The Children’s Village
Family Handbook

The Children’s Village
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Introduction

Welcome to The Children’s Village. This handbook focuses on CV’s core policies and common practices in order to clarify the rights and obligations of both parents and teachers to ensure a mutually beneficial relationship. It will answer any questions which might arise during enrollment at CV. Many procedures and policies are in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care regulations. Any suggestions for clarification of policies, the format of handbook, or inclusion of topics are always appreciated.

Philosophy Mission Statement

At CV, we provide a rich and nurturing environment for children from infancy through age five to grow and learn to their fullest potential. This age range offers us an opportunity to participate in a range of developmental stages throughout early childhood. CV is dedicated to establishing an environment in which every child feels safe, loved, and respected.

Our primary goals are to foster a positive self-concept in each child, to provide experiences that teach children about themselves, others in their world, and to promote natural development through thoughtful, engaging, hands-on curriculum. We value the importance of play coupled with rich learning environments and how that impacts positive life long learners. To ensure high quality Children's Village strives to achieve and maintain the NAEYC accreditation for teaching staff, children and parents. The center is licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care.

As early childhood professionals, we provide unconditional support and care to parents as well as children. Staff and parents work cooperatively to secure the optimum benefits for the children.

Nondiscrimination
CV does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, cultural heritage, political or religious affiliation, national origin, sexual orientation, parental or marital status in the administration of its admission, benefits or personnel policies.

General Information

Administration
Director: Debra Emery  
Email: childrensvdirector@gmail.com  
Office: 617-492-1990 ext. 11

Assistant Director: Rich Belmonte  
Email: childrensvad@gmail.com  
Office: 617-492-1990 ext. 10

EEC Licensing and NAEYC Accreditation

As a center based group childcare center, CV is licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) which serves children ranging in age from 10 weeks to five years. CV strives to maintain and achieve NAEYC accreditation.

Availability of EEC Regulations:
The center has a copy of CMR 102.700 Standards for the licensure or Approval of Group Day Care (Department of Early Education and Care), on the premises and available to any person upon request. A copy is kept in the office and in the staff room.
The Center
The 9,800 square feet interior space of the center includes five classrooms, large motor room, staff/resource room, parent/conference room, administrative office, a kitchen and storage areas. The building meets all state health, safety, fire and ADA requirements. The exterior space includes 2,400 square feet of playground area. In addition to the playground children take walks to local parks and playgrounds: Danehy, Tobin School Playground and Fresh Pond Park.

Classrooms
CV is divided into 5 classrooms with *approximate age ranges* as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>10 weeks to 15 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>15 months to 24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprout</td>
<td>24 months to 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-School</td>
<td>2.9 years to 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Kindergarten</td>
<td>4 years to 5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children may attend five, four, three, or two days per week. Infants must attend a minimum of three days.

Dept of Early Ed and Care Required Teacher: Child Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Children</th>
<th>Minimum Ratio (Staff: Children)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 weeks to 15 months</td>
<td>1:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 months to 2.9 years</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 years to 5 years</td>
<td>1:10 (CV Exceeds this 1:8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hours of Operation
CV is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. except for the designated holidays, early closures and other days as deemed necessary. CV’s holiday/closure calendar for the year is set by the Board of Directors by December.

Weather Related Closings
The Director and Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news to determine if it will be necessary to close the center. In the event the center closes early or if care is cancelled for the following day, parents will be notified of the situation promptly. The center will be closed if a State of Emergency is declared.
CV will remain open unless it is very clear that weather predictions for the day are bad or conditions are already hazardous. CV may have a delayed opening, usually until 10:00 AM to allow for conditions to improve. If a snowstorm begins during the day and is expected to continue, you will be informed through our CV Community Gmail by the Director and by phone.

Information will also be posted on: www.whdh.stormforce.com (click on school closings) and parents and staff will receive email notification from the Director.

Cell phone alert: You can also be notified on your cell phone for delays and closures. If you are interested in taking advantage of this convenient feature go to www.whdh.com and click on snow day alert. You will need to input your cell number, the name of your carrier and then enter Children’s Village as the school. If you have any questions please contact webmaster@whdh.com The decision to close the center will be made no later than 6:30am.

Holidays and Closures
Children’s Village is closed for 12 holidays, 1 Professional Day (March) and Classroom Prep Day (September). Copies of the calendar are available next to the Parent Board. The calendar is distributed in December for the upcoming year.

Parent Mailboxes
Each family has a CV “mail pocket” located near the entrance to or inside their child’s room. It your responsibility to check it frequently for newsletters tuition invoices, announcements, notes, etc.

Parking
Parking is reserved to all parents during the hours of 8-10am and 4-6pm. We appreciate your feedback pertaining to parking challenges that you may encounter. Please display your yellow hang tag. Those vehicles with no tag will be subject to towing.

Bulletin Boards and Postings
Important postings and announcements may be found on the Parent Bulletin Board located in the hallway next to the office. This board is used for miscellaneous community announcements, for social events, CV calendar, workshops, classified ads, etc. Parents should feel free to post notices of interest on either board. Enrichment/Events calendars are posted and copies are available next to bulletin board

CV is also a member of Cambridge Community Partnerships for Children, which offers tuition assistance to preschoolers. Families must be income eligible.

Resource Staff Library
CV maintains a library of books and other resources relating to the development and education of young children. We also keep current information on educational courses and workshops for staff and parents. We have special issue topic books for children in addition; we have current catalogues of children's toys, supplies and equipment. The center subscribes to many reputable early childhood magazines (Young Children, Parent & Child etc and Boston Parent’s Paper.) These resources are available in the Staff Room and Conference Room

Research Projects
CV frequently receives requests for assistance from colleges and other institutions of research that need to work with a population of young children and sometimes with their parents or teachers. Requests for simple observations from reputable organizations are always approved, but only during a time of day that would not disrupt the rooms involved. Requests for any kind of direct or in-depth research must be accompanied by an explanatory proposal. Each proposal is carefully reviewed by CV’s administrators
and staff. Parents will be notified of this type of study taking place in their child’s room and will be given the option of having child excluded from participation. Studies that involve specific children never occur without the written, informed consent of that child’s parents.

We do not allow the children to be photographed or filmed by the media or anyone outside the CV community without parental permission.

Arrival and Departure Times

Parents are responsible for checking in with your child’s teacher upon arrival and departure at CV. For the safety of the children, please do not drop off or pick up a child without acknowledgement from the teacher. Teachers take attendance as children arrive and depart each day. If there is a change in the schedule or if you have made arrangements to have an authorized person to drop off or pick up the center must be notified. Proper photo ID is always checked before releasing a child.

