

Southwest Valley ECEC Parent Handbook



Revised 1/2024

Southwest Valley ECEC FAMILY HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| Introduction | Page 3 |
| Program Descriptions and Ratio | Page 4 |
| Enrollment | Page 5 |
| Payment Policy | Page 5 |
| Attendance | Page 6 |
| Holidays | Page 7 |
| Inclement Weather | Page 7 |
| Transportation | Page 7 |
| Health Information | Page 8 |
| Safety | Page 9 |
| Missing Child | Page 10 |
| Strangulation Prevention | Page 10 |
| Daily Activities | Page 11 |
| Oral Health | Page 12 |
| Developmental Screening/Monitoring Tool | Page 12 |
| Clothing, Toys & Other Personal Belongings | Page 13 |
| Meals and Snacks | Page 13 |
| Nap Time/Rest Time | Page 14 |
| Behavior Guidelines | Page 14 |
| Parent Involvement | Page 15 |
| Mandatory Reporting Policy | Page 16 |
| Discharge Policy | Page 16 |
| Non-Discrimination Statement | Page 16 |
| Inclusive Practices | Page 17 |
| Tobacco-Free and Nicotine-Free | Page 17 |
| Parent Grievance Policy | Page 17 |
| Biting Policy | Page 18/19 |
| Handbook Acknowledgement | Page 20 |

Revised 1/2024

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to "Southwest Valley ECEC!" Our center is a state licensed facility with a capacity of 54 children, which meets all standards set by the Iowa Department of Human Services for children from 6 weeks of age to 12 years old.

Southwest Valley ECEC was established to provide quality child care that meets the needs of families in Corning and surrounding communities. The ECEC is a family-oriented facility whose goal is to furnish a nurturing environment for children to learn, play and grow. We provide a rich learning environment that fosters each child's individual needs and provides them with the basic skills they need to grow up in today's society.

Southwest Valley ECEC will be an exciting adventure for your child! Not only will he/she be well cared for, your child will also learn a great deal through activities that promote growth and development. Each child is recognized as an individual and is provided a balanced program of constructive activities geared to his/her age and developmental needs.

Southwest Valley ECEC is pleased to welcome your family. We look forward to working with you. This handbook is for you to use and will help you become familiar with our program. As you read through the following pages, you may have questions for us. We value your questions, comments, ideas and concerns and believe that an open line of communication between families and our staff is very important. Please do not hesitate to stop in and see how your child is doing. We'd love to see you!

The Southwest Valley ECEC wants to make sure it is accommodating to everyone. If there is a language barrier or illiteracy issue between parents and the Center, we will find someone in the community to help us help you/ them.

Sincerely,

Southwest Valley Staff

Revised 1/2024

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Placement and changes in a child's program will be conferenced between the director and the lead teacher. We value your suggestions and input that will better meet your child's needs as you are your child's first teacher.

All the programs offered at Southwest Valley ECEC provide a balance between:

- structured and free time
- individual and group activities
- physical activity
- quiet time

Infants

The Infant Program includes children ages 6 weeks to 2 years. Southwest Valley ECEC promotes a warm, nurturing relationship that meets the child's health and safety needs. Young infants are held during feeding while older ones sit in a high chair and are fed at their own developmental level. Stimulation is provided by being held, rocked, played with and talked to individually throughout the day. The ratio for the infant room (6 weeks to 1 year) is 1:4

Toddlers

Children 2 years of age attend the toddler program. Toddlers are introduced to, but aren't limited to: textures, body parts, songs, finger plays, story times and art projects. These skills are used to enhance their language, motor skills and self expression. The ratio for the toddler area (2 year olds) is 1:7.

Preschool Age

Children 3 to 4 years of age participate in such activities as working with colors, shapes, letters, numbers and name recognition. Children will participate in small and large fine/gross motor groups. The ratio for preschool age children (3 year olds) is 1:10 and (4 year olds) is 1:12.

School Age

Children who are 5 to 12 years of age may attend before/after regular school hours, early out days, no school days and during the summer. They are allowed time to socialize and play, as well as get involved in activities offered at the center. Activities are planned throughout the school year for before/after school care. Assistance with homework may be offered to children who need it. The ratio for the school age children (ages 5-10) is 1:15.

The ECEC in Corning has a max capacity of 54 children.

