



Early Childhood Education
Family Handbook

Updated 9/1/2019

Dear Families,

Welcome! We appreciate your participation in Lancaster Recreation Commission's Early Childhood Education programs.

Our goal is to provide enriching, safe programs for children to participate in a creative learning environment which promotes cognitive, social-emotional and physical development, while they receive quality care by a dedicated, nurturing staff.

All policies and procedures in this Handbook relate specifically to our Early Childhood Education programs. Information in this handbook is effective August 2019. All information is subject to change. As a registered participant you will receive a written notice of any procedure or policy change.

Please read this Early Childhood Education Handbook carefully and feel free to ask questions or voice your concerns.

For Early Childhood Programs please contact Don Yeager at 717-392-2115 ext 136.

Sincerely,

Don Yeager,

Director of Early Childhood Education

The Lancaster Recreation Commission mission is to provide quality and affordable recreation and learning opportunities to Lancaster residents.

Lancaster Rec Child Care Programs

The Lancaster Rec Early Childhood Education programs provide state licensed early childhood education for working families in the School District of Lancaster. Any child 6 weeks up to 5 years of age is welcome. We offer care for infants, toddlers and Preschool at the Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey; a Pre-K Counts Program for children ages 3-5 at the Lancaster Recreation Center, and Wrap around Before and After School Care for children in K3 and K4 at the Lancaster Recreation Center and Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey.

Our Philosophy

At our Early Childhood Education Programs we understand that each child is an individual and as such will develop at their own pace. We are not the typical “cookie cutter daycare” but a quality early childhood education program focused on language, literacy, math and science skills, social and emotional development, physical development, critical thinking and the arts. We believe that young children learn best by doing. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work, and to understand firsthand about the world in which we live.

Through the use of Creative Curriculum we help children become enthusiastic learners. We encourage children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and think their own thoughts. We want to help children become independent, self-confident and inquisitive learners. We are teaching them how to learn, not just in preschool, but all through their lives.

We believe that every child has the right to receive care and nurturing of the highest quality in a safe and loving environment. All Lancaster Rec child care programs are open programs where families are welcome and encouraged to drop in at any time. Additionally, if your child has an IEP/IFSP we request this document at enrollment to utilize in our programs to help your child meet their goals.

The Lancaster Rec child care programs participate in Keystone Stars, a state-supported and funded quality improvement program which has four STAR levels. Each STAR designation measures a quality performance standard. The four levels measure quality in the following areas:

- Education and training of staff
- Physical environment
- Management
- Family and community partnerships

For more information, please visit www.pakeys.org/stars or call 392-2115 x136

Early Learning Resource Center

Some families may qualify for financial help for their child care. If you would like more information on subsidized care, please call Early Learning Resource Center (Formerly known as Child Care Information Services) at 717-393-4004.

Our Staff

Our child care staff is carefully chosen and trained. All employees must have FBI criminal background clearances, child abuse registry clearances, bi-annual physicals, first aid and CPR certification, fire safety training, emergency preparedness plans, and water safety training. Staff also participate in professional development through PA Keys and Keystone Stars in all aspects of child care, receiving at least 24 hours of professional development training each year.

Our Curriculum

Lancaster Rec employs a child-based curriculum that is aligned to the state academic standards and utilizes planned activity centers as the method to achieve hands-on learning. Through observation and discussion of the children's interests and abilities, the staff plan activities and lessons to support each child's development and learning. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

Our preschool programs follow guidelines established in partnership with the School District of Lancaster using Creative Curriculum. This curriculum allows us to assess each child and create a working portfolio for each child that attends our program.

The goal of this activity-based curriculum is to help the children meet the state standards in academic areas, to reinforce classroom learning, to develop social competence, to improve communication skills and to help children be more physically active.

If applicable to the child, we will work with parents and public, social and community service organizations to help meet IEP or IFSP goals and/or special needs plans.

Infant, Toddler and Preschool Care at Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey

The Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey offers care for infants (6 weeks and older), toddlers and preschool age children. The Center is open year round, 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday. We utilize a play-based curriculum that emphasizes social, cognitive and physical development through age-appropriate activities. This curriculum also incorporates the State's Early Learning Standards.

The Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey works cooperatively with the School District of Lancaster to provide a model child care center for the District's Early Childhood Education Program. The Center also works with community organizations to provide care for children of teen parents that use any of the schools in the City of Lancaster.

The Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey offers breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack to all children at no charge. If your child has a food allergy, documentation from a physician must be obtained and kept on file. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a government funded program. We follow CACFP guidelines for meals; for infants, American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations are followed. Therefore, from time to time you will be required to update your information to maintain accuracy. Failure to complete these forms could result in your child care services being suspended.

Parents are asked to provide bottles/cups for each feeding per day. Parents are also asked to bring a supply of diapers for their child. We will notify you when that supply is running low.