Early care (from 7:00 - 8:00am)
Arrangements must be made with teachers in advance. When needed, two classrooms will open: One for Infant & Toddlers and one for Sprouts, Preschool, and Pre-K children. The classrooms are staffed by regular CV teachers and are available on a first come/first serve basis. Please provide a minimum of 48 hours notice for the days that you may need early care, and 24 hours notice to cancel. Children arriving earlier than 8:00 a.m. will need to have eaten breakfast prior to arriving at CV or parents may supply the early care teachers with breakfast food for their child. Parents are still charged for a “no show” Early care is contingent on staff availability. An administrator or another teacher will also be on the premises during this time. The fee is $15.00 per hour per family and will be included on your monthly invoice.

Late Pick Up Policy
We request that you call and speak to your child’s teacher and let them know if you will be late. This provides time for the center to make arrangements.

Parents are required to sign a late fee form after 6 pm stating the time at which you picked up the child. You will receive a copy of the late pick up form the next day stating that the amount owed. If you refuse to sign the form, late fees will still be assessed. These fees will be added to your monthly invoice. Please note that fees are paid to those teacher(s) who stayed with your children.

Parents picking up their children after 6:01pm are considered late and subject to the following fees: $10.00 for the first 5 minutes or any portion thereof and additional fees of $2.00 per minute for each minute thereafter (example: 20 minutes late equals $10 for the first 5 minutes plus $30 for the remaining time equals a late pickup fee of $40)

*For accuracy a cell phone is used to determine the arrival time. If you have more than one child in more than one classroom, you will be assessed late fee for each child.

Safety and Security

All enrolled parents and employed staff have access to the center by using their registered FOBS provided by Administration. Parents have limited access to CV during the hours of CV operation only. If you lose your FOB there is a replacement fee of $10.00. Please return FOBS to the office upon termination of services with CV. Additional fobs may be requested in writing by parents for family members and caregivers who pick up their children on a routine basis.
CV provides a security system to monitor the premises throughout the day and night.

*Weapons as described in Massachusetts General Laws 269 section 10 are not allowed at Children’s Village or grounds

* Smoking is prohibited on CV premises and surrounding area. The smoking is not permitted in the presence of children at any time. Signs are posted outside the buildings.

**Confidentiality**

The Department of Early Education and Care requires that we maintain a file on each child and family enrolled at CV. The information in these files 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 agencies (Dept of Early Ed and Care). Information to other outside agencies is released only with written permission from parents.

**Children’s Village Staff**

CV is an independent non-profit corporation. The Center is fully licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care to serve children ranging in age from ten weeks to five years.

The CV By-Laws state that each family with a child enrolled at CV and each member of the CV staff are members of CV Corporation. In turn, each corporate member is entitled to one vote on all issues that require a “community” vote.

**Board of Directors**

CV conducts an annual election meeting in June to elect its Board of Directors. The Board oversees all significant activities within the CV community, and is the forum for most major decisions. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting policies that produce high quality care for the children and families create an optimal work environment for staff, following sound business decisions.

Day-to-day policies and decisions are made by the Director, who reports to the President of the Board of Directors. All staff members and the Assistant Director report to the Director. The Board of Directors is comprised of a balance of parents, staff members and two outside members who meet once each month.

Policies at CV are revised, added, or eliminated over the years in response to the current early childhood information, social and economic factors, and the changing needs of the CV community. The issues discussed at the monthly Board meetings are added to the agenda by a CV parent, a CV teacher, or one of the Center administrators who requests consideration, and an eventual vote, on a specific issue. The Board also is responsible for developing a proposed annual budget, including salary and tuition, and for monitoring the budget throughout the year by reviewing CV’s monthly financial statements.

The job of the Board is to make important decisions for CV, always keeping the interests of the children, parents, and staff in mind. If you would like to add an issue to a Board meeting agenda, feel free to tell the Director or a Board member. Please understand that if a decision is made that is not consistent with your point of view, it does not indicate that there was not an open and thorough consideration and discussion of the issue. It is very difficult to accommodate each individual need in such a large community.
Administration
The daily administration of CV is the responsibility of the Director and Assistant Director. They are responsible for implementing the policies and philosophy of the center, and insuring that CV is running optimally for children, parents, and staff. Their shared responsibilities include:

- Addressing parent and staff issues and concerns
- Monitoring center and program and needs
- Maintaining Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) license and NAEYC and all other health and safety inspections
- Providing resources and referral information to staff and parents

Both the Director and the Assistant Director work full time. Their schedules provide office coverage between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily. Occasionally, responsibilities take them away from their desks and there may not be anyone in the office, please feel free to drop a note, email or leave a voice message ( ext 10 or 11) During the occasional times that both the Director and Assistant Director are out of the for the day an experienced, tenured teacher will be placed in charge. A wipe off board next to the office provides information regarding administrative schedules and if not in office. A teacher will be placed in charge in the event that both administrators are not in the center.

Our telephone system permits all incoming calls to be directed to any of the individual classrooms. Please select the extension for your child’s classroom to speak directly to a teacher in your child’s room. If for some reason your call into CV is not answered, you may call the office and speak with the Assistant Director or Director.

Parents are always welcome to stop in the office to make suggestions, discuss center issues or simply chat etc. Pre-arranging a time will assure that you find at least one administrator in the office with time for an uninterrupted discussion, but you are always welcome at any time. We value your input and encourage your feedback!

Director
The Director is responsible for the success of virtually all aspects of the organization. Through effective teamwork, delegation, communication, and supervision, the Director ensures that CV delivers high-quality childcare in a safe environment, provides a positive workplace for its staff, and operates in accordance with reasonable financial, regulatory, and legal policies. The Director is also responsible for managing CV in accordance with the established operating policies and procedures including personnel policies, parent guidelines, and other policies as authorized by the Board of Directors.

He/she represents CV in communicating with the agencies and companies affiliated with the center, such as the Department of Social Services, Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC), Cambridge Public Schools, NAEYC, Cambridge Community Partnerships for Children (CCPC), Cambridge- Somerville Early Intervention, Early Years Project, Special Start and other pertinent agencies. The Director is also responsible for in-house communications and providing a link between CV and the early education community by participating in early education related committees and professional organizations. He/she also supervises the process of hiring new staff.

The Director conducts orientation for new staff and meets with each teacher to provide on-going supervision. The Director monitors curriculum and staff interactions closely by observing each classroom on a regular basis. The Director coordinates the scheduling of weekly team meetings and supervises the process of staff performance evaluations.
Assistant Director
The Assistant Director works cooperatively with the Director to address issues related to CV’s operations and assists the Director in maintaining CV’s philosophy and high standards of professional conduct.

