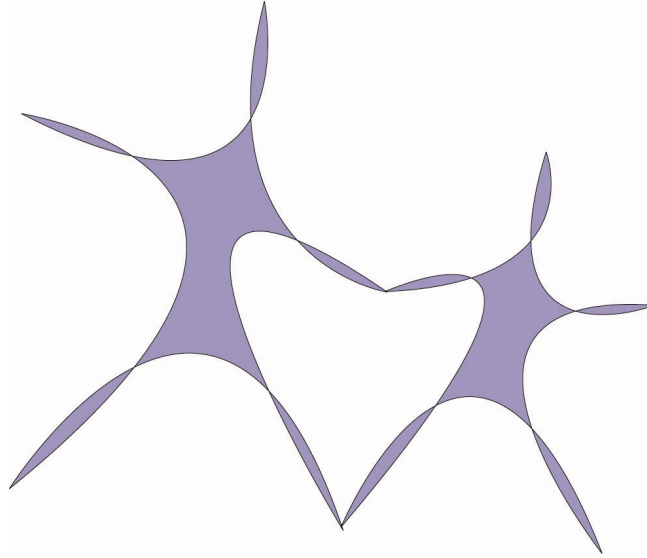


Parent Handbook



Field of Dreams nurture and education center

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Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center

Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

Welcome! This booklet is for you, the parents of a child entered in Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center.

The day your child enters this program is a very important milestone in his/her life. Therefore, our teachers have planned very carefully to receive your child. We shall try to give your child the loving care and learning experiences that children need in their formative years. We want the change from home to school to be a happy one - one in which your child feels safe and secure.

As parents, you are cordially invited to visit us, ask questions, and keep us informed regarding your child's progress. We consider that you are "enrolled" along with your child, for you are as important to your child in his/her school as you are to him/her at home.

Field of Dreams has been planned for young children with the goal of helping them in their total development (physical, mental, social, cognitive, and emotional) and helping them to realize that they are purposeful, intelligent, creative, feeling, social persons who are in the life-long process of learning.

Field of Dreams is in compliance with fire, health, and licensing standards required by the South Carolina Department of Social Services. We strive to uphold the standards set by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Field of Dreams does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, physical disabilities, or political affiliation.

Philosophy

Field of Dreams adopts the philosophy that all areas of development - social, emotional, intellectual, and physical - are equally important and should receive equal emphasis. The early years are critical in a child's development and the quality of care they receive during these years will have a lasting effect. Optimum learning and development occurs in children when they feel loved, safe, and secure. Field of Dreams ensures a supportive, predictable environment through developmentally appropriate practices. Children can depend on their teachers for attention, guidance, and caring. The curriculum will reflect this. It is believed that children learn by manipulating and interacting with their environment, and that they learn best when their educational experiences are facilitated by skilled and loving adults. We know that children learn best through play, and our role is to set up a variety of play experiences in which we can encourage your child to become involved. Because play is a process, it is likely that you often will not see a final, finished product to reflect what your child has learned. This is normal. Please feel free to talk to

the teachers for information regarding the learning experiences your child is having, or come by to observe for yourself at any time.

Mission Statement

The mission of Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center is to nurture children in a secure and innovative learning environment that provides quality, developmentally appropriate, child development services for children - infants through age twelve; to be a model setting for learning; to offer guidance and mentoring for parents regarding the growth and well-being of their children.

Curriculum

Each classroom plans its daily routines and activities based on developmentally appropriate practices for young children. The learning experiences provided by the teachers enhance development in the children on all levels: socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically, and creatively. The curriculum includes daily plans that allow freedom of choice, interactions with adults and children, active and quiet activities, individual and small group activities, family-style meals, hands-on exploration of real materials, outdoor/active play, and creative problem solving. Lesson plans, daily schedule, menus and special events are posted in each classroom.

