

# A Child's Place

## **PHILOSOPHY**

*Childhood is a time of wonder, curiosity, and investigation. We feel that all preschool experiences should be successes. Successes raise self-esteem, and a positive self-image is the one most important asset we can help your child achieve.* -Mildred W. Frazer, Founder

A Child's Place, Inc does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, or ethnic origin in admission, administration of its educational policies and the enforcement of enrollment policies.

## STAFF

A school is only as good as its teachers and we are proud of ours. Our school is staffed with well-qualified, experienced, caring people who enjoy working with children. Our teachers and aides have considerably more training than is required by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Some are college graduates, while others are currently enrolled in college curriculum.

Before hiring, the background and references of each applicant are carefully checked. Every employee of the school must have a criminal record check by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## OUR COMMUNICATION LINES

Good communication between parents and the school is essential in order for the children's needs to be met and for the school to function well. We have several ways of communicating with you.

- Our preschool teachers make use of naptime to write daily reports for each child. These are put out with your child's papers for you to pick up every afternoon. This "daily report" tells you how your child ate and slept, and any memorable moments or special problems that occurred throughout the day.
- Our monthly newsletter informs you about staff members, upcoming events, special activities, the monthly themes, and other important information. The newsletter also includes a school calendar with field trips, class events and school holidays. Please read these carefully, we would not send them out without a cause and a need for your attention.
- Please check the dry-erase board in the kitchen for daily announcements and reminders.
- If your child receives a bruise, cut or other small injury, the teacher or aide who sees the accident will fill out an accident report. This report will be signed by the acting supervisor. The report will contain date, time, circumstances of accident or incident, and treatment. The parent will receive a copy of the accident or incident report at time of pickup.
- The Director or Assistant Director is always available. We are here to answer your questions, take messages for the teachers, or discuss your child's progress.
- If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please contact the office and we will make arrangements for a conference or phone call.
- Semi-annual meetings will be scheduled in order for parents to

provide their child's teacher and the Center Director with feedback on their child and the center's program.

- Parents will be provided semi-annual reports in writing on information concerning their child's development, behavior, adjustment and needs.
- Our website is another useful tool to keep up with what is going on in school. Lunch menus, class calendars, and other event information is posted monthly on our parent's page. This page is only available to parent's of A Child's Place students. You can access our site by visiting <http://www.achildsplaceinc.com>

Please let your child's teacher or someone in the office know of any significant changes in your child's routine or living situation. Young children react to changes at home with changes in behavior. Often they cannot tell us in words what is bothering them. They show their discomfort by crying, hitting, backsliding on toilet training, etc. If we know what your child is reacting to we can be more understanding and respond more appropriately to your child's behavior. Thanks for helping us to keep these communication lines open.

## HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

A Child's Place is open year-round, Monday through Friday. We open at 7:00am and close promptly at 6:00pm. All children must be picked up by that time. A late fee of \$30.00 will be charged for the first 15 minutes or any portion thereof your child is here after we close at 6:00pm. There will be a charge of \$1.00 for each additional minute. Every effort will be made to contact you or one of the emergency numbers on your registration form. At 7:00 pm, if no contact has been made with the parents, or an emergency contact, 911 and social services will be called.

## TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is charged weekly and payable by Monday of each week. The school will be closed on holidays listed on our annual calendar. Your tuition remains the same regardless of holidays, vacations, illness, snow days, or other acts of nature. A delinquent charge of \$15.00 will be assessed if payment is not received by Wednesday of each week. If the bank returns a check to us your account will incur a \$30.00 fee.

\* Security Deposit-A deposit of two weeks tuition is due along with registration fee. A child's security deposit must be always equal two weeks current tuition. This deposit may be applied to the two weeks following written notification of disenrollment of your child at our center. Tuition fees are adjusted annually and deposit adjustments should be made at this time.

## WITHDRAWAL/DISENROLLMENT POLICY

A two-week written notice must be given before disenrolling a child. Regular tuition charges apply to this two-week period. If you withdraw your child, you cannot re-enroll your child for at least 30 days. A new enrollment fee and activity fee will be required when you re-enroll your child.

Examples of possible reasons for disenrollment of a child may include, but are not limited to acts or threats of physical violence, unresolved differences with a parent or child, or non-payment of fees. Every effort to resolve conflicts will be made. Should expulsion be the final outcome, the Director and Executive Administrator make the decision.

## **HOLIDAYS**

Please see our annual calendar.