The Assistant Director is responsible for the following financial matters: accounts payable, tuition collection receivables, deposits, and recording. The Assistant Director also answers tuition questions from parents and manages enrollment and the wait list in addition to conducting parent tours. He/she manages the payroll process and ensures accurate record keeping/administration of all employee benefits. The Assistant Director also maintains and updates files for each child enrolled at CV and prepares a monthly enrollment report for the Director and Board of Directors.

Team Teachers
Teaching and caring for young children is a challenging and fulfilling experience. Our teaching staff is professional, skilled, and committed to the growth and development of each individual child.

There are both full and part-time teachers. Full-time teachers work 6 hours per day and part-time teachers work 4 hours per day. Full-time teachers are paid an additional 5 hours per week and part-time teachers an additional 3 hours per week to compensate for time spent in curriculum planning, progress reports/parent conferences, and additional classroom related meetings. In addition, each full-time teacher is entitled to three “professional” days per year in order to attend early childhood-related workshops, conferences, and other professional activities (i.e. visits to other centers). CV is committed to providing many opportunities for staff development. In addition, the center sponsors on-site workshops and seminars.

All of the teachers in each room work cooperatively as a team. They share in the daily responsibilities of their own room. This approach has helped to share each teacher’s strengths and to alternate their responsibilities.

Each team of teachers meets once weekly with the Director and or Assistant Director to discuss children, classroom issues and curriculum. Teachers also meet with the Director to discuss individual goals and objectives on a regular basis. All staff is evaluated annually. Often this time is spent on additional planning for the classroom program.

Ads for available positions are posted at various local colleges, Craigslist, and other newspapers and forums. To apply for a teaching position at CV the prospective employee must submit a resume and phone references. The interviewing process consists of:

- A visit to CV which includes a tour of the center with the Director
- An interview with the Director, including a discussion about CV’s history and organizational structure and the position available
- A lengthy visit in the room where the teaching position is available
- A meeting and interview with the room’s teaching team

Meetings with the prospective teacher cover the candidate’s knowledge of child development, teaching philosophy, discipline in early childhood education, curriculum, teaching, and parent communications. Several phone reference checks also will be made for each candidate. Criminal offender record index (“CORI”) checks are completed by the Department of Early Care and Education before any employment is finalized.
**Assistant Teachers**
Each room has one or two assistant teachers who work 4 hour daily shifts either in the morning, afternoon or both, depending on the room.

The criteria for hiring assistant teachers differs because they are not primarily responsible for the children, nor are they responsible for planning activities, making decisions, or communicating with parents. They do however fulfill an important role in the classroom and work closely with children and help out with important tasks in making the classroom function as a whole.

**Meal Coordinator/Cook**
The meal coordinator has responsibilities for meal planning and preparation in accordance with the EEC Child and Adult Food Program (CAAFP) while following public health regulations regarding food storage and preparation.

**Financial Information**
CV’s fiscal year runs from January to December. During the budget making process the Board of Directors make every effort to keep tuition increases to a minimum; however increases are necessary to compensate for inflationary costs and staff compensation (benefits and wages).

Due to budget constraints, CV is unable to allow for unbilled variations (vacations, etc) in enrollment. Therefore, any space left open by a child who leaves for the summer or any other time may be filled. A space for that child cannot be guaranteed. Parents must continue tuition payment to hold a space. CV does not hold space for new or existing families. If you cannot start on the date of the room vacancy you are required to pay for it until your child starts or the space will be filled. CV must be as efficient as possible to ensure we stay within our budget.

**Enrollment Deposit**
Upon enrollment, the parents of each child will provide a $500.00 deposit. This fee will be assessed once per family regardless of the number of children enrolled at CV. This deposit will be held by CV for the duration of the family’s contract with CV, and will be refunded to the parents after the settlement of CV’s account upon withdrawal from the Center. This deposit will be forfeited in the event that the child does not start at CV.

**Tuition**
Invoices for tuition and additional fees are issued to the parents on a monthly basis for the forthcoming month. Tuition is paid on a monthly basis. Tuition is due on or before the 5th of every month. **Tuition received after the 5th will incur a late tuition fee of $25.00**
Parents have the option of enrolling in ACH for monthly tuition debits. The enrollment forms are available in the office.

**GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OF CHILDCARE SERVICES BY CV.** In the event of termination, the parents remain liable for all outstanding tuition and service fees. **Tuition Mailbox** is located in the office just as you enter on the left hand side. The box is locked at all times.

**Sibling Tuition Discount**
Two Children enrollment: 5% discount for oldest sibling
Three Children enrollment: 10% discount for oldest sibling, 5% for second sibling, 0% for youngest
Reserving a Sibling Slot for Currently Enrolled Families
Please notify the Assistant Director as soon as possible if you plan on enrolling your baby at CV. Your new baby will be enrolled as space allows. In the event there is not a spot open when you would like to enroll your baby, you will receive the next available spot. In the event a spot opens before you are ready CV will hold the spot up to one month tuition free for currently enrolled families. If you would like a spot held for more than one month, you are responsible for paying the tuition for any time beyond the one month period.

Sublet Days
Parents may pay for additional days at a prorated daily rate as needed. This may only occur if there is space in the classroom (un-enrolled day) Please speak with your child’s classroom teacher, Assistant Director and or Director to inquire. It is best to provide as much notice as possible, however we realize that emergencies can occur at a moments’ notice.

Vouchers
CV participates in the Childcare Resource and Referral Voucher Program, which provides a publicly funded childcare subsidy to recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Those vouchers help to pay CV’s tuition for those who are income eligible. Enrollment fee and deposit are waived.

Babysitting
Due to the liability of the center babysitting may not take place on CV premises. Parent(s) must have complete the “Consent to Hold Harmless” form. In addition, parents must sign an authorization release form if a staff member is picking up a child from the center. The release authorization form and consent to hold harmless form will be kept in the child’s file and updated as needed.

Termination Notice
We know that parents may feel a natural anxiety about leaving their child in the care of others. For this reason, we feel strongly that the basis of our relationship with parents must involve as much open, two-way communication as possible. Parent involvement at CV is crucial to the program. We try to do this in a number of ways.

Home-to-Center Transition
In order to ease the child’s home-to-center transition and to enable teachers to learn more about each child’s family, one or both parents should plan to stay in the classroom on the first day of the child’s first day until he/she feels comfortable. In order to promote informal communications, parents are encouraged to stay in the room for some time upon arrival and upon departure whenever possible. If separation problems occur, the teachers and parents will work out appropriate strategies for leaving.