Goals For Children

- * Develop a healthy self-concept.
- * Develop positive trusting relationships with teachers and peers.
- * Develop security and a feeling of success.
- * Develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically through interactions with adults, children, and materials.
- * Develop independence and personal care skills.
- * Develop enjoyment of creative experiences.

Goals For Parents

- * Become familiar with the Field of Dreams philosophy, goals, policies, and procedures.
- * Seek information on age-appropriate expectations and methods to enhance each child's optimal learning and development of self concept.
- * Explore methods for child guidance and for the progressive development of self control in children.

- * Become active in family-school partnerships to promote quality environments for children.

Orientation

An orientation meeting will be scheduled prior to the child attending the Center. This meeting is a mandatory parent only meeting. Both parents are strongly encouraged to attend. There is a possibility that the four year old classrooms may hold a separate orientation on a specific evening in the Fall.

Purpose

The purpose of the Center is to provide superior child care and education to children of families in the local Fort Mill and surrounding communities. The highest standards will be maintained to provide stimulating programs in clean, well-organized and spacious facilities.

The needs of the children are our first priority. All decisions regarding the procedures and policies of the Center are made with the best interests of the children in mind.

Visitation

Parents are encouraged to come to the Center unannounced, at any time, to visit their children in the classroom. However, please be aware that some children may become upset as parents begin to leave. Please use discretion. The teachers will work with parents and children to ensure that parental visits are very special times for both the parent and the child. Please understand that teachers can visit with the parents for a few moments as the children are dropped off and picked up, but they must return to the children quickly. Parents need to schedule a parent conference with the classroom lead teacher if they have a question or concern that will require a longer conversation.

Program Policies

Admission and Enrollment Procedures

Types of Enrollment

Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center accepts children with no discrimination on the basis of sex, creed, handicapping conditions or national origin. No otherwise qualified child with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be denied enrollment in the Center or be excluded or removed from the Center's program or activities.

Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center provides full-time programs. The Center does not provide sick care or drop-in care.

Parents may apply for enrollment at the Center or print an application online (www.fieldofdreamscenter.com). The registration fee and last week's tuition is required to

reserve a space in the program. An additional application fee is required in order to be placed on a waiting list. The parent will be contacted when a space is available.

Priority Enrollment Procedure

Names are placed on the waiting list by date of application. Priority status allows that siblings currently on the waiting list for enrollment in the Center will be moved to the top of the list when openings arise in age-appropriate classrooms.

Age

Children will be accepted from six (6) weeks of age through age 12.

Enrollment Procedures

The following forms must be completed before a child can attend the Center:

- Updated Information Form
- South Carolina Certificate of Immunization**
- D.S.S. Health Admission Form
- Field of Dreams Registration Form
- Discipline Policy
- Activity and Emergency Consent Form
- Field of Dreams Medical Information Sheet

** A South Carolina Certificate of Immunization must be obtained from the Health Department or from the child's physician. Field of Dreams must have a copy of this completed form before the child can attend the Center.

Hours

Field of Dreams is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. The sign-in/out computer is located on the counter in the reception area. We cannot accept the responsibility of caring for children before 7:00 a.m. for insurance reasons. **If you arrive before 7:00 a.m., you may wait in the lobby with your child until that time. Please do not enter the classrooms before 7:00 a.m.** The Center closes at 6:00 p.m. A fee of \$15.00 per fifteen minutes, per child, will be charged for late pick-ups. The fee will be applied at 6:01 p.m., and to every additional 15 minutes after 6:01 p.m. that your child remains at the Center. (Example: After 6:01 p.m., \$15.00 per child. After 6:15 p.m., \$30.00 per child.) Field of Dreams may terminate child care services after three (3) late pick-ups per school year (August-July). The clock in the front lobby of the Center determines the time. The Center reserves the right to suspend enrollment of any child for failure to abide by these policies.