## **SNOW & EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

- **If the Federal Government is closed, we will be closed.**
- **If the Federal Government remains open, we will do everything possible to remain open.**
- If Liberal Leave is granted to Federal Government Employees, you should receive notification by our new “**One Call Now**” system if the center is closing for the day or if you have any questions please call the center answering machine. If the Federal Government releases its employees early, all centers will close as quickly as possible and you will be notified by the automated call system or by email to pick up your children, A report is issued by “One Call Now” verifying that all parents have been contacted.
- If the Federal government report time for their employees is delayed or Fairfax county School are closed, our opening hours will change you will receive a call or email about the opening time of the center.
- In a weather emergency if you have not received an automated call or email by 6:30 am please check the center answering machine for a message about closing on our web site.
- If the Federal Government releases its employees early, all centers will close as quickly as possible.

- If the Federal Government report time for their employees is delayed or Fairfax County Schools are closed, our opening hours will change.

**IF FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED, THE CENTER WILL NOT OPEN BEFORE 9:00AM.**

1. A final decision about closure of the centers for the day will be made and put on the center's answering machines not later than 6:30 AM.
2. Should Fairfax County Schools be closed two consecutive days, our centers will make every effort to open on time the second day. **One Call Now** will notify parents about the opening time for the second day. Notices will be posted at the centers.
3. If Fairfax County Schools have a delayed opening, schools will open on time. In the event of a situation where circumstances are beyond our control and we would have to open late you would be notified by the automated calling system.

All schools are equipped with emergency supplies and have emergency procedures in place to follow should it become necessary. Please make certain you have the phone number of your child's center. We also ask if your work, cell or emergency numbers have changed, you update your child's record immediately by checking with the center office.

If the power is out at the center at 7:00AM, the center will remain closed for the entire day. If the power should go out during a storm, the center will contact parents and will close immediately. This is a licensing regulation. We hope this information will help you in planning for the severe weather.

**\*The center Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in the office**

**at any time for parent review\***

## ADMISSION

A Child's Place is open to boys and girls of all races, religions, and nationalities. Ages of acceptance are from 8 weeks to school age. If we do not have space available, we will gladly put your child on our waiting list. Before a child is put on the waiting list or enrolled, we recommend one or both parents to personally visit the school with the child. To be enrolled your child will need:

- A registration form completed and signed by at least one parent/guardian.
- Payment of the non-refundable registration fee
- Agreement of Enrollment Form
- Emergency Medical Form
- Copy of custody agreement, if one parent has custody
- Proof of child's identity and age (Birth Certificate)
- A health form completed by your child's doctor.
- An extra set of clothes-pants, shirt, socks, and underwear for use in the event of toileting accidents, spills, etc.(please clearly mark all items with child's name)
- An annual update of your child's records will be required by the center. This is to ensure accuracy of your child's records.

## REGISTRATION FORMS

Certain forms are necessary for registering your child at A Child's Place. Before your child may attend school, the registration application, agreement of enrollment, emergency medical authorization, and proof of identity must be provided and/or completed. In addition, an entrance physical examination form must be completed within 30 days of enrollment.

Should you have any questions regarding these forms, please contact the office at A Child's Place (703-698-8050).

## THINGS TO REMEMBER ON YOUR FIRST DAY

- Change of clothes for the appropriate season (pants/shorts, shirt, underwear, socks, shoes)
- Pull-ups or diapers (if applicable)
- Baby wipes (if applicable)
- Nap mat

You're welcome to call throughout the day to check on your child. Please make sure that we have all of your correct phone numbers and all registration forms.

## REGISTRATION FEE

There is a one time registration fee for Infants and Toddlers and annual registration fee of \$100 for the Preschool Program. These non-refundable fees will guarantee your child's placement in A Child's Place.

## CLASSROOM AND NAP MAT FEES

At the time of enrollment, each family is required to pay a non-refundable \$100.00 class fee per child and will be charged an activities fee of 100.00 every spring and fall while your child is enrolled with us. This fee will be used to fund our P. E. and Music programs, field trips, and special guest events. Parents will be notified prior to field trip or event.

At the time of enrollment (toddlers through preschool children), a \$50 fee is required for a nap mat. Each child will receive their own mat, which has an attached sheet and pillow, along with an A Child's Place bag to store the mat. This mat must be taken home for laundering on Friday and returned to school each Monday.