Parent Resources
The center offers a wide range of resources to families and are available at all times. Administration and teaching staff works closely with you to provide support. The office has a Cambridge Resource Manual which may help you with any information needed (e.g. referrals or resources, lists of services) In addition there is an extensive library located in the conference room book shelf and in the office. We have a number of books, brochures and resources for parents and children on a wide range of topics. We are here to help. Please feel free to speak with us! Also there is always pertinent information related to parenting on Parent Board.
Parent Involvement
Parent participation in your child’s classroom is a great way to help build a community spirit! Parent Help will vary from classroom to classroom depending on the needs. Parent participation on the Board of Directors or serving on center committees also counts as Parent Help.

Parent Coordinator
Each room selects one or two parent(s) who serves as the Parent Coordinator(s). Some examples of the role of the parent coordinator are: welcoming new families into the room, assisting with room meetings and social events, field trips, organizing staff appreciation, serve as a parent reference for prospective families, offer tech support or guidance, set up email lists and fundraising or social events.

*Please note the Parent Coordinator is not responsible for relaying any grievance that may arise. Any concerns should be brought to the teachers and or administration by the parent who has the concern. CV encourages open and direct communication.

Parent Meetings
Parent Meetings are an important opportunity to share with the staff and with other parent ideas and information relevant to the functioning of your child’s classroom and other childcare issues. Parent meetings are held twice a year unless fewer than half of a room’s parents sign-up to attend within 2 days of the meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity to ask questions about curriculum, special topics of interest and to meet the other families. This is designed to learn about the classroom program whereby teachers describe daily routines, curriculum, and goals for children and special topics that are relevant to this age group. There is always a fair amount of discussion during and after the meeting. It is a wonderful way of getting to know one another. Typically there are lots of photographs of children and sometimes a short video capturing your child in action.

The agenda is written in collaboration with you. Our goal is to provide meaningful discussion where everyone can feel valued.

Throughout the year teaching staff plan informal social events to build a Classroom Community!

*Contingent on staff available babysitting may be offered

Communication
Communication between parents, staff, and administrators is crucial to the smooth functioning of the Center. The link between a child’s home and CV is a responsibility that we all share.

Any information pertinent to a child’s health or events at home that may affect his/her behavior at CV should be shared with the staff. A written note in your child’s classroom is often the most helpful way to pass information to all of the teachers in the room. Teachers make every effort to communicate daily information to you either verbally at either end of the day or by the use of notes.

We are aware that one of the important ways in which communication takes place at CV is through informal, interpersonal relationships. The channels of communication should always be utilized with a sense of respect, honesty, and a positive attitude for a generally beneficial purpose to parent and/or child.

Please feel free to call the child’s classroom teacher at their classroom extensions.

Newsletters, special notification and memos are communicated by the Director through a parent Gmail account and prefer all other communication be done directly.
Parent Teacher Conferences/ Progress Reports
Parent-Teacher conferences are offered at least twice a year for children ages 15 months–preschool and every three months for infants and children with children receiving services. Progress Reports document a child’s growth and development. Parents are always welcome to schedule a meeting with their child’s teacher at any time. When parents are separated or divorced, two conferences may be arranged, if that is preferred. Children are or siblings are never present at meetings. Child care during conferences is provided if the child is already scheduled for care. During the conference the teacher will share with the parent a written progress report then becomes a part of the child’s record at the Center. If a parent has a concern about their child overall development the Director and child’s teaching team will schedule a meeting and prepares a current list of possible referral resources

Suggestions and Concerns
From time to time a concern or problem may arise which requires discussion, Please feel free to approach a Teacher, Administration or a Parent Board Member to set up an appointment to meet. Every effort is made to arrive at a satisfactory solution. Please refer to handbook to clarify policies and procedures.

Many parents are please with the programs offered and the quality of care provided at the center. Knowing what works well is useful to the teachers and administrators. Positive feedback is as important as constructive criticism. Each year, a questionnaire is distributed to families to evaluate the program. Your feedback is vital in helping to identify strengths and areas that could improve

Health Policies

Our Health Care Consultant
CV is fortunate to have the consultation of Pediatrician Dr. Dawn Peters of Cambridge Health Alliance. Her professional advice helps determine medical policies and respond to both chronic and acute medical situations. In addition, the center consults with several mental health professionals to provide guidance to teaching staff on classroom dynamics. A complete copy of our health care policy is available upon request from the office.

Parents and Staff Working Together to Contain Illness
CV is like a large family - both children and adults are continuously exposed to each other’s germs. Although we understand that it is difficult for a parent to miss work, in some cases it is not in the best interest of the sick child and/or the CV community to have the child come to CV. The CV health policies set up the basic criteria that are followed regarding necessary treatment, and exclusion of care for common conditions found in early childhood.

When children have a contagious illness or exhibit symptoms of illness, low energy, general discomfort, and in other ways indicate that they are too sick to participate fully in the program, parents will be asked to take their children home. Children who are too sick to participate comfortably in our program, including going on field trips must not attend the center. For infants, participating comfortably includes feeding and sleeping without significant congestion or irritation, as well as freedom from significant loss of bodily fluids through repeated episodes of vomiting or diarrhea. As a general rule, the decision about whether a child is able to participate fully in the program will be made by the teachers in that classroom. When you do keep your sick child at home, please call your child’s classroom teachers and let them know what it is that has kept them home so that other families can be aware of possible symptoms in their own children.

All families are urged to take a conservative approach when managing your child’s illness. If your child displays symptoms of illness at home, such as fever or vomiting or diarrhea, or if they are unusually
lethargic, please keep them at home rather than sending them to the center. Likewise, if your child has been out of the center sick and is “almost back to normal” we strongly urge you to keep them home an extra day so they can come back stronger and less likely to get sick quickly again. If medication has been prescribed for a contagious condition, please keep your child home for at least 24 hours from the start of the treatment. A child may not be at, or return to the center, if he/she requires Tylenol or Motrin to feel well or as a fever suppressant.

Hand washing is the single most important prevention of spread of infection. We insist that all children and staff wash hands upon arrival. Please reinforce this habit with your child. Guidelines are posted in every classroom.

Full parent cooperation is required if we are to minimize the spread of illness among children, staff and other parents. We realize that interrupting your day to pick up or care for a sick child can be very disruptive. Yet we do need your timely cooperation with our notification that your child needs to be picked up. In situations where we cannot reach one of the parents and we determine that the child is too sick to remain at the center, we will attempt to reach the emergency contact persons on your enrollment forms and have they picked up your child.

Please note that it is the parents’ responsibility to keep emergency contact phone numbers up to date. Please inform administration and the teachers of any changes throughout the year.

If your child appears to have any of the following symptoms of illness, please keep your child home: (When in doubt, the Director, Assistant Director, or Teachers are available to help parents decide when it is appropriate for your child to come to childcare.)