Weather Closings, Delays, Early Dismissals

Field of Dreams will make decisions regarding delays, early dismissals and closings as early as possible and will be on our web site and on WSOC TV channel 9. If the public schools release early due to inclement weather and your child is in the after school program, you will need to pick-up your child at the elementary school. Field of Dreams may be dismissing at the same time as the schools so we will not be able to pick-up at the schools. All pre-school children need to be picked-up immediately upon the announcement of early dismissal by Field of Dreams. Most local radio and television stations air the public school announcements.

Tuition Payments

Field of Dreams requires all tuition payments to be made by electronic funds transfer to your savings or checking account or by automatic bill to your Visa or Master Card. There will be an additional 3% surcharge applied for using Visa or Master Card. All tuition is paid in advance, and you have the option to pay semi-monthly (twice per month) or monthly. Semi monthly payments will be drafted on the 1st and 15th of the month and the monthly payments will be drafted on the 1st.

Returned or Late Payments

Any time an electronic payment is returned due to insufficient funds or other reasons, a charge of \$30 will be assessed. The error must be corrected within 48 hours, at which time your bank will receive the updated electronic billing which includes the tuition plus the \$30 fee.

If the issue with the electronic payment cannot be resolved within 48 hours, you will be required to bring in a certified check the next day. If certified checks are required more than two times, you may be asked to leave the program.

At no time can a tuition payment be outstanding when the next tuition payment becomes due.

Elementary School Early Dismissal

The Fort Mill School District has several early dismissals from school as well as scheduled school closings through out the year. Field of Dreams will provide childcare for your school-age child(ren) upon your request as long as the Center is open. Parents will have the opportunity to sign up for childcare for your child(ren) for a fee of \$15.00 for half day and \$20.00 for full day which is billed through Tuition Express. If you sign up past the deadline given by Field of Dreams, an additional late sign up fee of \$15.00 will be added to your account. If you sign up and decide not to use our services, the fees will not be refunded. Please know that your regular tuition covers childcare from 3:00pm until 6:00pm.

Changing Bank Accounts

If you need to change the bank account used for Tuition Express within 5 business days of the next billing cycle, you must pay that upcoming tuition payment by check on the due date. This will allow time for the new account information to be electronically approved.

Withdrawal

Field of Dreams requires a two week notice when withdrawing your child from the Center. Please request a withdrawal form from the front office. If no notice is given, the final two weeks of tuition will be charged to the parent's account.

Leaving and Picking Up Children

For the safety and convenience of all parents and children, the following rules must be observed by all who use the Center:

- a. All traffic must follow normal parking lot rules please stay within the painted lines.
- b. Parents should park in marked parking spaces in the Field of Dreams parking lot. Please keep your child with you at all times when arriving and departing as traffic is heavy and small children are difficult to spot between parked cars. Supervision of children before entering and after departing the classroom is the responsibility of the parent.
- c. Parent must accompany his/her child into the child's room upon arrival, and out of the child's room at the end of the day in order to ensure that the children arrive and depart safely.
- d. Parent must sign his/her child in and out each day.

Custody of Children

We do not allow your children to leave with any person who is not listed on the update information form unless we have permission from you **in writing**. Teachers/staff will request identification from any person before allowing the child to leave the Center.

Records Update

All records pertaining to the child shall be kept current. Any changes in address or telephone numbers, as well as other pertinent changes, must be reported to the administrative personnel. Any permanent changes in authorized pick-up persons must be made on the official form. Parents are required to fill out a new updated information form once a year. Other forms may be updated as required by D.S.S.

Classroom Records and Attendance

Observation and attendance of children will be an ongoing process by teachers. Checklists of developmental skills will be kept on each child, as well as attendance records. Attendance will be taken upon arrival, at all meals and at departure. Attendance records are carried with teachers when exiting the building; to the playground, any emergencies, and/or outgoings. Developmental records are used during parent/teacher conferences to inform parents of their children's progress. They will enable teachers to plan activities that will aid in an individual child's development.

Schedule

A daily classroom schedule is posted in each room for parents and visitors to see. Weekly lesson plans are also posted.

