
Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines Training
CPR/First Aid Training
*Must obtain a minimum of 12 clock hours of training annually

Teacher Training Requirements: The Center will ensure that each Teacher Completes the following trainings:

New Staff Center Orientation
Safety Training
Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines
CPR/First Aid training
*Must obtain a minimum of 12 clock hours of training annually

Support Staff Training Requirements: Support staff consists of any staff members who work 20 hours or less.

New Staff Center Orientation
CPR/First Aid training
*Must obtain a minimum of 6 clock hours of training annually

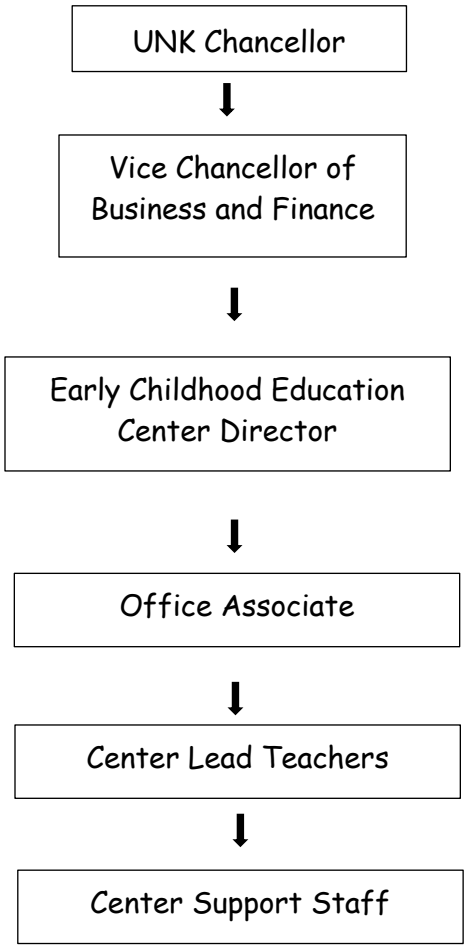
STAFF DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE: Any employee who fails to satisfactorily perform the duties and responsibilities of his/her position or to comply with the Department of Health and Human Services Licensing Regulations or University policies, procedures, and regulations may be subject to disciplinary probation. The employee may be immediately dismissed from Center employment for any behavior deemed detrimental to the children, parents, staff, and/or Center.

STAFF ILLNESS EXCLUSION POLICY

Center Staff will be required to be away from the Center if the following criteria are present:

The Staff member has a fever of **100.3°** or higher.
The Staff member vomits.
The Staff member has attained a written note from a licensed health care provider.
The Staff member is unable to provide care for the children due to illness.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center at 865-1576.

Authorized Representative:
Vice Chancellor Business & Finance
Founders Hall, #100
2504 9th Ave.,
Kearney, NE 68849
308-865-8205

Review Receipt

☐ I would like a paper copy of The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center Family Handbook

☐ I will use the digital version on The Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center webpage

I have received and reviewed the Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center Family Handbook upon enrollment of my child at the Early Childhood Education Center. I understand that any questions regarding policies affecting the care of my child should be directed to the Center Director.

_____ _____

Parent Signature Date

_____ _____

Director Signature Date

Please return this page to the Child Development Center office.