Full-Day Preschool

Our full-day preschool is for children 3-5 years of age who are toilet trained. Preschool is available at the Lancaster Recreation Center or the Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey. Both Preschools are open year-round, Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Children will be provided a breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack each day. We utilize a play-based curriculum that emphasizes social, cognitive and physical development through age-appropriate activities. This curriculum also incorporates the State's Early Learning Standards.

Each day children participate in learning centers that include music, art, cooking, science, math, language and small group activities. Daily activities also include storytelling and dramatic play. We plan special craft projects and cooking labs each week and holiday parties and special events each month. Children are provided a nutritious breakfast, lunch and a light afternoon snack and beverage each day. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a government-funded program. Therefore, from time to time you will be required to update your information to maintain accuracy. Failure to complete these forms could result in your child care services being suspended.

Pre-K Counts (PKC)

In partnership with the School District of Lancaster, Pre-K Counts is available at the Lancaster Recreation Center and McCaskey Child Development Center. Pre-K Counts is a free state-sponsored program that is offered from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Lancaster Recreation Center and McCaskey. PKC follows the SDOL school-year calendar. Pre-K Counts enrollment is based on a child's needs and a family's income. Children must be 3 or 4 years old, toilet trained and a Pennsylvania resident. Children will be provided a breakfast and lunch. Families will be required to submit income verification. Families are allowed a 5 minute window for dropping off and picking up from our PKC programs. Any child dropped off before 7:55/8:25 or picked up after 3:05 will be charged for Wrap Around services.

Preschool Wrap Around

Preschool Wrap Around is available only at the Lancaster Recreation Center and Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey. Breakfast is provided during Before School and a snack during After School.

- **For children attending Pre-K counts at the Lancaster Rec and McCaskey:** wrap around is available before and after the scheduled hours of the Pre-K Counts for an additional fee. Children will stay at the location where they attend Pre-K.
- **For children attending K3 & K4 at Price and Martin Elementary:** wrap around care is available at the Lancaster Rec location. The School District of Lancaster will provide bus transportation to/from Martin Elementary. Lancaster Rec staff will escort children to/from Price and the bus to/from Martin.

Preschool Screenings

In order to support healthy growth and development, all children attending a preschool program will receive the following screenings within 60 days of enrollment: hearing, vision, dental and mental health. The Lancaster Recreation Commission will assume the cost of the initial screening. Families are responsible for providing us with a current physical examination within the first 60 days of their child's enrollment. Physicals can be dated no more than 90 days prior to enrollment. The Lancaster Recreation Commission will work with families on an as-needed basis to create a follow-up plan.

Before School Program: 6:30 a.m. to start of school day

State regulations require an adult to sign your child into the Before School program on a daily basis. Please be sure to walk your child into the school every day. Staff arrives for the Before School program at 6:30 a.m.

The School District serves breakfast in all of its elementary schools. We allow children to go to the cafeteria for breakfast if they wish or you may provide breakfast. If your child is not having breakfast at school, he or she should eat before leaving home. The Before School program does not provide food.

At the beginning of the school day, the children are dismissed to join their teacher and classmates. Some schools require children in our Before School program to line up by class on the playground or in the lobby and then enter the building with their teacher. Other schools permit the children in our Before School program to go straight to their classroom. We follow the school's choice.

Civil Rights Compliance

Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age or sex. Program services shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aids and use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods. Any student (and/or parent/guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Department of Human Services Bureau of Equal Opportunity Room 223, Health & Welfare Bldg. P.O. Box 2675 Harrisburg, PA 17105	PA Human Relations Commission Harrisburg Regional Office 333 Market Street, 8th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg. 150 S. Independence Mall West Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111	Bureau of Equal Opportunity Central Regional Office Cameron and Maclay Streets Building 56, Patton House P.O. Box 61260 Harrisburg, PA 17106-1260

Non-Discrimination Statement: In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the Lancaster Recreation Commission is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Policies and Procedures

To Register for Child Care Programs

Registration for Child Care programs is only accepted in person at the Lancaster Recreation Commission office. No phone registrations are accepted. A non-refundable registration fee of \$50 (plus \$10 for each additional child from the same family) is due at enrollment. There is also a \$25 re-registration fee due annually for all non-Pre-K Counts Programs.

A complete registration consists of the following:

- Completed and signed Child Care Agreement
- Completed and signed Attendance Contract
- Completed and signed Health Appraisal Form (Physical) and Immunization (Shot) Records
 - Physicals and Shot Records less than three months old are required for infants ages 6 weeks to 1 year; less than six months old for young toddlers ages 1 to 2 years
 - Physicals and Shot Records less than one year old are required for older toddlers ages 2 to 3 years, Preschool children ages 3 and 4, Grade K-5 and Grade 5 and up
 - Children in Grades 1 through 4 are required to turn in Physicals and Shot Records (may be more than one year old)
- Copies of any Custody/PFA Court Documents, if applicable
- Copies of child's IEP or IFSP, if applicable
- Completed and signed Child Care Center Meal Benefit Income Eligibility Form, for children ages 4 and under

Please note that children are not permitted to attend Child Care programs until all items have been turned in.