If your child develops any of the following symptoms of illness while at CV, you will be notified that he/she must be picked up as soon as possible: (Please make sure that an emergency contact is available by phone if you are unreachable.)

**Evaluation of an ill child by CV will be based on presence of symptoms and the child’s disposition. The criteria are as follows:**

- Illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
- Illness that prevents a child from participating comfortably in all center activities
- The child has the following condition: fever, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, and/or other manifestations of possible severe illness.

The CV staff does not make a “sick child” judgement call lightly as we realize the stress that it can cause parents. However, we adhere strictly to the health policies for the benefit of the sick child and for the entire group.

**In the event that your child becomes ill during their time at the center we will follow the below steps:**

Parent or guardian will be contacted immediately if the child shows any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the program.

During the interim the child will be placed in a comfortable location in the classroom where he or she is supervised by qualified teaching staff member. **When we call you to pick up your child you are responsible to arrive promptly.** If you will not be at your usual contact number on any given day, please do leave us a number where you can be reached in case your child becomes ill during the day.
If your child appears to have symptoms of illness, as described in the policies listed below, please keep him/her home. When in doubt, you are welcome to call CV in the morning to ask for advice in judging the condition. We also request that you let the room teachers know if your child is not coming in the morning. That information helps us to identify similar symptoms in other children and it also helps in program planning. Notification of any child’s highly contagious condition (i.e. Chicken Pox) is very important - notices of such illnesses will be posted for each room in order to inform all parents.

Having “on call” arrangements with family members or friends for times of illness can be very helpful to parents who may not be able to miss work. CV’s administration, as well as your child’s room teachers, we will need to know if you have arranged for someone else to come for your sick child. We will call the authorized “emergency” person listed in your child’s file if your child is ill enough to go home and no parent is reachable.

CV does not have the appropriate space or staffing to provide care for mildly ill children for an extended period of time, however those children may stay in the office with on a mat. Children who are well enough to be at CV must also be well enough to participate in outdoor play. It is not possible for a child recovering from an illness to remain inside during outside play because all the rooms are outside at approximately the same time and no teachers would be available to take care of the child indoors.

**Illnesses and Conditions**

Guidelines for the development of these policies are provided from The American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases of “Children in Out of -Home Child Care Programs” and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and in the Department of Early Education and Health and Safety Manual. Our Health Care Consultant/Pediatrician and licensor carefully reviews and approves of the below policies.

**Health Care Policy and Exclusion Policy**

Children enrolled in group care programs are exposed to many sources of contagious diseases. When children are too sick to participate comfortably in our program activities, we will ask you to take your child from the center to promote the health of all children; our program tries to reduce the potential exposure to infectious diseases. Part of that effort includes sending children home and excluding them from the center when they have an infectious condition or when their illness results in a greater care need than our teaching staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children. For some situations where a child has been sent home because of a suspected illness or contagious disease, the child’s re-entry to the center must be cleared by a health care provider.

**EXCLUSION Criteria (Situations where children should not be in group child care):**

**Fever**

Children and Infants with a temperature of 100.4°F or above must stay home for 24 hours. Children may return to the center when they are fever free without suppressants (Tylenol, Advil etc) Digital thermometers are used to ensure accuracy.

**Strep Throat**

A child may return after receiving antibiotics for 24 hours and has no accompanying symptoms.

**Cough**

A child who has severe or non-stop coughing should remain at home until symptoms improve.
**Mouth Sores** in a child who cannot control their saliva, unless the health care provider states the child is non-infectious (such as herpes-cold sores, fever blisters). The child may return when sores are crusted over or healed.

**Thrush**
A child may return with confirmation note from health care provider.

**Conjunctivitis**
A child with pink or heavily discharging eyes should be sent home and should be evaluated by their healthcare provider to determine treatment. A child may return to the center 24 hours after the first treatment of prescribed antibiotic ointment.

**Impetigo**
The same guidelines for conjunctivitis apply to impetigo. Please be aware of any new or unknown scabs, rashes, pustules or sores and have them checked and cultured as necessary. Impetigo is extremely contagious but can be cleared up when treated promptly. Impetigo is a highly contagious skin infection, usually treated with some combination of antibiotic ointment and an oral antibiotic. If we suspect impetigo or some other contagious skin conditions your child will be sent home. A child may return to the center when cleared to do so by a health care provider.

**Diarrhea**
A child who has more than two watery stools (or a single watery stool that contains blood or mucous) while at the center will be sent home. For persistent diarrhea (consecutive days) the center may require a note from a health care provider stating the child is not contagious and healthy enough to attend the center.

*Exceptions will be discussed for individual conditions such as reactions to medication. Children may not return to the center until they can tolerate a regular diet and have not had diarrhea for 24 hours.

**Vomiting**
Any child who vomits and otherwise appears healthy and in good spirits may remain at the center, however will be watched closely for additional episodes of vomiting or the development of other symptoms. If a second episode of vomiting occurs that day parents will be called to bring the child home.

**Chicken Pox**
Children may not return to the center until all blisters are scabbed over and no new ones are erupting.

**Head Lice**
CV will notify parents of any cases of head lice. Lice are easily treated and are not a sign of unhealthiness or unsanitary conditions.
1. Children with nits and lice will be sent home for treatment with shampoo and removal of all nits and lice.
2. Children may return to CV after treatment and removal of all lice and all nits
3. Children with confirmed cases of head lice will be checked daily for the presence of new nits and lice for a 10 day period. (Please be assured that routine head checks will be done discretely)
4. When there are 3 or more known cases of head lice in a particular group, a designated teacher, Administrator will conduct routine head checks on all children. This will be done in a discrete manner.
5. If necessary the center will hire a public health consultant to provide head checks
Bronchiolitis
Infants and toddlers diagnosed with Bronchiolitis will be asked to remain at home until cleared by their Health Care Provider. Fever must be gone and child is well enough to participate in routine activities.

Ear Infections
Many ear infections are accompanied by a fever and in these cases; CV follows the exclusion policy regarding fevers. Occasionally, there is no fever but it is often apparent that a child with an ear infection is very uncomfortable and out-of-sorts. In these cases, even though ear infections are not contagious, if it is determined that the child requires one-on-one care the child will need to be picked up by parent. If a child leaves CV with an ear infection and is treated by a health care provider with medication, it is best that the child not return to CV that day. It is our experience that, despite a dose of medicine, a child is still very likely to be uncomfortable. Children with ear infections must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the center.

Teething
Infants and toddlers present a special health problem due to teething. Teething is often accompanied by a slight fever, which is not contagious but might make a child feel uncomfortable. We will try to ease your child’s discomfort through this time, especially by following the methods that have been successful at home. If a day becomes particularly stressful for a teething child, we may ask that you pick up the child early. *The exclusion temperature guidelines are followed.