ENROLLMENT/Orientation

It is the policy of Southwest Valley ECEC that applications for enrollment to the ECEC will not be denied because of race, color, national origin, religion or sex.

Parents/guardians must meet with the Director for an orientation to review the policies and contract. At this time I will answer any questions you may have. You can then complete an Enrollment Packet as well as other pertinent and required documentation and return them to the Director. Parents are then welcome to view/tour the center or schedule a time before admission with the director. The following required forms must be completed and on file at the center. The ECEC staff are also made aware of our procedures and policies at time of hire, monthly staff meetings, and communication with you as the parent about your child on an individual basis and making staff aware as all staff are responsible for all children at the center.

- Enrollment Form
- Physical Examination Form (within last 12 months)
- Immunization Record
- Emergency Contact Information
- Childcare Agreement
- Allergy form
- Daycare/ Preschool Schedule and Release Authorizations
- Food Program Application

Parents/guardians are responsible for updating and keeping all information in their child's record current. When changes occur, parents need to notify the Southwest Valley ECEC. Director of the changes one week in advance and before Friday's and complete the appropriate forms.

Your child's records are confidential and the ECEC will not share any personal information on your child or family unless specifically agreed to in writing by you.

The AEA and Corning Community School District are resources to Southwest Valley Early Childhood Education Center to assist families with language barriers and communication if needed.

PAYMENT POLICY

A Fee Agreement is to be completed and returned to the Director at the time of enrollment and before the child's first day at Southwest Valley ECEC. The fees stated on the agreement will be expected on or before Monday (of the week of service) at time of arrival. If the fee is delinquent the child will not be able to return to Southwest Valley ECEC until the account is made current.

A \$1.00 per minute fee will also be charged for late pick-up after daycare regular hours which are until 5:30PM at the Corning facility. Any additional fees will be added to and due the following week.

Payment by check is the preferred method. However, if cash payments are necessary, they should be placed in a

Revised 1/2024

clearly marked envelope. You may also pay using our electronic program. If paying by cash, keep in mind that we do not make change at the center, as cash is not kept on site. If you pay in cash with larger bills your left over amount will be added to your next statement. Whether paying by check or cash, please indicate on the check or the envelope your child's name, the week for which you are paying and the amount of payment. Please make your checks payable to Corning CSD.

Non-sufficient funds: Checks are held until cash or money order is received. If payment is not made within a week of notice, the child will be suspended until payment is made in full. You will be billed for any charges we receive due to a non-sufficient funds check.

Emergency situations will be treated on an individual basis. Every opportunity will be given to families to reach an agreeable financial plan during emergency financial situations. Parents are encouraged to contact the Director as soon as an emergency arises - please do not wait.

ATTENDANCE

The center is open on weekdays, Monday through Friday, from 6:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. The center may be closed due to snow days, other natural disasters, building maintenance issues, and holidays.

We use the Playground Childcare Communication Software to clock children in/out and communicate with parents/guardians. There is a QR code in each room used for signing children in and out within the system. Please clock your child in when arriving and clock him/her out when leaving. We need to have all children signed in and out during the day. If there is another family member or emergency contact person picking up they are responsible for clocking your child in/out of the building.

Note- Any visitors to the center will need to sign in and out with their contact information, time, and the reason for the visit.

For your child's safety please take your child to their designated room and deliver him/her to a staff member. Infants that arrive asleep or fall asleep outside of a safe sleep environment while in care will be removed and placed in their crib. When picking up please notify the staff member with your child's group that you are taking him/her with you. Please let the daycare know if someone other than the specified person will be picking your child up. Let staff know if you plan to arrive much later or earlier than scheduled.

Parents are expected to notify the center when your child will be absent. Informing the center in advance about absences helps with planning and staffing. If you do not make contact with the center before your child's scheduled time, you will be assessed the daily rate of \$35.00 fee which is due at the next scheduled billing date. If your child does not arrive within 30 minutes of their contracted scheduled time the center will call to make sure the child will still be attending for the day.

Drop-in children are welcomed as long as the necessary enrollment forms are on file and room is available in the daycare classroom at the time. You will need to call 24 hours in advance to see if we have an opening for your child.