By completing the registration procedure, parent or guardian waives any claim for bodily injury or property damage against the School District of Lancaster, the City of Lancaster, Lancaster Township and the Lancaster Rec while their child is a participant in a Lancaster Rec program at any location.

Confidentiality and Record Keeping Policy

The Lancaster Recreation Commission is dedicated to maintaining a professional environment for our families and staff. Therefore, we will not release information to anyone that is not designated in writing. The enrolling parent must give written permission and update that permission as needed. The Lancaster Recreation Commission keeps all records and information regarding students and their families confidential. Information will be kept in the administrative offices and only administrative personnel will have access to the information.

Holiday Closings

All Child Care programs are closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day (4th of July,) Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Please make note of these days and arrange alternative care for your child on these days

Community Resources

Information regarding community resources and how to contact community resources will be included in the registration packet and be again available to parents during the six-month review and update period (January-February). Parents may also obtain information regarding community resources by request.

Community resources available include: CCIS, information and application for CHIP and Capital BlueCross low-cost health insurance, COMPASS (online social services in Pennsylvania), Federal Earned Income Tax Credit and the Federal Food Program. Information on health, nutrition, fitness or child development will be shared at each site's Family Night and through handouts.

Scheduling and Billing

Your child's weekly billing is determined by the schedule you submit on the attendance contract at registration. If you need to change your submitted schedule, we ask for two-week's notice. The schedule forms are available online or at the Lancaster Recreation Commission office.

Sibling and SDoL Discounts

For families with more than one child enrolled in our programs we offer a 10% sibling discount off the oldest child's tuition. SDoL employees are eligible for a 10% discount. However, SDoL employees with more than one child enrolled are only eligible for one discount.

Payment Policy

Payment is due bi-weekly and must be paid by Friday at 5pm. There is a \$10 a day late payment fee for families not using subsidized funding. You must advise the Lancaster Recreation Commission office if your plans change, in writing, with two-week's notice.

There is no return of fees if a child is ill or fails to attend. You will be charged for the days you enroll your child, regardless of actual attendance. The full price of tuition will be charged regardless of the amount of time a child is present. If a family is receiving funding through CCIS, and funding is discontinued, the family will be responsible for payment of the entire fee. Unpaid balances may result in denial of services.

It is the families' responsibility to keep statements, receipts or canceled checks for income tax purposes. The Lancaster Recreation Commission's federal ID number is 23/1352353.

Payment Methods

Payments are accepted in the following manner:

- Cash, check, money order, Visa, MasterCard or Discover at the Lancaster Recreation Commission office
- Checks and money orders are to be made payable to the Lancaster Rec.
- Check or money order only at each of the sites
- Check or money order only deposited after hours at the Lancaster Recreation Center drop box
- EFT - Electronic Funds Transfer. This will give you the opportunity to have your weekly payment for child care taken out of your checking account or charged to your Visa/MasterCard. This transaction will occur every Wednesday. Please request a form from the office at 717-392-2115 x138 or go online to www.LancasterRec.org.
- Online by accessing your account at www.LancasterRec.org, and clicking the "Make a payment" button on the home page.
- There is a \$20 charge for all returned checks.

Arrival and Departure

Our programs open at 6:30 am and close at 6:00 p.m. For infants and Toddlers we ask that they arrive clean and fed (unless arriving before meal time). We will try our best to send your child home with a clean diaper, and would appreciate the same consideration when you drop off.

Our Pre-K Counts Program begins operates from 8 am until 3 p.m. We ask that you arrive no later than 8:30 am for this program so your child does not miss out on any of the learning activities. For all other programs we have an 11 am deadline to accept children. This is to ensure that your child receives a full day learning experience. If your child will be arriving after 11 am we ask that you give us 24 hour advance notification.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when dropping off. Please make your drop off brief, the longer you prolong the departure the more difficult it becomes for both you and your child. A smile, cheerful goodbye kiss and a reassuring word that you'll be back is all that is needed.

Please be brief at pick up times as well, as teachers are still providing care and supervision to other children. If you have an issue to discuss, please call and set up a time that is convenient for the teacher to speak with you.

Our policy is to release a child only to his/her parents/guardian or someone designated on the Authorized Pick Up and Emergency Contact Form. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child please notify us ahead of time. If the person picking up is not on the list we **must** have a signed written release from the parent/guardian granting us permission to release the child.

Please inform emergency contacts or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know them we will ask for identification.

A \$1.00 per minute late pickup fee will be assessed for any child picked up after closing (6:00 p.m.). This late fee must be paid with the next week's tuition. This will be strictly enforced and habitual tardiness may result in termination of childcare services.