Research

Research is vital to the field of child development and to the success of our Center. As an educational institution, Field of Dreams will be involved in research to gain information regarding the usefulness and benefits of the child care and educational programs it offers. The information gained from the research will be used to improve the quality of care provided to your child and other children in the region.

Parent Involvement

Communication

We encourage parents to have open communication with all our teachers and administrators. Any problems or concerns about the classroom should be discussed with the teacher directly. If not resolved at this level, the parents should consult with the Director. All attempts will be made to solve concerns to everyone's satisfaction.

Communication is essential in any effective program. Teachers are responsible for supplying information to parents concerning their child's growth and development, his/her routine daily care, and any significant occurrences during his/her day. Parents need to supply teachers with the details concerning goals and expectations for their child. Also, please inform the Center staff of any significant changes in the child's routine and any significant events in the child's life. These situations could cause a change in behavior or require special attention from the staff.

Please remember to keep the staff informed of any changes in the home or emergency phone numbers, updates on work, residence, etc. **The Center staff must be able to reach all parents in the event of an emergency!**

Conferences

A minimum of two parent conferences will be planned by the staff during the year, usually in Fall and Spring. At these conferences teachers will discuss the development of the child on all learning domains: physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. However, a conference can be scheduled at any time if requested by the parent, teacher, or Director. If parents request a conference arrangements will be made.

Evaluation

All parents will be asked to complete a comprehensive evaluation form about the Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center annually. This information will be helpful to the Center in implementing and/or redesigning its services. Typically, annual surveys are done in late Fall. We encourage parents to complete these surveys in order to provide the best possible program for their child.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

A Parent Teacher Organization acts as a support group for the Director and parents utilizing the Center. The organization can help coordinate the resources of the Center, sponsor events of interest to parents and children, hold fund raisers for equipment and teacher appreciation activities. All parents are invited and encouraged to attend. Meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month.

Health and Safety

No child will be allowed to remain in the Center if he/she has a temperature of 101 degrees or develops diarrhea or vomiting. Children with communicable diseases must stay home at least one school day and/or until the contagious period has passed. Parents will be contacted if a child becomes ill while at school. Please call the Center if your child will not be attending. In some instances a doctor's permission must be obtained before a child is able to return to school. For more information contact the Director.

Children Too Ill To Participate

When, due to illness, should a child not be brought to the Center? This is a common question that often arises in a child care setting. In order to protect your child and other children, the following guidelines have been established. Please read them carefully. If your child is sick upon arrival, the teacher will not be able to accept him/her. Please have someone available to keep your child when he/she is sick in case you cannot.

Keep A Child At Home If He/She Has:

The following list is a guide to help parents assess and make a judgment regarding attendance—this is not an exhaustive list: (also see the DHEC guidelines)

- * a fever of 101 degrees axillary or 102 degrees rectally (or above)
- * a skin rash that has not been identified by a physician in writing
- * diarrhea and/or vomiting two or more times in a day
- * evidence of head lice or other parasites
- * severe coughing
- * discolored nasal discharge with other symptoms
- * rapid or difficult breathing
- * yellowish skin or eyes
- * conjunctivitis
- * unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- * sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- * stiff neck
- * infected skin patches
- * complaint of pain and/or pain which interferes with normal activity
- * evidence of infection
- * excessive fatigue
- * ring worm
- * drainage from ears
- * chicken pox
- * measles (red or German)
- * mumps
- * signs of illness without obvious localizing symptoms. In this case, your child may look and act very differently. There may be unusual paleness, excessive crying, irritability and excessive sleeping.

You Will Be Asked To Pick Up Your Child From The Center:

1. If the above illnesses or any other symptoms of illness occur during the course of the day.

OR

2. If your child develops a fever of 101 degrees axillary/orally or 102 degrees rectally.

The Center policies for exclusion focus on the need and behavior of the ill child. The decision to send a child home is based on many factors; fever is not the only indicator. Your positive support to these health standards will help us protect your child and others attending the Center. All children should be fully able to participate in all activities, including outdoor play while in attendance at the Center.