## HEALTH FORMS

A certificate from your child's doctor, including immunization record must be in our files in order for your child to attend. This is a Commonwealth of Virginia requirement. Proof of updated immunization is required. Please help us avoid preventable problems by alerting us to any chronic ailments, allergies, or food sensitivities that your child may have. Have your pediatrician note these on your child's health form.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM

This is one of the most important things that you can do for your child's protection. This form must be completed before your child may be registered. Please keep all phone numbers and contacts current. This form is always available should an emergency arise. These forms go along on any field trip your child may attend.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## DROP OFF AND PICK UP POLICY

Parents are required to bring their children into the building upon arrival to insure that the proper staff member meets them. This is the most pleasant way for your child to begin the school day. Parents are required to sign-in their child upon arrival.

When you arrive to pick up your child, please remember to sign-out. Remember to pick up your child's artwork and papers along with the daily report at the end of each day. Their belongings are placed in individual cubbies in preschool and in the mail pockets for school-age children. Your child has looked forward to sharing his/her work with you all day.

Please remember that we will release your child only to those people listed on your registration form. If for any reason someone not listed on your form must pick up your child, please notify the office in advance. Whoever picks up your child will be required to show photo ID.

## STUDENT VACATION POLICY

After one year of attendance a one-week vacation credit for children will be authorized. Any vacation exceeding one week will be at full weekly tuition rate. If the vacation week is not used, it cannot be held over until the following year. Also, a vacation week cannot be used early or 'borrowed' against a future vacation week. Individuals not wishing to pay may withdraw for more than one week, but will not have their position retained. They will be placed on a waiting list and must register as a new enrollee when they return and pay all applicable fees. Vacation

is determined by date of enrollment.

## ABSENCES

When it is necessary that a child be absent for any reason, it is requested that you call or email the office by 9:00am to report the reason. No reduction in tuition is allowed because of absences due to illness or otherwise.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

We would be very happy if we could say that children at the center never get sick, but unfortunately, it does happen. We do our best to stop the spread of illness. Children are encouraged to wash hands before mealtimes as well as after using the toilet and after wiping noses. Even with all the precautions that can be taken, children still get sick. We also need full cooperation from parents to keep all of our children as healthy as we possibly can. Several of our staff members have training to screen children for signs and symptoms of communicable disease. Screening is done in the morning as children arrive as part of the normal greeting procedure.

If your child becomes sick at the center, you will be notified and expected to pick up your child immediately or within the hour. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will attempt to call the emergency contact persons listed in your child's file. Please be sure to update these names, telephone numbers and addresses as often as necessary so that we can reach someone in case of an illness or other emergency.

Parents agree to inform A Child's Place staff if a member of their immediate household has developed any reportable communicable disease, as defined by the State Board of Health, within 24 hours. Any

life threatening diseases must be reported immediately.

If your child exhibits the following symptoms: body temperature more than 100 degrees, vomiting or diarrhea, you will be notified and expected to pick up your child immediately. A child with these symptoms must be excluded for a period of at least 24 hours. The child may return to school once he or she has been free from fever, vomiting or diarrhea for a period of 24 hours. We ask that if your child has these symptoms at home, you abide by the same '24 hour' rule. This reduces the risk of your child passing on an illness or virus to the other children.

If your child has pink eye, an unidentified rash or a communicable illness such as chicken pox, your child will be excluded from the center until a doctor's note is supplied stating that your child is no longer contagious and that he or she may return to school. When a child at the center has a contagious illness, a notice will be posted so that you may watch for symptoms in your own child.

When your child is excused early from the center, you will receive an Early Pick-Up Form explaining the reason for dismissal and when the child may return to school.

We need parents to help us fight illness at the center. If your child comes to school with a contagious illness, it puts the other children at risk of getting sick.

## MEDICATION POLICY

Medication (this includes over the counter and prescription) will not be administered by A Child's Place Staff. Parents/legal guardians may come to the school at any time during the day to give their child medication.

**EXCEPTION:** Life sustaining medication, as determined by the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) will be administered with appropriate

paper work filled out by a doctor and a parent/legal guardian. A Child's Place staff, accordingly trained as determined by the Commonwealth of Virginia, will be permitted to administer life-sustaining medication. A logbook will be kept of all medications administered at A Child's Place. All medications must be taken home when the authorization form or actual medication expires.

Diaper rash ointment and sunscreen may be applied to your child with written parent authorization. Forms are available in the office. You would need to supply the actual ointment in its original container, labeled with your child's name. Teachers will apply these ointments and/or sunscreen. Children will not be permitted to apply to themselves. The application of diaper rash cream will be documented each time and then kept on file. All ointments/sunscreen must be taken home or disposed of once expired.