Revised 1/2024

HOLIDAYS

Southwest Valley ECEC will be closed for ten holidays. These holidays are:

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| -New Year's Eve | -Thanksgiving Day | - Labor Day |
| - New Year's Day | - Friday After Thanksgiving | - Christmas Eve |
| -Good Friday | - Memorial Day | - Christmas Day |
| -Fourth of July | | |

If a holiday falls on a Saturday we will be closed the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday we will be closed the Monday after.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The general policy of Southwest Valley ECEC is to remain open during most weather conditions for the convenience of families. If inclement weather develops during the workday and your schedule will allow you to pick your child up early, we ask that you do so. In the event of severe weather during the night causing the ECEC to close and you are in doubt please call the center.

TRANSPORTATION

The following rules apply to transportation needs of the children who attend our ECEC.

- Transportation to and from Southwest Valley ECEC is the responsibility of the parent. Parents can contact Southern Iowa Trolley to make arrangements for their child's transportation. The phone number for Southern Iowa Trolley is 866-782-6571.
- Southwest Valley ECEC will arrange transportation for field trips sponsored by the center. Parents will be notified in advance of any scheduled outing.
- Transportation to the elementary school is provided by the school district buses. Pick-up and drop-off times are arranged through the school transportation department.

HEALTH INFORMATION

A Physical Examination Form signed by a physician must be completed for enrollment of your child and annually thereafter. Physicals must be within the last year.

Documentation of current immunizations your child has received is required.

Documentation of any allergies that your child might have is required.

Documentation of any special diet needs your child might need is required.

An Emergency Medical Consent Form is necessary in the event that your child needs emergency medical attention.

When changes in any of this information occur, the parent/guardian is to notify the daycare and complete any necessary forms.

Medications

When a child is to be given a prescription or over-the-counter medication, the parent must provide the educational center with a completed and signed Medication Authorization Form. This form is available at the ECEC and will give staff permission to dispense medication to your child according to your doctors' instructions. Please be accurate in indicating your child's name, type of medication, route, date, amount and time of dosage to be given.

All medication must be brought to the daycare in its original container opened and already used once at home with the supervision of the parent/guardian. Medication must indicate your child's name, type of medication, date, amount, time, and route of dosage to be given. Medication must stay at the center once it is given. It is the parents responsibility to ask your pharmacist for an extra bottle or to split the prescription between home and Center. All medication must have a doctor's note, this includes and is not limited to Tylenol, IBUProfen, etc. The only medications that do not require DR. notes are insect repellent and sunscreen.

Ill Children

When a child becomes ill or is seriously injured at the ECEC, the parent will be notified immediately.

If the child's temperature reaches 100.4 Degrees or above while at the ECEC, the parent will be contacted to pick the child up. Children need to be fever/symptom free for 24 hours **after** the fever/symptoms disappear before returning to the center.

Children who are ill (i.e. continuous cough, unexplained rashes, swollen glands, vomiting, fever) will not be accepted into the ECEC.

If a child has been exposed to a communicable disease, and upon symptom observation by a parent or staff indicating any sign of the disease, the child will not be accepted into the ECEC until symptoms of the illness have disappeared. A *Communicable Disease Chart* can be found at the end of this handbook.

A doctor's approval is required for a child to return to the educational center after having a contagious disease.

If your child is ill and unable to attend the educational center, please notify the center within one hour of your normal arrival time so staff can plan accordingly. The ECEC reserves all rights to not accept

Revised 1/2024

children who show signs of illness.

The health and safety rules above are superseded when a pandemic such as Covid 19 occurs. The ECEC staff will have full discretion on what children will be accepted for services based on temperature checks and/or symptoms.

SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

Southwest Valley ECEC staff will administer basic first aid treatment to your child such as applying bandages and/or applying antiseptic for minor cuts, scratches and splinters, applying ice packs for bruises and bumps, etc. Parents will need to complete an Emergency Medical Consent Form in the event that medical care is necessary and the parent is not available.

Injury Report: In the event that a child has been injured at the ECEC, an Injury Report will be completed by staff and provided to the parent. The parent will be asked to sign the report acknowledging receipt of the report.

Incident Report: In the event that a child causes an injury to another person or exhibits persistent and/or serious behavior problems an Incident Report will be completed by staff and provided to the parent. The parent will be asked to sign the report acknowledging receipt of the report.

* A copy of each report will be placed in the child's record at the ECEC and a copy given to the parent.