Parents will be notified if a child becomes ill at school. In the event the parent is unable to be reached, an alternate emergency number that is listed on the updated information form will be called. It is very important that the staff be provided a parent contact number at all times.

It is also important that parents have an alternate plan for child care for when their child becomes ill. An ill child should be picked up as soon as possible after the parent is notified, preferably within the hour. An ill child is required to remain out of school the following school day.

Children may be readmitted:

- a. With a physician's statement stating that the child is free from communicable disease and that returning poses no risk to the child or to others.
- b. After the required day at home and if the child is visibly free from communicable disease, illness, fever free for 24 hours, and free of vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours while on a normal diet.

Allergies

If a child has any food allergies, a doctor's note must be provided verifying this situation. The parent must provide an alternate food item for your child at meals and snacks. Please inform us of other allergies your child may have and the expected reactions.

Medication

If your child requires medication (prescription or non-prescription), the Center must have a written order from the child's physician. Medication permission forms are provided in the main office and in your child's classroom. Teachers are required to document, in writing, when the medication is administered to your child.

Accidents

Phone numbers of police, fire, and ambulance are posted at all outgoing phones. Parents will be notified immediately and an ambulance called, if necessary. The Center carries accident insurance covering the 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. hours. All accidents, both major and minor, will be outlined in an accident report to be completed by the teacher, and a copy given to the parent.

Meals and Snacks

Mealtime and snacks are a vital part of the curriculum and are designed with nutritional and social needs of children in mind. Parents of infants will provide formula and baby food. Bottles must be marked with the child's name and date.

Children are urged to serve and feed themselves whenever possible, and the staff is present to assist the children as well as model appropriate behavior for these times of day. Morning and afternoon snacks, along with lunch, are prepared in the Center kitchen and served family style in the children's rooms. A mealtime schedule for each classroom is posted. Please see your child's classroom for scheduled meal times. Parents are invited to eat lunch with their child at any time. Please notify the Center so that our kitchen staff can plan an extra meal. The cost of your meal is \$3.

Other Policies

Child Abuse

All suspected cases of child abuse will be reported to the appropriate agency in accordance with state laws and licensing regulations.

Discipline

The purpose of discipline in the Center is to help children learn acceptable behavior, to express emotions appropriately and to develop inner control. The Center will use developmentally appropriate methods for guiding behavior, recognizing that all children are unique with individualized past experiences, preferences and concerns. Harsh voices, corporal or physical punishment, scolding, shaming, or ridiculing will never be used.

Parents should not be alarmed if their child exhibits new behaviors when joining a group of children. It is typical for children to try out new behaviors that they observe from their classmates. Of course, this takes the form of desirable and undesirable behaviors.

It is important to treat these behaviors matter-of-factly while making it clear what is acceptable and unacceptable. In addition, increase in aggressive or passive behavior may emerge with some children when first adjusting to a new group of children. Through appropriate direction, the staff will guide these children towards more appropriate

interactions. In the case of discipline of children with disabilities, special considerations and procedures will be employed. For more detailed information contact the Director.

The Center staff will encourage the development of self-control through individualized appropriate methods described below:

- Arrange environment to reduce behavior difficulties
- Appropriate rules stated with explanation of reason
- Tell child what she/he can do, show or instruct appropriate behavior
- Give child choices when possible
- Recognize child's appropriate behavior
- Redirect child's behavior
- Use listening techniques to help child express feelings and solve problems
- Use logical consequences when appropriate
- Remove child from group or situation when child is not in control of own actions, until child is ready to rejoin class
- Physically hold child, if necessary, to prevent child from hurting self, others, or property

Wearing Apparel

Each child will need at least two changes of clothing that is labeled with the child's name and left in the child's cubby for emergencies. Infants and toddlers need at least three changes of clothing. The change of clothes should be seasonally appropriate. The child should be dressed comfortably for an active school day and should be encouraged to help choose his/her clothing whenever possible. All children over the age of one (1) are required to have rain boots and raincoats.