Our job is to keep your child safe. Staff will follow the Department of Human Services supervision regulations which state: Staff must be able to see, hear, assess and direct the activity of the children at all times. Your child will never be left alone for any reason and must stay in the designated child care space at all times.

Families are responsible for transporting their children to and from our programs. State regulations require an authorized adult to sign your child into and/or out of the program on a daily basis. Children may only be released to parents and those whom the parent designates on the registration form. Staff will request photo identification. If applicable, we require families/guardians who have children under joint custody in divorce/separation situations to provide staff with a copy of any and/or all pertinent legal documents. All documents will remain confidential. This information must be received prior to your child's first day of attendance. We will not allow the child to leave without an adult. No unauthorized person(s) including school staff will be permitted to pick up your child without written permission during program hours. We reserve the right to phone the family/guardian if questions arise.

When picking up your child, please allow time for your child to finish what they are doing, and encourage him or her to put away the materials they are using. You can use this time to look over the family information area and talk with the staff.

The Early Childhood Education programs have designated parking area. Families are expected to park in the assigned area and turn off their car while dropping off and picking up their children. Failure to adhere to this policy may affect your child's enrollment in the program.

If a McCaskey Student is suspended from school they will need to arrange for someone else to bring and pick up their child to care during the suspension.

Withdrawal

We require a two-week notice of withdrawal. There is no penalty fee for withdrawal.

Families are responsible for payment of services up to the date of withdrawal. There is no guarantee of re-entry into the same program if a waiting list exists for that program. We reserve the right to close a program site due to low enrollment with two weeks' notice.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is scheduled at the time of registration. Families must notify the Lancaster Rec office if there will be any change in their child's scheduled attendance. On days that your child is scheduled to attend, but will not attend for whatever reason, we ask you to call the center phone where your child attends. Five consecutive absences will be reported to your funding source.

Attendance Policy for Pre-K Counts

Students enrolled in Pre-K Counts must attend 5 days per week for 180 days a school year. Students will be excused from school for illness, family emergencies or other extenuating circumstances.

If a student is absent for 3 consecutive days, the family will be contacted to learn the nature of the absence and offer support, as appropriate. When children have more than 5 consecutive unexcused absences, the family and teacher will discuss the reason for the absence and determine ways to support the child's attendance in school.

When children have 10 or more consecutive unexcused absences or more than 10% unexcused absences over the course of the school year and have not responded to program supports, the child will be dismissed from the Pre-K Counts program.

Supervision

All Lancaster Recreation Commission Early Childhood Education programs are certified by and adhere to regulations established by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS.) DHS defines supervision as staff being able to see, hear, assess and direct the activity of the children at all times. For your reference, the regulation (3270.113) regarding the supervision of children is as follows:

- Children on the facility premises and a facility excursion off the premises shall be supervised by a staff person at all times. Outdoor play space used by the facility is considered part of the facility premises.
- Each staff person shall be assigned the responsibility for supervision of specific children. The staff person shall know the names and whereabouts of the children in his/her assigned group. The staff person shall be physically present with the children in his/her group on the facility premises and on facility excursion off the facility premises.
- The requirement for supervision on and off the facility premises includes compliance with the staff to child ratio requirements in regulation #3270.51-3270.55 (relating to staff to child ratio).

Ratios

When children are grouped in similar age levels, the following maximum child group sizes and ratios of staff persons apply: infant 1:4, young toddler 1:5, older toddler 1:6, preschool 1:10. When children are grouped in mixed age levels, the age of the youngest child in the group determines the staff to child ratio and maximum group size in accordance with DHS regulation 3270.51 (relating to similar age level) .

Napping

While toddlers and preschoolers are napping the following staff to child ratios apply: young toddler 1:10, older toddler 1:12, preschool 1:20. Staff persons who are on duty but are not providing child care during naptime shall remain in the child care portion of the facility premises.

At least 2 facility persons shall be present in the facility when 2 or more children are in care. At a minimum, one of the facility persons shall be a staff person. If the staff to child ratio warrants only one staff person, the second person may be another facility person. This section is cited in 55 Pa. Code 3270.55.

Your child will never be left alone for any reason and must stay in the designated child care space at all times.

Outdoor Play

We take all children outside to play every day, weather permitting. We ask that you dress your child in weather appropriate clothes. We take children outside regardless of the temperature from 25°F -90°F. We ask that you bring boots, scarves, hats, gloves, etc. in cooler weather, and water, shorts, t-shirts, etc. in warmer weather. Please note if your child is well enough to come to the center he/she must go outside.

Clothing

For infants, toddler and preschoolers, we ask that you provide at least two complete changes of clothing for your child. Extra clothing can be kept in his/her cubby or locker. You may also bring in a diaper bag for storing supplies. Please remember to label everything that you bring into the Center with your child's initials, or name. We require that children not wear opened toed shoes to our program. Children are very active and this type of shoe could present a safety hazard to little feet. Parents who send their child to our program in opened toed shoes will be called to bring in a change of shoes for their child.