Staff will consciously practice active supervision in the classrooms, on the playground, and during field trips. During transitions, such as going outside, staff will use face to name recognition as well as head counts before and after the transition. During basic care routines staff will be strategically placing themselves to see all children at all times. Staff will also continually take training, such as the required Child Care Essentials course, to further educate themselves in active supervision. Cell Phones will be used for parent communication only.

We do not play or have field trips near bodies of water (i.e. lakes, ponds, pools). If the ECEC participates in water play (i.e. sensory tables and sprinklers) staff will practice touch supervision. This is when the staff is within arm's length of the children at all times. The water activities that the ECEC would participate in would be sensory table play inside or outside and/or sprinklers outside.

During walks and field trips, extra staff members will accompany the group. We use a guide rope for the children to hold on to during walks. During field trips (ages 4-12) extra staff go along and the buddy system (small groups with a staff) is used. We also talk to the children about what to do if they get separated.

Staff will practice tornado and fire drills with the children monthly. Staff are certified in First Aid and CPR as required. Emergency numbers are posted by all phones and at the main entrance to the daycare. Children's emergency information is available in the educational center.

All staff are trained in playground safety. Upon hire, the director trains the staff on the playground rules and safety procedures. When outside, the ratio is kept so all children are properly supervised at all times. Along with

Revised 1/2024

supervision on the playground, staff will also maintain a safety checklist of the playground that is completed monthly, as well as a scan of the playground at the beginning of the week. The ECEC Playground equipment and fall surfacing has been installed according to manufacturer's instructions, including anchoring. The fall surface (rubber tiling) is maintained by being checked monthly on the safety checklist, along with being checked while outside daily. If the fall surface is needing repaired, the company that installed the surfacing will be contacted to do these repairs. The fall surfacing is also at the required depth in all use zones. The playground checklist that staff use for routine inspection of the playground environment consists of checking for:

- Missing or broken parts
- Protrusion of nuts and bolts, any sharp edges, splinters, and rough surfaces
- Rust and chipping or peeling paint
- Stability of handholds and any non-anchored large play equipment
- Wear and deterioration, including any visible cracks
- Safety hazards such as trash or toys, or stinging insect nests

Any trash or broken pieces will be thrown away. Any unsafe equipment will be taken off the playground. Protrusions will be covered or removed. Chips and peels will be sanded. Any surfacing that is unsafe or wearing down will be reported to the school and surfacing company. Staff has been trained on what to look for from the manufacturing company and school maintenance staff. Staff follow the monthly safety checklist as well to ensure the playground is safe for play.

The Southwest Valley ECEC Director and staff shall not be liable for any accidents or injuries to any child attending the ECEC. Families are responsible for the cost of any necessary medical treatment.

Missing Child

The ECEC will follow daily procedures and safety measures to prevent the event of a missing child. We have a fenced in playground, and use names to face counting when transitioning.

In the event of a missing child, staff will notify the administrator or supervisor, who will have all staff take their classes to their rooms and perform a name to face head count. The administrator and any non ratio staff will complete a search of the entire building, inside and out. Local law enforcement will be contacted, as well as the parent/guardian, with the location of where the child was last seen. DHS will also be contacted and an incident report will be completed within 24 hours of the incident.

Strangulation Prevention

To prevent strangulation, the program has prevention measures in place. Any electrical cords or other strings/cords long enough to encircle a child's neck will not be accessible. The center does not use window coverings with cords or strings-cordless pull down blinds are installed. Dramatic play items such as purses with long straps will be removed or shortened. Any long items such as necklaces, neck ties, boas, etc. are not allowed in dramatic play. Pacifiers attached to strings/ribbon are not allowed. Child clothing items with strings near the neck, such as hoodies, will be stored in cubbies or parents will be asked to remove the strings. We do not use lanyards.

Revised 1/2024

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Fine Motor Activities

The children participate in activities that include the use of such materials as puzzles, pegboards, stacking blocks, plastic snap-together toys and play dough. Specific planned activities will incorporate fine motor skills as part of the daily planning.

Gross Motor Activities

As part of the daily planning, the children will participate in gross motor activities such as but are not limited to: running, hopping, jumping, galloping, skipping, bikes, jump ropes, etc.

Learning Centers

The children will be provided with optional learning centers to express their creativity and explore with curiosity.

Story Time

Staff will read to the children from books or tell stories with flannel boards, dramatizations and/or picture books. As often as possible, the children will participate in and discuss the stories and participate in activities.

