

**St. John's Early Learning Center**

# **Parent Handbook**

**Philosophy, Policies, and Procedures**

**Revised January 2017**

# Philosophy

## Our mission...

To proclaim and spread God's Good News in Jesus Christ through Word and Deed.

## Our vision...

Called by the Holy Spirit, gathered in faith saved by grace, we will worship, learn and serve.

## We strive to be...

A people who cherish The Gospel of Jesus Christ and root our hope on the power of God's word.

A people who learn together about God's purpose for our lives through Bible study, other educational and service opportunities.

A people who invite you to join us in meaningful worship.

St. John's Early Learning Center is based on the child development model which incorporates:

- Learning through play and implemented as the cornerstone of the curriculum.
- Our staff provides protection, security, stimulation, support, limits and affection.
- Children are respected as individuals within a child-oriented rather than teacher-directed program.

At St. John's Early Learning Center, children are given the opportunity to explore materials and participate in a variety of experiences. Activities are carefully planned and implemented in an open-classroom setting. Children are free to choose from age-appropriate activities including art, music, language development, pre-math skills, science and nature, and dramatic play. Children develop self-esteem, independence and problem-solving skills as they make choices and assist in planning the environment and the activities.

Our primary goal is for children to feel safe and secure. Children are treated with respect and kindness. We recognize that children develop at different rates and have different interests. Our focus is on the whole child; mind, body, and spirit. We strive to help each child achieve a great feeling of self-worth, a lifetime love for learning, and build a positive self-image.

# Daily Schedule and Curriculum

During the course of the day your child will experience some of the following activities:

## **Creative Expression**

When children interact with art materials such as paper, glue, markers, paint, etc., they create something that is unique and belongs to them. Preschoolers may use paint as a sensory experience rather than an artistic experience, but this lends itself to the child learning what the medium can do, thus leading to a greater understanding of how to use paint. Some children use lots and lots of paint and others use barely any. Any and all paintings are celebrated because they are the child's creation.

## **Science and Pre-Math Skills**

Comparisons – greater than, less than, equal to, alike and different, more, fewer

Measurements –longer, shorter, taller, wider

Reading and writing numerals 0 to 10

Graphing – to demonstrate similarities/differences and create another form of developing counting and pattern skills.

Counting – using tangible items to develop counting skills

## **Music/Finger Plays and Rhythmic Movement**

Music is used to introduce daily routines such as a cleanup song or a lunch time song. Music is shared with others in singing, dancing, and playing instruments together and is by its very nature a social experience. So, music helps build social and emotional skills. It also helps in self-regulation. We sing soothing songs to very young children. Music plays a powerful role in the lives of young children. Most important, sharing music experiences with the people they love makes very young children feel cherished and important.

## **Jesus Time**

Through stories, Chapel, and music time we intend to promote an environment that allows children to ask and learn about The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Progress reports**

Our policy in informing the parents of the child's behavior, progress, and social and physical needs is to provide 3-4 progress reports during the year. We also communicate with parents on daily basis verbal and through emails.

### **Story Time and Pre-reading skills**

Children will participate in large group and small groups as they are read to, read/look at books on their own, and participate in literacy developing activities.

- Picture "reading" – recognizing fish drawing as representing the concept and the word "fish"
- Picture-book "reading" – looking at pages of a theme-specific book – making up their own words
- Association of certain beginning sounds with animals, etc. that begin with that sound
- Listening to theme-specific stories and relating the stories to the theme activities

### **Cooking**

When children cook they engage in using a hands-on-approach to learning math and science skills such as measurement of liquids, mixing, and seeing the before/after effects of cooking.

### **Outdoor Activities**

Learning and playing are not limited to the classrooms. Children participate in the outdoor environment each day. There are opportunities for water play, woodworking and motor development.

### **Special Guests (in-school field trips)**

Throughout the year, we will have special guests such as the Butterfly Pavilion, Magician, Music Man (Mr. Marty every other Thursday morning), and others to present the children with additional opportunities to learn and grow. These activities are in addition to our enriched curriculum.