Illness

The Lancaster Recreation Commission's Early Childhood Care programs are "well-child care facilities". At no time, do we provide sick child care. The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well-being and safety of all concerned. The purpose of our sick policy is to reduce the spread of illness among our children and to encourage full recuperation of sick children before they return to school. We depend on parents to assist us in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all of our children. The parents and our staff need to work together as partners to keep our children healthy and feeling well.

We reserve the right to send home any student who shows signs of illness at school. Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to school. Children may be sent home if they have any specific symptoms as listed below. In addition, a child must be free of all of these specified symptoms for at least 24 hours without medications (48 hours minimum, if a highly communicative illness such as flu or Strep) before he/she can be returned to school. When the child returns they cannot be on any fever reducing medications. Parents cannot give medicines of any kind in the center.

Children who exhibit the following symptoms will be excluded from the program:

- A fever of 100 degrees or more
- Vomiting within the previous 24-hour period
- Diarrhea within the previous 24-hour period (including recurring episodes of diarrhea at school)
- Tears, redness of eyes, with discharge (conjunctivitis/pink eye)
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- A heavy nasal discharge indicative of infection
- A constant cough or sore throat
- Mouth sores
- Impetigo
- Symptoms of a communicable disease*
- Lice**
- An unusual or infected skin rash/spots, excluding diaper rash
- Headache and stiff neck Severe itching of body/scalp
- Fussy, cranky, less active behavior and generally not himself/herself and unable to be consoled

Following an illness a child may return to school once he/she has either been seen by a doctor and it has been determined that the illness is not contagious. A doctor's clearance note will be required.

Additional effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices.

*Please notify the Center at once if you find out that your child has a contagious disease, so that staff and the parents of the other children may respond appropriately. Discreet notification will also be given to you if your child has been exposed to any contagious illness. No child's name or info will be shared.

****Lice Policy**

Upon the discovery of lice or nits the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. The child will be excluded from the program until 24 hours after being treated with appropriate lice elimination methods. Upon return to the program the child will be checked by the center director. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, infestation is identified by the presence of adult lice or nits (eggs) on a hair shaft 3 to 4 mm from the scalp. Parents of all children will be notified of the incident and our procedure at pick up the same day lice is discovered. Before children can be signed into any program, staff will check all of the children every day for a period of five days after the discovery of a case of lice. Any child found to have lice or nits (eggs) will not be accepted.

Any child found to have lice or nits will not be permitted back into the program.

****Please notify the Center at once if you find out that your child has a contagious disease, so that staff and the parents of the other children may respond appropriately. Discreet notification will also be given to you if your child has been exposed to any contagious illness. No child's name or info will be shared.**

Administration of Medication

In accordance with the licensing regulations of the Pennsylvania Department Human Services, non-prescription drugs are not administered nor are children permitted to take medications during the program, unless a doctor's order is provided.

Prescription medication can be administered if the following requirements are met:

- Prescription medicine is given by the staff only if the parent fills out the medication log in detail each day.
- The medication must be in its original container with the child-proof cap, have the child's name on it and include instructions.
- The staff will also fill out the medication log, indicating the time the medicine was given.
- If staff fail to administer medication at the required time, they are still required to complete the medication log providing reason why the medication was not given.
- In order to ensure the safety of all children and for the quickest response, we ask that staff hold all inhalers and Epi-Pens during program hours.

When dealing with medical conditions requiring special care we follow recommendations made in "Caring for Our Children." If your child requires medication/treatments/monitoring for a health condition, please provide the care plan from your doctor and we will follow it as written.

Medications and Ointments

Before Center faculty can administer any non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream, lip balm or sunscreen) to a child, Lancaster Rec requires written authorization signed by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian should provide:

- A completed Authorization for Administration form specifying the dosage and the time(s) the ointment should be administered
- The ointment, labeled with the child's full name Note: The topical ointment (diaper cream lip balm and sunscreen) must be designated for use for children on the label. When applying any type of ointment, staff must wear gloves and utilize proper hand washing procedures between each child. Duration of administration cannot exceed 6 months for sunscreen and 1 year for diaper creams.
- The ointment, labeled with the child's full name when applying any type of ointment to a child with open, oozing sores, this should be done using gloves and proper hand washing. Diaper cream may be applied to a child as a protective measure after diapering to prevent diaper rash and to a child who has a mild diaper rash. If a child has diaper rash that persists and/or has a rash that is red, irritated and has open, oozing areas, that child should be seen by a physician.

Diaper creams, ointments and sunscreen must be kept out of reach of children in and locked.