Art (creativity)

Children will participate in art activities to help develop creativity and fine motor coordination. Finished art will be used to decorate classrooms and to take home.

Sensory Stimulation

Sensory activities such as finger painting, listening for certain sounds, identifying various odors and tasting different foods will help children learn about all their senses.

Rest Time

In a full day program, many children nap. Those who do not nap still need a quiet time. Rest time is supervised and staff do all they can to make it a relaxing and comfortable atmosphere for the children.

Talking and Problem Solving

Children are introduced to vocabulary through sharing experiences and are involved in activities that encourage them to reason and to solve problems. Children are encouraged to talk about their problems when conflicts arise.

Songs and Games

Children develop large and small muscles as well as coordination, balance and rhythm by singing, playing

Revised 1/2024

instruments, following exercises and participating in movement games.

Circle Time/Meeting Time

The children gather in a circle, usually sitting on the floor, to share news, tell stories, sing songs, enjoy rhymes, do finger plays and dramatizations, and participate in calendar and weather activities.

Outdoor Classroom

Unless extreme weather conditions prevail, the children will go outdoors to socialize, to play on playground equipment, to take walks, etc. Children should always be dressed appropriately for the daily weather conditions, including coats, boots, hats, mittens and scarves.

Snacks and Lunch

Staff will eat meals with the children and use these opportunities to stress good nutrition as well as to develop language, vocabulary, social and self care skills. Meals will be served family style which will help stimulate socialization and enhance table manners.

Cleanup

Children will be expected to assist in picking up toys, wiping tables, organizing materials and maintaining order in the classroom which will help them learn responsibilities, cooperation and develop a sense of pride.

Birthdays

Southwest Valley ECEC will acknowledge each child's birthday. If you wish to send treats on your child's birthday, please notify staff in advance. Treats must be unopened/pre-wrapped from the store.

Oral Health

Good oral hygiene is important for all children. We require each child's dentist/resource list for children without a dentist. We implement daily tooth brushing with song and direction. We only use sippy cups and bottles at mealtimes and not at nap times. Following CACFP guidelines helps us promote toothbrushing. We also engage in age appropriate oral health educational activities such as but not limited to; painting with toothbrushes, brushing teeth on paper with shaving cream and a toothbrush. If there is a dental emergency parents will be contacted immediately and handle the situation at hand as the parent. Tooth brushes are replaced as needed.

Developmental Screening/Monitoring Tool

Staff at the ECEC uses developmental monitoring tools to monitor children's meeting of appropriate milestones. Your child's development is important to us at the ECEC. We will use the ASQ SE for children within 60 days of enrollment and every year thereafter if the child meets age requirements. This tool will help the staff and you as the parent identify your child's milestone achievements and help identify if additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies are needed. These results are only shared with parents unless permission is given.

Revised 1/2024

CLOTHING, TOYS & OTHER PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Clothing

- Parents are encouraged to send their child in comfortable play clothes and shoes.
- Children should always dress for the daily weather conditions so they can participate in the daily outdoor play time.
- Each child should have an extra set of clothes at the center in case clothing gets wet or soiled and should be replaced when needed. Please label your child's clothes with their name or initials.
- Parents of infants must provide the bottles, diapers, and wipes for their child.

Toys

- No toys should be brought from home to the ECEC. We have age appropriate toys and activities available to the children.
- The ECEC may have a "show and tell" day when students can bring things from home to show to the group. After showing, items will be put back into bags to be taken home.
- The ECEC will not be responsible for toys brought from home.

Other Belongings

- Children are allowed to bring a blanket and pillow to be used at nap time. Please label with your child's name or initials. These Blankets and Pillows will remain at the ECEC.

MEALS & SNACKS

Southwest Valley ECEC will provide the following nutritious and well-balanced meals and snacks in accordance with the Child and Adult Food Program standards for Educational Centers:

- Breakfast at 8:00 A.M.
- Lunch at 11:00AM
- Snack 2:30PM & 3:15 pm ASP

No Food is to be brought to the center with your child. Special treats (unopened) brought for your child's group are welcome for such events as birthdays, etc. Please notify your child's teacher beforehand so that arrangements can be made. Thank you for your cooperation with our food policy.