Socks and non-skid, comfortable shoes such as tennis shoes or sneakers are a necessity. Sandals, crocs, flip-flops, dressy shoes and cowboy boots are not allowed at any time, as they are unsafe when children are running, climbing, etc. Please remember that children are active and often involved in messy art and outdoor activities. Although we try to keep children's clothing clean, it is not always possible. Please dress your child for play.

Daily Rest Time

Daily periods for rest are essential for children to relieve stress and rejuvenate themselves physically and mentally. The infant rest periods are determined according to the individual needs of each infant. At 12 months, staff will begin to introduce to infants one nap per day. The toddler and pre-school classes have a scheduled rest period following lunch

each day. The children may bring a special comfort item (a stuffed animal or special blanket), which may be helpful for sleep or reducing separation distress. These items must be labeled with the child's name and must be able to fit in the child's cubby.

Personal Belongings

We provide a full day of activities for children, and the fourteen classrooms are fully equipped. Therefore, we require that a child's personal toys be left at home. Occasionally, a teacher may plan a show and tell activity as part of the day. You will be notified when these will occur. We ask that videos, toy knives, toy guns, action figures, candy, gum, breakable, and potentially hazardous items not be brought to the Center. The Center is not responsible for lost or broken personal items.

Outside Times

We feel that outdoor play experiences are a vital part of the child's total development. Children will play outside every day, weather permitting, for at least a few minutes. Please dress your child accordingly. Children will play outside on rainy days so please be sure to provide rain boots, raincoats and/or ponchos. Send hats, mittens, etc. for winter, and dress your child lightly for summer.

Field Trips

Children may be taken on field trips to reinforce the curriculum they are learning. A field trip can be as simple as a walk to the park to see a nest of eggs, or to a destination off site. You will sign a blanket permission form for field trips. All rules of the road and child safety guidelines will be enforced.

Birthday Celebrations

Parents may bring a treat bag to share with the class to celebrate their child's birthday. These bags will not be opened in the classroom, but the children can bring them home where they can be opened with the supervision of their parents.

Holiday Policy

Field of Dreams does not celebrate holidays including but not limited to the following; Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. We as a center recognize and celebrate families. As a result we will celebrate Mothers Day, Fathers Day Grandparents Day, Week of the Young Child and birthdays.

Internet Cameras

We provide secure access to internet cameras as part of your tuition. You will be given a User Id and Password on your first day, which will give you access to the set of cameras in the areas of the building where your child(ren) are during the day.

You will be able to access the cameras from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Please do not leave the camera up on your PC when you are not actively viewing it. Everybody who has a camera active on their PC uses a portion of the limited bandwidth available to show the video over the internet.

We ask that you only share your User ID and PW with immediate family members. We also ask that you not call the center with questions relating to something that you see on the cameras (for example, asking why your child might have on a change of clothes). Feel free to discuss anything with your teacher when you pick up your child at the end of the day. Our priority is to focus on the children throughout the day and we need to limit distractions from our teachers. We reserve the right to disable your access to the cameras at our discretion.

Because of the nature of showing video over the internet, we have worked hard to find the best compromise between picture clarity, picture size, and fluid motion of the video. You will see that the picture is not TV quality, but the overall quality is good for live video over the internet.

The cameras are accessed through our web site at www.fieldofdreamscenter.com by clicking on the Cameras button. You will then enter the User Id and Password that has been assigned to you.

By signing that you received and read your parent handbook, you consent that your child will be viewed on cameras and the video recorded by Field of Dreams for security and training purposes.

Non-discrimination

It is the policy of Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, religion, veteran status, national origin or handicap in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies. Field of Dreams Nurture and Education Center complies with all rules governing licensed child development centers in the State of South Carolina.

Confidentiality:

All records on children and families will be kept in a locked cabinet.