Policy on Applying Sunscreen/Block on Children

During the warmer months, parents are responsible for applying sunblock to their children in the morning before bringing them to the center. Staff will apply sunscreen again prior to going out doors in the afternoon. Any staff applying sunscreen to a child must wash their hands before applying the sunscreen and will be required to wear gloves while applying the sunscreen. Staff must change gloves for each child they apply sunscreen/block on. Staff must apply the sunscreen/block in view of another staff person. Families who wish to have our staff apply sunscreen/block on their child must complete a Sunscreen Form. Families who do not provide sunscreen must provide a waiver stating such. Sunscreen that has reached or is past the expiration date will be returned to the parent and asked to replace the sunscreen. In addition:

1. All sunscreen/blocks must be kept out of the reach of children and locked away.
2. Children may not share their sunscreen/block with other children.
3. Children may only use the sunscreen/block their family has provided.

Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that is both age and stage appropriate for children under the age of 3 years. Even in high quality settings, where staff is vigilant, a variety of activities are available, and all preventative strategies are used, biting may still occur.

Understanding the reasons for biting, taking the necessary preventative measures and communicating with families will hopefully bring an end to the problem. We understand the frustration from both sides of a biting incident and our staff works very hard to ensure that the biting incident is handled in a way that respects both families involved in the incident.

We handle biting incidents as follows: The child who is bitten is attended to immediately. The child is taken to a quiet area and the bite is examined and the child comforted. The bite is cleaned and ice is applied to prevent swelling. If the skin is broken and depending upon the severity of the bite, the child's parents will be contacted to let them decide if they wish to seek medical consultation. After the child that is bitten is taken care of, we focus on the biter. Removing the child from the area of play to another area and communicate that biting hurts and we need to be gentle. Explaining and demonstrating what gentle and acceptable behavior means. If the incident happens repeatedly with the biter, attention given to the child will vary to avoid establishing a predictable and routine pattern, which may become positive reinforcement for the biter.

The parent (s) of the bitten child will be informed (both verbally and in writing) of the incident which is documented at the child care center. With respect to confidentiality we do not share the name of the biter with the parent(s) of the child who was bitten.

The parent(s) of the biter will be informed (both verbally and in writing) of the biting incident and due to confidentiality will not be told the name of the child that was bitten.

We have reference and resource materials for the parents of the biter and the bitten child to better understand the biting behavior.

The child care center director, along with the Director of Early Childhood Education, will consult with the parent (s) of a habitual biter to develop strategies that can be used at the center and in the home, so that we are working together. The director will continue communicating on the status of the biting via e-mails, phone calls and/or meetings.

After all steps have been taken to address the biting behavior, and it is deemed in the best interest of the child and other children attending the child care center, then other arrangements will be made for the child. The director and Director of Early Childhood Education will work with the parent(s) to help develop a contingency/transitional plan and assist with referrals to appropriate child care services.

Medical Emergency Procedure

In the event of a medical emergency or of an accident, we will contact the parents and fill out an accident report. Basic first aid will be administered at the site. If it is impossible to reach the parents or the situation demands immediate attention, the child will be taken to a Lancaster hospital. A staff member will accompany the child to the source of emergency care and remain with the child until parent(s) or a designated emergency contact person assumes responsibility for the child's care. All sites have emergency procedures posted. Your authorization for staff to contact your family physician and to take whatever emergency medical procedures are deemed necessary is part of the registration contract.

Your Child's Progress

We offer a “getting to know you” meeting with parents within 30 days of enrollment. A copy of the “getting to know you” notes becomes part of the child’s record. At this meeting the staff will meet with each family to review this Family Handbook which contains our policies and expectations as well as initial observations of your child and ages and stages for preschoolers. We encourage parental involvement and seek to form partnerships with parents in the child’s development. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and participate in Family Nights, special trips, activities, transition meetings and conferences. Family Orientation will be held in August (PKC Program) and Septembers (McCaskey non PKC programs) to enable you to get to know our staff. Portfolios from observations and developmental assessments of your children are completed twice a year and can be reviewed with the parent during conferences. Throughout the year, we aim to communicate with you as we see your child grow and progress. A developmental screening is completed within 45 days of enrollment. Ages and Stages is used to track development of all infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Preschoolers are also assessed using Work Sampling System.

ECE Partnership with McCaskey High School

The Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey is proud to partner with the Technical and Business Careers Small Learning Community at McCaskey High School. This opportunity benefits the children in our care by giving them additional planned learning opportunities. It gives the McCaskey students real world experience working with children as they prepare to meet their future career goals. For many of these students, the future career goal is to become teachers.

The McCaskey Early Childhood Education Program (ECE) is a 3 year program. Junior and Senior McCaskey ECE students complete competencies in the development, care, guidance, and teaching of young children from birth through second grade. Students actively participate in the on-site laboratory school through weekly internships. The lab school includes the Lancaster Rec Child Care Center at McCaskey. All Year II and III students also participate in a weekly internship at a community child care center or in a SDOL elementary classroom.

McCaskey students will design and teach lessons to the children in our child care program. Therefore, the Lancaster Rec Child Care Center at McCaskey asks all families to give permission for SDOL staff to sign their children out of the child care space to participate in these activities. The SDOL staff will then sign the child back into the child care space after the lesson is over. A separate form will be issued to parents with children attending the Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey Center for this purpose.