If a special diet is necessary for a child or a child has any food allergies, the center must be notified with a written copy of any foods the child may or may not eat. This information should be included in the enrollment forms. Parents may be asked to provide any special foods that the center doesn't have on hand or is unable to get.

Revised 1/2024

NAP TIME/REST TIME

Children age 5 and younger are encouraged to have rest time after lunch even if they do not nap. If your child is not accustomed to napping, he/she will still be expected to rest on a cot for a period of time while the other children are sleeping. School Age children also have a period of “quiet time” during full time days and are provided with a movie during this time. This is typically from 12:00PM-2:00PM.

Infants 12 months and under are placed on their back to sleep, and any infants under 4 months of age that roll over during sleep will be rolled back to their backs. The ECEC cannot sleep a child in another position without a waiver from the child's primary physician stating the medical need, and the waiver must have an expiration date.

The sleep environment for infants consists of; firm mattresses, one infant per crib, no blankets, no swaddling, tight fitting sheets, with nothing else in their cribs. The temperature of the room is set between 68-72 degrees, and staff will check the infant for signs of overheating during the period of sleep. These signs may be sweating or labored breathing. If an infant falls asleep with a bib, hoodie, pacifier clip, or any other hazard they will be removed before placed in the crib. If a child arrives asleep in their carrier or falls asleep anywhere but their crib, they will be immediately moved to their crib.

Nap times will be dependent on the infant's needs and schedules. During nap time for infants, supervision at all times, of sight and sound, is maintained by staff consistently zoning the room. Bedding is changed in cribs as needed and always washed and the cribs are sanitized on Fridays. Cribs are also labeled with each infant's name so that beds are not shared and the center has manufacturer certificates on file.

The infant safe sleep policies will be shared and explained to parents during the orientation process. Staff will be trained on safe sleep by administration or by Safe Sleep training courses.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Southwest Valley ECEC provides a warm and loving atmosphere for your child. Staff are trained in positive reinforcement, and model desired behaviors through various training throughout the year. Upon hire, the director communicates and discusses the policies and procedures described in this handbook. Parents/guardians are made aware of these guidelines through the handbook and communication with staff at time of enrollment. These are the methods used to provide guidance, and these forms of interaction and guidance between children and staff will help children develop kindness and self-respect, solve problems independently, and grow into responsible people. This method of positive reinforcement will also form a trusting relationship between staff members and the children. Spanking and other forms of physical or corporal punishment are not permitted.

Revised 1/2024

If positive reinforcement and modeling does not help with any behavior problems, a conference with the child's parents may be necessary to determine a plan of action to help the staff and child be successful. If a child becomes a serious threat to the safety or security of others or him/herself, the child will be removed from the situation and his/her parents will be contacted. An Incident Report will be used to document a child's persistent and/or serious behavior. The completed report will be provided to the child's parent with a copy placed in the child's file.

After repeated serious behavior, a parent meeting may be required where a plan for help will be created and decided on. Referrals to Area Education Agency and/or Mental Health Services may also be appropriate. A refusal for a modification or plan may be grounds for dismissal from the program. Southwest Valley ECEC will assist in any way possible with the transfer to a new program, including sharing of information and referrals.

If there is a staff concern that is shared with the director, based on the situation at hand it will be taken care of swiftly and accordingly in house. We understand your concerns here at the ECEC and a follow up may or may not be necessary with the parent. The in house conversations with staff are confidential and the director is not at liberty to discuss with you. Be assured that the situation is dealt with on an individual basis as well as a group center conversation if necessary. We take every concern a parent has seriously and look to always remedy all situations.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Only through communication, cooperation and understanding between the home and the educational center can the well-being of your child be assured. There are many ways which parents and daycare staff can communicate with one another. The following are some ways the educational center uses to maintain communication with parents/guardians;

Day to Day Communication

This is best handled by talking to staff when your child is dropped off or picked up. If this isn't sufficient please let daycare staff know and an appointment can be set up.

Bulletin Board

Please check the parents' bulletin boards daily. They are located above the children's cubbies and outside the classrooms. Monthly menus, up-coming special events, and other special communications are posted on these boards.

Newsletters

Families will receive newsletters from the educational center with helpful information about what is going on in the center. Be sure to check your child's cubby or take home folders for these newsletters.

Visits

The educational center maintains an open door policy and visits by parents/guardians are encouraged at any time, during open house, etc.