**The following is a typical day at St. John's ELC:**

- 6:30-7:30 Welcome Activities**
- 7:30-8:45 Exploration Time**
- 8:45-9:00 Clean-up time**
- 9:30-10:00 Circle time/begin curriculum (large group)**
- 10:00-10:30 Mid-Morning Snack**
- 10:30-11:00 Small group activities**
- 11:00-11:15 Clean-up time**
- 11:15-11:30 Jesus Time**
- 12:00-12:30 Outside Activities (gross motor skill)**
- 12:30-1:00 Lunch**
- 1:00-3:00 Rest time**
- 3:00-3:30 Afternoon snack**
- 3:30-4:30 Small group activities**
- 4:30-4:45 Clean-up time**
- 4:45-5:30 Outside Activities (gross motor skill)**
- 5:30-6:00 Exploration time**
- 6:00-6:30 Clean-up and goodbye time**

# Policies and Procedures

## Admission and Registration

Prior to a child attending our Center, the following must be completed:

1. Enrollment Application
2. Health record (found in enrollment packet) signed and dated by a physician.
3. Immunization card filled out by doctor's office.
4. Tuition agreement (signature of reading and complying to the parent handbook is suffice).
5. Signature of all forms in the Enrollment Application, which includes:
  - a. Authorization for emergency medical care
  - b. Parent handbook acknowledgement
  - c. Sunscreen permission
  - d. Nap Mat permission
  - e. Field trip and Television/Video Viewing

## Hours of Operation

Our hours of operation are from 6:30AM to 6:30PM. Children who attend a full-time day are permitted to attend from open to close. Children who attend part-time, preschool only, or 3 day schedule MUST attend in their allotted time/days. If a schedule change is needed, parent/guardians must seek approval from the Director. Additional fees will accrue for children who attend out of their scheduled days in accordance with our fee list. Children must be at the preschool by 10am. We begin lesson plans and activities in the morning and for planning purposes/staffing it is important that we have accounted for the correct teacher/child ratios. We will consider your child absent for the day if they have not arrived at the center by 10am. If you have appointments or things of that nature, please be sure to let us know in advance.

## Attendance

Children enrolled in our program have a secure spot in our center. Notification of absences due to illness, vacations, and other circumstances must be reported to the Director in advance, if possible. If no notification is received after two weeks, the child may be withdrawn from our program. Families are allowed up to one week of vacation time without paying tuition. After this time, families will need to pay ½ their normal tuition rate in order to hold their spot.

Our procedure for identifying where children are at all times is to conduct head counts every 15 minutes. Each classroom is equipped with a dry erase board to mark who is in or out of the class at all times.

## Withdrawal from the Center

A two week notice is required if you wish to withdraw from our center. If a child is removed from the center without notice, you will be required to pay the FULL two weeks tuition.

## Holiday and Closures

The Center is open Monday through Friday with the exception of the following holidays:

New Year's Day                      Memorial Day                      Independence Day  
Labor Day                              Thanksgiving Day and the day after                      Good Friday

-We will be closed for ONE week at Christmas time.

-We also close at a TBD time the week of Vacation Bible Study (notices will be posted ASAP).

**-The center follows Adams 12 School District polices for all closures and delays.**

# Tuition/Fees

Tuition is payable in advance for child care services provided. You may choose to pay your fees in full on the first of the month or bi-weekly of each month. Statements are NOT sent out each week; therefore parent/guardians should actively pay tuition on a regular basis.

Since our Child Care Center operates under a break even budget, past due accounts cannot be tolerated. If an account is more than one month past due, your child may lose their enrollment spot.

Enrollment in this center is an agreement to pay any and all fees required for your child to attend our program.

## Tuition Rates as of January 2017:

### **Weekly Full-time Rate:**

5 days	3 Full-time days
\$190	\$150

### **Part-time days (4 hours max)**

5 days	3 Part-time days
\$165	\$120

### **Preschool Only days (9am to 11:30am)**

5 days	3 Preschool Only days
\$120	\$95

### **Fees:**

Annual Registration Fee- \$50 per a family.

Late tuition payments- A fee of \$10 will be added to the normal tuition rate for payments received more than two week past due.

Late pick-up- \$1 per minute is charged after our closing time (6:30). This fee is due within 24 hours of the late pick-up day to the closing staff member.

There is a \$25.00 returned check fee.

Summer Activity Fee- \$100 per a family.



## School Operation

Children 2 ½ to 6 years old may attend our center Monday-Friday when space is available. We are open from 6:30am to 6:30pm. We will provide two snacks (mid-morning and afternoon). You must provide a lunch each day for your child. If you forget a lunch, we will provide lunch for a \$3.00 fee.

## Special Needs

St. John's ELC admits students of any race, color, national origin, and gender to all the rights and privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and gender in administration of its educational policies and other center administered programs.

Special needs children are accepted if our staff is qualified in caring for their individual needs. We will maintain compliance with the ADA.