Additional Health Related Policies

Tooth Brushing
With concerns about the increase in tooth decay (cavities) among young children, the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) recently adopted a new regulation for child care settings, number 606 CMR 7.11(11)(d), to promote oral health and prevent tooth decay.

Effective January 2010, child care workers must assist children with brushing their teeth if:
1. The children are in care for more than 4 hours, or
2. They have a meal while in care.

Children in the Infant and Toddler Classrooms will have their teeth and gums wiped with a wet paper towel. Children in all other groups will be assisted by staff to brush their teeth using water and a toothbrush. Written notification is required by the parent(s) should they decide to exclude their child(ren) from the toothbrushing policy.

CV provides each child with a labeled and dated soft bristle toothbrush which will be stored in a sanitary manner. Toothbrushes are replaced every 3 months or after a child has been absent due to sickness.

Sunscreen and Topical Ointments
We asked that parents apply sunscreen to your child(ren) prior to arriving at CV. The teachers will reapply in the afternoon before the children participate in outdoor activities. CV supplies the sunscreen but if your child requires a different sunscreen, you will need to bring that in labeled with your child’s name. Parents are required to fill out a form allowing CV staff to apply any creams and/or ointments.

Antibiotics
When a child is being treated with antibiotics for a contagious condition, s/he must remain home for at least the first 24 hours of treatment. Remember that antibiotics are only effective when taken according to their prescribed dosage and duration. You should alert teachers to any side effects a child experiences from the medication so that another illness is not suspected by mistake. If the side effects are enough to make the child too uncomfortable to be in group care, teachers will ask parents to take the child home.
**Medications**
The Department of Early Ed and Care will not allow CV staff to administer any prescription or non-prescription medication to a child without a written request from a physician. CV also requires that parents complete a medication form, which is available from your child’s classroom teachers.

Prescription medications must come in their original containers, with the child’s name and appropriate dosage on the label. CV cannot administer outdated medication of any kind. Medications are stored appropriately – please make sure your child’s name is clearly marked and take all unused medications home promptly so that they are not accidentally thrown away.

DEEC regulations also prevent CV staff from giving pain and fever reducing medications, such as Tylenol. **CV maintains Tylenol for emergencies only – such as a quick spiking fever (103.5°+) and for parents to administer, if they choose, when picking up a sick child**

**EPI Pens**
We recommend that there are 2 pens at the center, in the event one does not function. In the event it is necessary for a teacher or admin to use the pen 911 will always be called immediately for medical evaluation. Staff receives hands-on instruction for their use at mandatory First Aid Training; all staff is certified in Child and Adult First Aid.

**Lead Testing**
The Mass Department of Health **requires annual lead testing** for all children less than five years of age. No exceptions can be made. Annual Lead Testing is required for children ages 2 years +.

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**Emergency Situations**

**Emergency Evacuation**

In the event of an emergency situation that requires an evacuation of CV, we have the following plans in place. The center has worked very closely with Emergency Preparedness and Coordination (EPAC) division of the Cambridge Fire Department in assisting with this emergency response plan.

CV Staff practice evacuation routinely so that children and staff know what they are to do to get out of the building quickly. This is handled in a matter of fact, upbeat manner so that children can feel confident that we all know how to keep ourselves safe.

**If we must evacuate the premises and relocate to another shelter** the Cambridge Fire department has prior arrangements for an MBTA bus to pick up children and bring them to Fayerweather School located on 765 Concord Ave in Cambridge The may also bring children to Danehy Park or Tobin School Playground (weather permitting) until parents arrive depending on the nature and location the of emergency. This serves as a off-site shelter. Weather permitting children may also be taken in walking buggies, strollers by staff, unless otherwise advised by emergency personnel. Children will remain off site location supervised by staff until parents are contacted and arrive to pick up their children. In the event that a physical examination is recommended due to the nature of the emergency, children will be transported to the Mt Auburn Hospital The Cambridge Spaulding Hospital or another hospital if necessary (e.g Boston Children’s) where they will be provided with medical treatment. Staff will remain at the Hospital until parents or emergency contacts are notified to pick up children. Our building is equipped with a fire box outside of building, sprinklers and carbon monoxide detectors. We are well connected to the Cambridge Fire Department and have worked extensively with the Cambridge Emergency Service and Planning Department.
It is essential that your child's file is up to date and contains accurate contact and emergency information with the staff whenever their child is in attendance. If parents are on the premises during a practice drill we ask that you participate with us. The Director and Assistant Director will contact parents immediately through the CV Parent Gmail and or by phone regarding the details of the emergency and location of the children.

**Emergency Care**

CV staff is required to successfully complete the Infant/Child Saver First Aid training and Child/Adult CPR during the first few months of employment. Certification must be kept current. Training is held here at CV and parents are welcome to attend. Each classroom maintains its own First Aid Kit and a larger center kit is located in the Adult bathroom and in the kitchen.

In the case of a medical emergency, children are taken to Mount Auburn Hospital on Mt. Auburn Street in Cambridge or the Cambridge /Spaulding Hospital. The hospital requires parent written consent to treat a child. Although you sign a medical release form upon enrollment, we ask that you come to the hospital immediately in the event of an emergency.

**Meals and Nutrition**

CV IS A PEANUT and TREE NUT FREE CENTER. NO FOODS THAT CONTAIN PEANUTS OR TREE NUTS SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO THE CENTER.

Children’s Village cannot guaranty that foods brought into the center will not contain traces of peanuts and or tree nuts, or were shared with equipment or made in a facility that processes peanuts and/or tree nut products.

CV serves two nutritious snacks and one warm lunch daily. The menu — written in accordance with the Department of Education and Child and Adult Food Program — is wide-ranging and culturally diverse, which is reflective of our community. The center strives to provide well-balanced, “child-friendly” meals with a variety of poultry, fish, vegetarian dishes, seasonal fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grain breads. We do not serve any foods containing hydrogenated oils or with high sugar/salt content. We will provide all substitutes for children that have identified food allergies and intolerances which require a note from the doctor (see allergy policy). Our current cook is Serv-Safe Certified and is Allergen Awareness Certified.

CV does not serve cow’s milk to infants younger than 12 months old. Whole milk is served to children 12 months-24 months and after 24 months we serve 2% fat.