Early Learning Network

As a Keystone STARS 4-star facility, we are responsible for recording demographic information and results from the “Work Sampling System Online (WSO)” into the State’s Early Learning Network. This information will be kept confidential and used by the Office of Child Development to maintain programming quality. Additionally, the Office of Child Development may occasionally seek your input regarding program quality.

Conferences

We offer you the opportunity for two individual conferences a year (November and March) to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have. You will receive a letter from the staff informing you of the dates and details to schedule a conference. In the event you are unable to attend, we will gladly mail you a written report. In addition, we will make every effort to discuss your child with you at pick-up or drop-off time. At your request, we will send home a daily comment sheet for your review. If at any point during the school year you would like to discuss your child's development, our staff are available for one-on-one meetings. Please schedule this meeting through your child's site supervisor.

Family Programs

To help involve the children's families in their learning and development, we have instituted Family Nights two times a year. Family Night includes an educational program, a time to meet the other children and their parents/guardians, and of course food and fun for the whole family.

Transitioning into the program

Recognizing each child as a unique individual, we try to make each family as comfortable and confident as possible as they enter our Child Care Programs. To help children and their families adjust to a new room or site, families are invited to come observe and tour the center prior to the first day of attendance. All families will have the opportunity to have a “getting to know you” meeting. We work with families to adjust schedules, routines and starting the program to meet the best interests of the child.

Children attending the Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey are placed in classrooms by age; infants, younger toddlers, older toddlers, and preschool. When children change classrooms, we will introduce the child and family to the new teachers and environment prior to their first day in the new classroom.

Transitioning to another Program

We work with the parents and the schools to make transitions as easy as possible for your child. We automatically transfer all necessary files from the Preschool program to the Before and After School program. Parents can request a copy of your child’s portfolio when the child advances to Kindergarten.

A meeting will be offered for children transitioning to Kindergarten to provide information to support this change. The meeting will be held in May in conjunction with program graduation activities or Family Night. Also, we will make every effort to participate in School District of Lancaster-sponsored transition activities.

Damage, Theft, and Loss

The Lancaster Rec provides an ample supply of learning materials for the children to use in our programs. The Lancaster Rec staff is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items. Children are responsible for any items brought from home or school.

The parent/guardian will be responsible for any damages resulting from his/her child's actions to either Lancaster Rec or school property.

Cell Phones/Electronics:

Children attending the Lancaster Rec programs may not bring any electronics to our Early Childhood Education programs. These electronics include but aren't limited to ipad's ipod's, tablets, and cell phones. If these items are brought to the program, the staff will collect them immediately from the children and will be given to the adult that picks them up at the end of the program.

Limited English Proficiency

In order to provide clients with equal access to programs and services, the Lancaster Recreation Commission will provide any person or persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) competent, free language assistance services. These services include, but are not limited to, interpreter services, sign language and any other means necessary to provide fair and equal access to services.

Snow and Weather Closings

Cancellation information will be posted on our website www.LancasterRec.org and on WGAL TV8.

Early Childhood Programs (McCaskey Child Development Center and Lancaster Rec Preschool)

- If the School District of Lancaster has a 1 or 2 hour delay, Lancaster Rec Early Childhood Program PKC programs will open at 10. All other age groups will delay their opening by the same amount of time as the school district. AM wrap around will not be provided.
- Early dismissals for weather will be decided on a per-case basis. Parents will be notified as promptly as possible. PM Wrap Around will not be provided.
- All Day camp will not be provided for any ECE program or wrap around care on days school closes due to weather.

Publicity/Photographs

Photographs of the children in our programs may be taken and may appear in newspapers, displays or other publicity materials. Parents must notify the Director of Early Childhood Education if they do not wish to have their child's photo used in this manner.

Staff Babysitting

To keep a professional atmosphere, we do not allow staff to accept babysitting jobs outside of work hours. Staff are strictly prohibited from providing private transportation for any children in our programs during program hours. Lancaster Rec does not take responsibility for staff actions outside of regular program hours.

Exclusion and Suspension Policy

Lancaster Rec Early Childhood Education Program strives to create inclusive and supportive environments for children of all abilities. A core of our program philosophy is that children benefit from regular program participation and attendance. All ECE staff are trained in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies and Techniques. The aim of PBIS is to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of schools and other agencies. PBIS improves social, emotional and academic outcomes for all students, including students with challenging behaviors, disabilities and students from underrepresented groups. This is accomplished by creating a nurturing and responsive relationship with the children in our program. Staff will model and teach appropriate behaviors to children during the first few days of the program. Expectations for behavior will be reviewed regularly with the children, with individualized teaching as needed.