## Parent Communication

Communication is essential as we work together to meet the needs of your child. Please call (303-920-2142) or email ([stjohnsearlylearningcenter@hotmail.com](mailto:stjohnsearlylearningcenter@hotmail.com)) if you have any questions. If you have any questions concerning Center policy or practice, please ask the teachers or the manager.

# Drop-Off and Pick-Up

The Center is open at 6:30 am and will close at 6:30 pm. Children should not arrive any earlier than 6:30 am or be picked up any later than 6:30 pm. In order to assure the safety of your child, we ask an authorized adult sign your child in and out each day. The sign in and out book is located as you enter our building. After signing-in, take your child to the designated classroom or area. Make verbal contact with a teacher in order for us to know that your child has arrived. We cannot be responsible for a child that we do not know has arrived. Please do not allow older children to enter the building or classroom alone.

Difficulty with separation is not unusual for children, especially during their first weeks of attendance. Please help prepare your child for your departure. A teacher will be happy to assist you if necessary and help your child settle into an activity. If a child is upset when you leave, please know that children usually calm down and are participating before a parent reaches the parking lot. Please feel free to call at any time to check on your child.

Children will not be released to anyone who is not authorized in writing. If an unauthorized person attempts to pick-up the child, the child will be kept with a staff member in a different area while the Director authorizes the pick-up. If no verification is made the child will not be released. Verification of authorized persons requires a copy of their photo ID. Local law enforcement will be notified of any illegal pick-up attempts.

**\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY IF ANY INFORMATION ON YOUR REGISTRATION FORM NEEDS TO BE UPDATED. WE MUST BE ABLE TO REACH YOU IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY\*\*\*\*\***

## Late Pickup Policy

A late charge of \$1 per a minute is assessed and payable within 24 hours by the parent/guardian to the staff member who must remain at the Center.

## Non-pickup of a Child

If your child has not been picked up one-half hour after their scheduled pickup time and parent or guardian contacts have not been reached, the emergency contacts will be called. If every emergency contact provided has been tried and we are unsuccessful in reaching someone after an hour and fifteen minutes, the police will be contacted.

## Inclement Weather

All children go outside every day. Please send labeled clothing appropriate for the weather. During a light rain, we may take a walk, so a raincoat is advisable. On snowy days, send boots, hats, gloves and layers of warm clothing. During the summer, we will have lots and lots of water play. We feel that outdoor play is important for each child, each day. **Please do not ask that your child stay inside, as we are not staffed for one-to-one care.**

Children will not be allowed outside during extreme weather conditions would be:

- A temperature 25°F or below.
- There is visible precipitation or lightening in the area.
- There is snow covering 50% or more of the playground surface.
- The temperature is 95°F or above.

## Clothing

All children need at least one complete, labeled change of clothing at the Center. As the seasons change please check and change the outfits left at the Center. Young children may need several changes of clothing each day, especially those involved in toilet learning.

## Guidance and Discipline

As children mature and try to gain self-control, they may lose control. At such times, children may be redirected to another activity. Sometimes talking about what has happened eases the tension. A child may occasionally need to sit quietly in order to calm down and regain self-control.

We have a “time-out” policy for children who are being disruptive. He/she will be put in time-out 1-5 minutes depending on age. They will always remain within sight of a teacher.

Children are never spanked, humiliated, or embarrassed. If the behavior is persistent, teachers will examine the environment and the events which surround the behavior. Through observation and discussion, teachers will decide the most appropriate way of dealing with the situation. Parents will also be asked to share their ways of disciplining their children. If your child’s behavior adversely affects the class as a whole on a continuing basis, you will be asked to remove your child from our Center. This will be used as a last measure.

# Illness

According to State Licensing Standards, a child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to the Center. Please do NOT administer a fever-suppressant and bring your child to the Center. This is unfair not only to your child but also to the other children and teachers.

**Listed below are criteria for EXCLUDING ill or infected children from the Center.**

FEVER, defined by the child's age as follows:

4-24 month olds 101F axillary

Older than 24 months 102F axillary or oral

SIGNS OF POSSIBLE SEVERE ILLNESS, including unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing.

UNCONTROLLED DIARRHEA- defined as an increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper or toilet use.

VOMITING, two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.

MOUTH SORES, with drooling unless the child's physician has determined the illness not to be a communicable disease.

RASH, with fever or behavior change until a physician has determined the illness not be a communicable disease.

PURULENT CONJUNCTIVITIS, defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, including a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye.

INFESTATION (e.g., scabies, head lice), until 24 hours after treatment was begun.

IMPETIGO, until 24 hours after treatment was begun.