Please leave any and all life sustaining medicine/ointment with a staff member. Under no circumstances may the child retain possession of any medication once he/she comes under the supervision of A Child's Place. We will make sure it is stored in a locked cabinet, refrigerator or other acceptable area not accessible to the children. If all of the above instructions are not followed, the medication will not be given or ointment/sunscreen applied.

**THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THE ABOVE POLICY!**

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

School rules defining limits and expected behaviors are made with the children's ages and abilities in mind. These rules are explained in each classroom in a way the children will understand. Discipline based on these rules depends on a foundation of mutual respect and affection between teacher and child. Our teachers are aware of their responsibility as role models and know that an important part of their job is the

teaching of safety rules and social skills. Good behavior is encouraged by suggesting and praising appropriate actions as well as by teaching the children what not to do. Physical punishment and verbal abuse are unacceptable and not used.

Likewise, we do not force or withhold food or naps. Toileting accidents, a natural childhood occurrence, are not punished.

As teachers, our role is to guide each child toward behavior that is safe and sociable. We do not expect perfection. Children need and expect adults to set the limits, which they cannot make for themselves. Discipline is the enforcement of these limits through the use of both guidance and positive redirection. Effective discipline is fair and consistent. When misbehavior occurs, we focus our disapproval on the child's actions, not on the child. We find that redirection to a positive activity teaches the child appropriate behavior. Sometimes a child needs to be separated from the group and put in "time out" for a few minutes. "Time out" means that the child is placed apart from the group, but within view of the teacher. This gives the child a chance to calm down and to ponder the desirability of behaving in a way that allows him or her to remain a part of the group. Behavior out of the ordinary is communicated to parents either on notes, which parents should sign, verbally from your child's teacher at pickup, or by telephone. This is for your information, and so you may reinforce our discipline with your child. In some cases a parent-teacher conference may be needed to decide on a joint approach to discipline.

## POLICY ON REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

State law requires that child care staff be cognizant of maltreatment of children and to report suspected child neglect or abuse to Social Services. Maltreatment usually falls into one or more of four general areas: physical abuse, neglect, emotional maltreatment, and sexual abuse. Indicators are basically of three types:

- Physical - child's appearance (including presence of physical injury)
- Behavior
- Environment/Circumstantial-including social, cultural, or familial factors which are known to correlate with various kinds of abuse and neglect.
- Persons making complaints and reports are, by law, immune from any civil liability if they act in good faith. Any person required to report who is found guilty of not reporting suspected child abuse could be fined.

## **FOOD POLICY**

A Child's Place serves a hot, well-balanced and nutritious lunch at 12:00. The center also provides a morning and afternoon snack, at 10:00 am and 3:00 pm respectively. Children may bring in store bought special treats from home to share with their class for special occasions such as birthdays and holiday parties. Please check with the administration prior to this event for approval of all food items. Except for health and religious purposes, children may not bring food from home to school. Children who require a special diet must have a letter from a pediatrician.

## **TOYS**

Toy guns, bows and arrows, or knives are not allowed at school. We cannot be responsible for loss or damage of any other toys brought by the children, although we make special efforts to preserve them and it is seldom that a well-marked toy is lost.

## **SCHOOL DRESS**

Please dress your child in clothes that are comfortable, washable, and appropriate for a day of play and learning. Any clothing that may be taken off and misplaced (hats, sweaters, mittens, coats, etc.) should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Please provide an extra set of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, underwear, shoes). No sandals or open-toe shoes are allowed. Please make certain that your child's clothes are changed seasonally. We cannot be held responsible for loss or damage of any article of clothing brought or worn by the children, although we make a special effort to preserve them and it is seldom that well-marked items are lost or damaged.

## **OUTSIDE PLAY**

We are proud of our large playgrounds where the children enjoy running, shouting and climbing the play equipment. Weather permitting, all children spend one half-hour or more each morning and each afternoon outside. Virginia licensing standards require this. We shall exercise our very best judgment regarding outside play. If a child is not well enough to be outdoors, he or she is not well enough to be at school. Please make sure that your child has outer clothing appropriate for the day's forecast.

## **FIELD TRIP INFORMATION**

Unless a parent specifies otherwise in writing, the application/contract for registration of your child includes your permission for them to go on center-sponsored field trips. There will be a class fee for field trips due upon registration and periodically thereafter as required. Transportation will be provided by A Child's Place. To maintain the highest staff/child ratio possible, all staff assists on field trips. Please note the departure times, as no staff members will remain at the center for late arrivals. If a parent does not want their child to participate in a specific field trip, then the parent must make alternate arrangements for childcare on the date of the trip.