Tours of the center may be provided upon request.

Conferences

Revised 1/2024

Conferences will be regularly scheduled for children, however, if a parent feels one is not necessary, then they will not be required to have one.

Phone Calls

In the event of an emergency, please call the center immediately.

Other phone calls to the center should be limited as this interrupts activities by taking staff away from the children.

Reports

Activity, Incident, Injury and other reports will be provided to parents as outlined in this handbook.

Volunteers

Parents are urged to take part in the planning of trips, programs and other activities. You are also invited to help in public relations activities. Please let the director know if you have any ideas for field trips and activities. You are also invited to attend field trips if possible. Parents may be asked to fill out idea/activity curriculum sheets.

Family Handbook

Please become familiar with this handbook. If you have questions please ask.

MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Southwest Valley ECEC staff are mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect. Iowa's Department of Human Services requires care givers to report suspected cases of child abuse which includes the reporting of parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

DISCHARGE POLICY

The discharge of a child can occur when the Director and family agree that it is in the best interest of the child and/or organization. The following situations may result in a child being discharged from the center:

Failure of parent/guardian to meet center policies

Failure to make payment for services

Inability of child to adjust to the center given a reasonable amount of time

Child poses a threat to other children, staff or his/her self regardless of behavior intervention attempts.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they

Revised 1/2024

applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3)email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Inclusive Practices

All children at the ECEC are included in all activities. By being included, children with special needs develop increased social skills and self-esteem. Our program meets the needs of each child individually to ensure that they are included in all forms during activities. The staff obtain training annually to ensure the needs of all children are met accordingly. We will meet with parents and specialists based on the referral of each child individually. If a child requires a care plan (IEP, Health Plan Needs, etc) to implement as required to support meaningful participation.

Tobacco-Free and Nicotine- Free

Southwest Valley ECEC is a tobacco free and nicotine free school. NO use or possession of tobacco, nicotine, electronic cigarettes, and vaping are prohibited on the grounds (including employee's vehicles while at work), and in any vehicles used to transport children. Any staff are prohibited from wearing clothing that smells of smoke when working and will be asked to change if needed.

PARENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Southwest Valley ECEC strives to communicate with parents through daily personal contact, bulletin board notices, sending reports home with children, conferences and newsletters. The center welcomes and appreciates any and all feedback from parents about the center's policies and services. Good communication between parents and the center helps us provide better service and improves the quality of care your child receives. When situations arise that aren't resolved to the parent's/guardian's satisfaction, the following procedure should be followed:

Step 1: The parent/guardian should always first talk over their complaint with their child's **staff person/teacher**. This should be done within five working days of the occurrence of the problem. The Director will investigate, evaluate and provide a solution or explanation within five working days. The response may or may not be in writing.

Revised 1/2024

Step 2: If not satisfied with the response from the Director, the parent/guardian may submit within five working days their grievance in writing to the Southwest Valley School. After thoroughly investigating all aspects of the complaint, the school will respond in writing to the parent/guardian within 10 working days. Any decision rendered by the school is final.

BITING POLICY

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and staff. This biting policy has been developed with both of these ideas in mind. As a daycare, we understand that biting, unfortunately, is a part of a daycare setting. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur:

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children such as biting back or washing a child's mouth out with soap.

For the child what was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. The "Injury Occurring at School" form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child "NO! DO NOT BITE!"
2. The parents are notified
3. The "Parent Contact Form" is filled out documenting the incident.

When biting continues:

Revised 1/2024

1. The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents.
2. The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
3. The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.

When biting becomes excessive:

1. If a child inflicts 3 bites in a one week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. If the child again inflicts 3 bites in a one week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a mark, the child will be suspended for **2 business days**.

If a child who has been through steps 1 and/or 2, goes 3 weeks (15 business days) without biting, we will go back to step one if the child bites again.

If a child bites twice in a 4 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up from daycare for the remainder of the day. This will not count towards the 2 day suspension.

*** This policy is effective January 10th, 2020.. All past experiences of biting are not included in this policy, as this policy was not in effect at the time of biting. All biting occurrences from today forward will be counted towards a child's total biting incidents.

Parent Handbook acknowledgement:

I, _____, have read and fully understand the contents of the Southwest Valley E.C.E.C. Family Handbook.

Signed: _____

Date: _____