STREPTOCOCCAL PHARYNGITIS, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been fever-free for 24 hours.

PINWORM, until 24 hours after treatment was begun.

RINGWORM, until 24 hours after treatment was begun

CHICKEN POX, until 6 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted.

RUBELLA, until 7 days after the rash appears.

SOURCE: American Academy of Pediatrics/American Public Health Assoc.

## Accidents and Injuries

If a serious injury occurs that requires medical attention you will be notified immediately. Depending on the injury, 911 may also be called. An accident report will be filled out with social services with a copy for the parent.

## Medications

Occasionally, children will need to receive medication while at the Center. If your schedule allows, you may wish to come during the day and give the medication yourself. We store all medication in a locked cabinet in the preschool office.

**In order for the Center to assume that responsibility, the following guidelines must be followed:**

- 1) Prescription medication must be ordered by a physician for the child to receive the medication. Do not ask that we administer medication that was prescribed for another child or member of your family. Prescriptions must be in the original container with your child's name on the prescription
- 2) No medication, whether prescription or non-prescription, will be administered to a child without written parental authorization. Permission to administer medication forms are available in the office. The medication form must include the following:
  - A. Name of medication
  - B. Amount of dose
  - C. Time to be given
  - D. Date(s) to be given
  - E. Parent signature

**Medication should be handed to your child's teacher rather than leaving it on the counter or in a cubby. All medication must be in the original container with the child's name printed clearly on the label.**

# Storage of Inhalers and Epinephrine

St. John's policy on the storage and access of inhalers and epinephrine for all children in care. This has been reviewed by the Child Care Health Consultant. Page 60, Administrative Guide: Rules Regulating Child Care Centers 7.702.

Colorado Childcare Licensing Rule 7.702.52C:

Written policy on storage and access of the approved medication:

1. Medication will be stored as follows:

- Inaccessible to children and of reach of children, securely stored but not under a key lock method. Childproof locks such as clipped devices, are acceptable. The cabinet or go bag the medication is stored in must be labeled as Emergency Medications and/or with a red cross clearly available to staff.

All medications including inhalers, nebulizers, and epipens, must be stored in a leak proof bag with the MD order, the parent permission form, the original prescription label in the original packaging, a picture of the student, and the expiration date of both the MD order and the medication clearly marked on the bag. Parent contact information must be included on the parent permission form.

- Separate from staff medication. Staff medication must be stored in the director's office, the staff automobile, or a locked staff closet/locker. No controlled medications are allowed onsite for staff.

- Protected from sources of contamination.

- Away from heat, light and sources of moisture (not in the kitchen or bathroom).

- At temperature specified on the label (refrigerated if required)

- Separate from food.

- In a sanitary and orderly manner

2. Medications no longer being used will promptly be returned to parents/guardians or discarded.

3. Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of instructions provided by the health care provider.

4. Medications must not be dispensed to the childcare center on an “as needed” basis. Instructions must be clearly stated as to the situation they are to be dispensed. The nurse consultant will be responsible for reviewing the order and clarifying the instructions with the medication trained staff.

St. John’s Early Learning Center does not enroll school age children at this time. In the event that changes the following shall apply:

d A school-aged child will be allowed to administer his or her own inhaler or Epi-pen when the above requirements are met AND: 1. A written statement from the child's Health Care Provider and parent/legal guardian is obtained, indicating the child is capable of self-medication without assistance 2. The child's medications and supplies are inaccessible to other children. 3. Staff must observe and record documentation of self-administered medications.

# Emergencies

Our staff is prepared to deal with a variety of emergency situations. During all circumstances, teachers will remain calm and stay with the children. In the case of a weather related emergency, such as a tornado warning, children will be taken into our designated shelter, the bathrooms for safety. If there is a fire, children will go outside using the closest exit and walking across the parking lot. Center staff will check the building. Attendance will be taken immediately to ensure all children are accounted for in all emergencies. If there is a lost child one staff member will conduct a search of the building and property while another staff member alerts the parents and proper authorities.

In the event of any evacuation specific to the child care facility or a local evacuation the staff and children will evacuate the building and gather at any of the following locations

- Conoco 303)252-0790 located at:  
11090 Colorado Blvd. Thornton, Colorado 80233
- Carpenter Rec. Center 303)255-7800 located at:  
11151 Colorado Blvd. Thornton, Colorado 80233
- Thornton Fire Department #3 303)538-7602 located at:  
11257 Birch Drive Thornton, Colorado 80233

\*\*In the event that the staff and children are evacuated to a shelter due to a pre-evacuation or mandatory evacuation location every attempt will be made to inform parents of the shelter location as soon as staff and children have been safely evacuated.