**During Meal times staff must:**

- Wash their hands before and wear gloves when preparing and serving foods
- Actively interact and talk with children by sitting at the table
- Allow children to eat at a reasonable, leisurely rate
- Encourage children to serve themselves, when age appropriate ( Sprout classroom-Pre-K)
- Ensure that each child receives an adequate amount of food
- Help children with disabilities to participate in meal and snack times with their peers
- Encourage and model children to eat healthy foods
- Offer alternative activities for children who have finished their snack and meals
- Serve as a role model for healthy eating habits
Allergy Policy
The center accommodates the needs of children with food allergies or other dietary restrictions when a note from the doctor is provided. Every effort will be made to provide an appropriate alternative food (e.g. soy milk in place of cow’s milk, rice cakes in place of wheat crackers). Parents must contact administration and their child’s teachers regarding food allergies and other dietary restrictions as soon as possible. Parents must provide a Food Allergy Action Plan which includes the following information:

A complete list of foods to which the child is allergic
- The possible symptoms of the allergic reaction
- The treatment that should be administered, and under what circumstances
- Contact information for emergency medical services, the child’s allergist and the parents
- A current photo of the child
- Any additional relevant information

*Parents of a child with allergy must also provide 2 Epi Pens with current expiration date

Commitment to Healthy Eating
We believe in the value and benefit of a healthy food program and limit foods containing sugar, salt, additives, preservatives, and saturated fats. Foods that are considered "junk food" are not served and "sweets" are rare and usually come to CV by a parent celebrating an occasion for their child. We have learned that children enjoy simple foods and while we provide a variety of foods, children often prefer repetition of the foods they like best. Infants are fed according to their individual schedules and food restrictions. Teachers sit at the tables with the children modeling healthy eating habits and encourage children to try new foods. Proper hand washing procedures are followed and “no food sharing” rules are enforced.

*Cooking projects with children and an awareness of nutrition are regular components of the curriculum. The above guidelines are followed.

We welcome your suggestions. Please feel free speak with our talented Chef!

Diapering
Latex gloves are used when changing diapers. After each use, the changing pad is cleaned and disinfected with a bleach and water solution. Hands of the child and care giver are washed thoroughly. Diapers are changed as needed and are checked often. Parents are required to fill out a form allowing CV staff to apply any creams and/or ointments.

Clothing and Attire
Your child must come to CV each day in clothing appropriate for indoor as well as outdoor play (mittens, jackets, boots, etc.). Parents are required to keep a change of clothing in their child’s cubby; just ask the teachers for suggestions if you are unsure of what to bring in. To protect against cold, CV request that you as a parent provide clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. This is most suitable and comfortable for children.

PLEASE LABEL ALL ARTICLES OF CLOTHING. We will do our best to keep track of all of your child’s belongings, and any labeling with your child’s name will help us.
We are often able to supplement your child’s extra clothing supply, in case of “accidents,” with donated CV clothing. If your child comes home in CV clothes, please return them washed as soon as possible. Any donations of outgrown clothes you can donate to the CV supply would be appreciated.

**Toys and Other Items from Home**

Some toys from home are more appropriate than others at CV. We have found that children have difficult timesharing toys from home and feelings can become hurt. Keeping track of those special toys, and keeping them in one piece by the end of the day can be a challenge. Also, super hero costumes and similar items may tend to exacerbate distinctions between children who have aggressive tendencies and those who might become intimidated. Therefore, we discourage children from bringing toys from home, unless they are for a special event, such as “show and tell.” Teachers in each room have developed guidelines for this issue and you should check with them for specifics.

“Toy weapons as well as other potentially dangerous items such balloons and chewing gum; are not to be brought to the center.

**Naps and Rest Time**

Napping procedures vary with the age groups. Infants and young toddlers sleep in cribs and or mat according to their own schedules and needs. The center follows the recommendation of the American Board of Pediatrics that infants be placed down for sleep on their backs or sides unless the child’s pediatrician recommends otherwise. Pacifiers must not be given to babies while they are in their cribs. Babies must be supervised by sight and sound at all times.

The preschoolers and sprouts children rest after lunch. Children who do not fall asleep rest quietly for at least 45 minutes, and after resting, may play quietly at an activity on their mats. Mats are separated by a minimum of 3 feet. Requests that a child not sleep, or be allowed to sleep for only a specified amount of time, will be considered individually. Teachers will not withhold sleep from a child. Dept of Early Ed and Care mandate a minimum of 45 minutes of quiet or rest time for each child who is in care for over four hours.

Parents may send a favorite ‘lovey” or snugly along with their child blanket. The classrooms provide soft music, dimmed lights and back rubs! Mat sheets and blankets are laundered weekly or as needed. This is a part of parent help or is assigned to a teaching staff member in the classroom.

**Field Trips and Off-Campus Walks**

All CV organized field trips utilize contracted or public transportation. All buses are equipped with seat belts. In the event that alternative transportation is needed the teachers will call the center and Administration will contact parents to pick up children at the site if needed.

Field trips are announced one month in advance. Details regarding the field trip such as destination, transportation, date, time, and length of trip will be posted in the classroom and through email. The teaching team will organize each field trip to ensure that all procedures are implemented and communicated to parents. Organizers will request parent volunteers in writing with explicit information about what responsibilities are involved. Parents volunteers are informed in writing and verbally at least a day ahead, which children they are responsible for on the trip. Parents and children will be given an verbal “briefing” on the morning of the trip which includes an overview of itinerary and safety reminders.
A 2:1 child-to-adult ratio on the trips is recommended and, ideally, one extra “floater” adult with no pre-assigned children who will be available to handle unusual situations. On Pre-K trips, three children may be assigned to each teacher and two children to each parent volunteer. If the group breaks into smaller groups at the site, whenever possible a staff person will be in each of the small groups. When this is not possible, there should be at least two adult volunteers in each small group. There will be periodic regrouping of the whole group as appropriate to the site, and the trip leader will do a “head count” each time everyone regroups. In order to exercise responsible care and respond to unforeseen situations (a difficult child, weather or medical emergency, etc.), the team will have the authority to alter arrangements or take other action as necessary. First Aid Kit, cell phones, Emergency Parent Phone Contact List and any child’s needed medication (e.g. Epi Pens) are always brought along.

CV has one center wide field trip every fall. All classrooms go on this trip with the exception of the infants.

Please note that the above precautions will always be taken. Teachers always leave a note on the classroom door as to their destination, contact information, and time of arrival back to center.

Celebrations

Birthdays
We all enjoy celebrating a child’s birthday. The children are made aware of the special day and the birthday child loves hearing the “Happy Birthday” song. A hand-made birthday hat is provided. Simple parties work out best. If you bring in a special food, please bear in mind non-sweet treats are recommended (see below). Balloons and blowers may not be brought for health and safety reasons. Party favors, piñatas and other forms of entertainment are best for home parties.

To avoid disappointment among children, we ask that you mail invitations for parties outside of the center directly to children’s homes. You can also email invitations to families. The classroom teachers can provide you with a classroom list that includes addresses. Personal invitations should not be placed in the child’s cubbies or mail pockets.