# Transportation of Children

We do NOT transport children in motor vehicles to field trips or at any other time. Field trips usually involve visits from Special Guests (Butterfly Pavilion, etc...) or involve nature walks around the premises.

# Visitors

All parents or guardians are welcome to visit our center at any time. All other visitors must check in with center personnel and sign the visitor's log book, which lists the visitor's name, address, and purpose of the visit.



# Toilet Training

We ask that all children are toilet trained before enrolling in the Center, however it is not required. If your child is not fully trained you must provide the following:

1. A box of pull-ups
2. Wet wipes
3. Gloves

It is best if we can duplicate the routines and methods that you are using in order to have consistency for the child. We will try to assist as much as possible, but we do not have the staff required to change diaper or pull-ups on a regular basis.

# Children's Personal Belongings

If your child has a favorite sleep toy or any other security item, they are welcome to bring them to school. **Please label all items brought to school.**

We ask that children not bring the following items to the Center:

Toys (only allowed on Fridays for Show&Tell)

Toy weapons of any type

Money

Gum, candy

Cosmetics

Jewelry

# Birthdays

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at the Center, please discuss your plans with a staff member; he or she can advise you of any food allergies and scheduling.

# Pictures

During the year we will be photographing the children for various events. We also offer two sessions with a photography company for professional pictures to be taken (Fall and Spring). If you DO NOT want your child to be photographed, please let us know.

# Filing a Complaint

Our center is licensed under the authority of the Colorado Department Services. If you have a complaint, please write or call:

St. John's ELC  
11040 Colorado Blvd.  
Thornton, CO 80241

DIVISION OF CHILD CARE  
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714  
303-866-5958

## Reporting Child Abuse

Our child care facility requires each staff member of the facility to read and sign a statement clearly defining child abuse and neglect pursuant to state law and outlining the staff member's personal responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according to state law.

Any caregiver or staff member in a child care facility who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency.

If the suspected child abuse occurred at the child care facility, the report of suspected child abuse must be made to the county department of social services, police department, or other law enforcement agency in the community or county in which the child care facility is located.

If the suspected child abuse did not occur at the child care facility, the report of suspected child abuse must be made to the county department of social services in the county in which the child resides or to the local law enforcement agency in the community in which the incident is believed to have occurred.

At the time of admission the facility must give the child's parent or guardian information that explains how to report suspected child abuse or child neglect.

# PARENT REMINDERS

(POST AT HOME & WORK/SCHOOL FOR REFFERANCE)

- In order to take full advantage of our program, all children should arrive at the center before 10:00 AM. Children must be signed in and brought into their classrooms by an adult.
- Your child will be released only to the individuals listed on the Authorized Pick-up List.
- If for some reason, another individual will be picking up your child, we must be notified, preferably in writing.
- Any changes in your address, phone numbers, employment location, doctor, medical information, emergency contact, etc., should be furnished in writing to the office as soon as possible.
- Children with infectious symptoms (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rashes, head lice, ring worm, impetigo, chicken pox, strep throat, conjunctivitis, sore throat, etc.) should be kept home. The child should be free of fever without medication for approximately 24 hours and with symptoms abating before returning to the center.
- The Center staff will administer only medicine that has been prescribed by a doctor and is in its original container. A medical permission sheet must be completed if your child is to receive medicine at the center.
- Send your child to school in comfortable play clothes. Each child should have ONE complete change of clothes (including socks, diapers and/or underwear) in his/her cubby for emergencies. Children not yet toilet trained should supply their own wet wipes and diapers.
- We discourage children from bringing toys to the center as this frequently leads to loss, breakage, and problems with sharing. Toys that must remain at home are guns, war toys and other toys that promote aggressive play.
- Each child needs a nap sheet and blanket marked with his/her name. These are sent home to be washed on Fridays and should be returned clean on Mondays.
- Lunch boxes should be placed in the refrigerator each morning and be taken home each night.
- ALL belongings such as coats, snow boots, hats, gloves, backpacks, etc... should be labeled. We CANNOT be responsible for items that are misplaced if they are not labeled.
- Our quiet/rest time is from 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm. We request that children are not picked up during this time; however, if it is necessary, please notify a staff member in order for us to assist you in getting your child ready for dismissal.
- We follow Adams 12 School District weather closures. Tune into your local news; if Adams 12 is closed, so are we.

**St. John's ELC**  
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**Email: stjohnsearlylearningcenter@hotmail.com**