- Please note that the snack planned for the day will always be served first.
- **Suggestions**: banana, pumpkin, or other fruit bread, mini-muffins cupcakes or cookies, rice cakes, juice pops, frozen yogurt, Tofutti, Soy/Rice Dream frozen treats, sorbet, frozen fruit, fresh fruits with dips, smoothies or juice pops
- **NO CANDY may be brought into the classroom**
- Please do not bring in anything containing peanuts or tree nuts as we are a Peanut and Tree Nut Free Center. It is your responsibility as a parent to carefully check all ingredients before bringing them in the center. No food with peanuts or tree nuts will be allowed in the center.
- **It is mandatory that you always speak with your child’s teacher at least 48 hours before bringing in outside food.** Please make arrangements with your child’s teachers if you wish to have a specific time for the party.

Other Holidays
Festivities revolving around holidays, traditions and birthdays are always enjoyable. Within the center the meaning of various cultural traditions and holidays are experienced through simple exposure to foods, music, dress, and crafts. Children’s Village does not espouse any particular religious or political beliefs.
Religious messages are avoided, but questions are answered honestly. Families are invited to share their special traditions and celebrations at the center, making appropriate plans with the teachers ahead of time. A major responsibility for teachers of young children is to help them understand and enjoy the world around them. This is primarily accomplished by introducing and explaining relevant concepts through age appropriate activities. Teachers at CV apply this principle to the celebration of holidays and other cultural and festive occasions. We value the concept of children learning about the differences that exist among them and we welcome ideas from CV parents whose family traditions can be incorporated into room activities that will enrich the children’s understanding and enjoyment of their own and their friends’ backgrounds.

Several holidays are not celebrated at the center because the content would not be meaningful to the children. Other cultural customs and traditions that parents wish to incorporate into their child’s room activities are encouraged. We welcome you to share your special traditions with your child’s classroom. This is much more meaningful to children. Always consider whether it is age appropriate.

Following these guidelines for holiday celebrations and traditions, teachers seek to help children:

- Relate to the holiday symbols that surround them.
- Explore and enjoy their family’s holidays in meaningful and developmentally sound way.
- Learn about the different traditions and celebrations of their friends

Routines, Behavior Management, and Transitions

Classroom Routine and Activities
Teachers follow a routine appropriate to the age group and plan activities that stimulate the interest and development of the children. According to the CV philosophy, teachers use “play” as a vehicle to guide children along their natural path of development. A challenging, fun, and non-competitive environment enables children to have many successful experiences emphasizing what they can do, versus what they cannot do. Teachers will explain in detail the room routine and activities during the initial parent conference.

Guiding Children’s Behavior
Our goal is helping children learn about what behaviors are unacceptable, and understand why they are unacceptable, and ultimately help each child gain control over those behaviors. We strive to provide a consistent and positive approach to guiding children’s behavior. Children are given lots of encouragement and specific praise throughout their day. Children learn best through consistent modeling from teachers.

Teachers work hard to prevent potentially volatile situations from occurring by helping to resolve and diffuse conflicts before they become too upsetting by redirecting children before they lose control of a situation. If a child does lose control of his or her behavior, he or she is given time and space to calm down and regroup. Teachers talk to the child about what she or he did that was unacceptable and then help the child to rejoin the group. Teachers are careful to deal with each child in a way that is not damaging to a child's self esteem. Above all, teachers are positive, proactive and always take into consideration the individual child. Your child's classroom teacher can provide you with a more detailed copy of our behavior management plan. It is posted on the classroom parent board.

The following rules are encouraged:
People are not for hurting
Problems are solved by talking
We take care of ourselves, our friends, and all our belongings at the center

Teaching Staff Never:
- Use physical punishment such as shaking or hitting and do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion (no yelling or shouting whatsoever)
- Use threats or derogatory remarks, humiliation, and neither withhold food or force feed as form of punishment or
- Discipline a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or force a child to remain on the toilet, or use any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting

For children with persistent, serious and challenging behavior, families other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plans that supports the child’s inclusion and success. Staff observes children who have challenging behavior. They identify events, activities, interactions and other contextual factors that predict challenging behavior and may contribute to the child’s behavior

Steps in Behavior Management Plan

1. Communication with teaching team
2. On-going and consistent observation and documentation behaviors
3. Develop a behavior management plan with team
4. Review plan with administration
5. Review plan with parents
6. Make necessary revisions
7. Implement the plan
8. Review plan and monitor progress
9. Modify plan as needed

Outside resources and specialists may need to be contacted if progress is not made. Parents must sign a release form in order for the child to be observed or if any information is shared.

Classroom Transitions
The transition of children from one room to the next depends, first of all, upon whether there is space available in that room. Each room has a maximum allowable number of children under the guidelines of the EEC. Because some children leave CV to begin Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year, September is always a time of numerous room transitions. There are also some children who leave at the beginning of summer because of their families’ summer plans, so it is fairly consistent that some transitions occur in mid-June or early July. If CV is fully enrolled after the September transitions, no transitions can occur during the school year unless a child leaves CV due to the family’s relocation, job change, etc. In the past, the end of the calendar year is a time of change for families, therefore January transitions frequently occur, but there is no guarantee of this.

When openings occur, teachers determine which children are developmentally ready to move to the next room. Parents will be notified prior to any transition (depending on how much advance notice we have). If parents are unsure of the appropriateness of the transition for their child, a conference with the teachers will be scheduled to discuss the matter.

During the 1-2 weeks before the final transition, each child will visit the new room. The time spent in the new room with increase daily so that the child becomes acquainted with the room, routine, teachers, and
other children, most of whom they usually know already. At some point prior to the transition, a conference is held with the parents and a teacher from both rooms. Every effort is taken to make each child’s transition to the next room as smooth as possible. Talking about the new room at home in a positive and enthusiastic way will help the child to be comfortable and excited about the transition.

The Friday before Labor Day must be the last day for Pre-K children moving on to Kindergarten or alternative program. This is due to the center wide transitions that occurs.

**Please note:** Effective January 1, 2009 children enrolled in the Pre-K classroom, who will miss their public school district Kindergarten cut-off age, will be entitled to be re-enrolled for a second year in Pre-K. Administration will consider re-enrollment requests on a case-by-case basis for children who will not miss their public school district Kindergarten cut-off age

**Incident Reports**
Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident Report. Parents are required to sign the report at pick-up time and return it to staff. Should a person other than the parent pick-up the child, a parent or must sign the report and return it to the Administration within 24 hours.
Parent Handbook Disclaimer

I have read and understand the contents of the Children's Village Handbook.

Parent Signature______________________________________Date______________

Please sign and return to the office. This page will remain in your child's file at CV.