Our staff members use only positive methods of child guidance including natural and logical consequences, redirection, anticipation of and reduction of potential problems, and the encouragement of cooperative behavior. Staff members are prohibited from using corporal punishment such as spanking, hitting or striking a child, forceful pulling or pushing, humiliating, name calling, and/or use of profanity, threatening, screaming/yelling, frightening, or shame-based disciplinary

techniques. These standards will be upheld by all staff and visitors that are in the classroom or on Lancaster Rec property.

For children not meeting classroom behavior expectations, teachers will share concerns with the Director of Early Childhood Education and a documentation plan will be established. Parents will be contacted to share concerns, give their input and discuss support for the child. During this time, teachers will also offer explicit instruction in alternatives to assist a child to learn more appropriate behaviors.

If a child continues to exhibit persistent challenging behaviors, we will partner with the parents to examine additional support services for the child. This includes reaching out to our partners in the School District, obtaining technical assistance from Keystone Stars, reaching out to the IU 13, and any other supports services available. The goal is to obtain an assessment and develop individual support for the child. We will work with the parents and our partners to fully implement a behavioral strategy.

Only after all these steps have been exhausted, will alternative arrangements for the child be made.

Child Abuse Notification

All staff of the Lancaster Rec are mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are defined as a person who, in the course of their employment have direct contact with children and must report or cause a report to be made when they suspect child abuse. Any signs of suspected abuse, neglect or maltreatment will be reported. It is not Lancaster Rec's responsibility to investigate reports of child abuse/neglect, as it must be reported as stated by the Department of Human Services. The law also states that anything told to a mandated reporter, regardless of evidence involving maltreatment, abuse or neglect, must be reported to the appropriate agency. In addition, as mandated reporters it is our responsibility to make sure children in our programs are safe while in our care.

Inclusion

Policy Statement: Lancaster Recreation Commission welcomes all children and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

Procedures: Admissions/waiting list Children of all abilities are accepted into Lancaster Recreation Commission and families interested in having their child attend the program will be given an equal opportunity for admission. A waiting list may be maintained and children will be accepted from the list on a first come first served basis. Inclusive Environment Early childhood educators at Lancaster Recreation Commission use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make any

adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and early childhood educators will work with therapists, special educators and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications and strategies into classroom routines and activities. Any adaptations will be reviewed with families and other professionals supporting the child.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality applies to all verbal and written information about potential, enrolling and previously enrolled children and their families. All staff will be briefed on the need for confidentiality and will be expected to fulfill their obligation to respect the protection of privacy. Written records will be stored in a secure location with access limited to the director and the child's teacher. No information will be released about a child and the parent/legal guardian during enrolment or transition to another receiving program or school without first receiving the written permission of the parent/guardian. Family Centered Practices Lancaster Recreation Commission acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success. Lancaster Recreation Commission communicates with each family daily and has regular meetings to discuss the child's successes and challenges.

Professional Development and Support for Staff Training and support is provided to ensure that all staff are comfortable, confident and competent to meet the developmental and educational needs of all children. All staff receive an orientation on inclusion policies and attend training focused on effective inclusion and/or other disability topics whenever possible. The director provides additional support and resources as appropriate.

Collaboration with Other Professionals. Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teachers and others. Lancaster Recreation Commission welcomes those

professionals and works with them to assure the child's success. The service provider is encouraged to provide services to the child in the context of the early childhood classroom environment and the child's teacher and the service provider work collaboratively to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. Program Name Here supports the teacher's participation in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

If staff is concerned that a child does not fit a typical profile for a child's social or skill development:

- Staff will document behaviors and skills through observation and portfolio collection.
- Staff will contact the appropriate director of the department, who will conduct observations and provide documentation of findings.
- Family will be contacted to discuss findings and appropriate services that can help.

Parent Code of Conduct

We strive to maintain an environment that is safe at all times. All persons picking up children are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Violent, threatening or abusive behavior will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels angry or frustrated, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward staff members.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Adults conducting themselves in a disruptive or disrespectful manner will lose their privileges of dropping off or picking up their children and the authorities will be called. In certain cases of extreme disruptive actions by a parent authorities will be notified. This will be under the discretion of the Director of Early Childhood Education.

In the event a parent or guardian arrives by vehicle to pick up their child and is suspected by staff to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will discreetly negotiate with the person not to leave and encourage him/her to call a sober friend or companion to drive the individual and their child home.
- If the parent/guardian refuses, becomes violent, or leaves the program with the child, police will be called immediately with a description of the individual (including name and address), vehicle description, license plate number and direction of travel.

If an adult conducts themselves in a disruptive, violent, threatening or disrespectful manner, Lancaster Recreation Commission will follow the procedure below.

1. The first occurrence, you will receive a letter from the Director of Early Childhood Education.
2. The second occurrence you will receive a letter from the Director of Early Childhood Education.
3. The third occurrence, you will no longer be able to pick up/drop off your child for one full calendar year.

Parents and Legal Guardians Visiting Programs

Families are an essential part of our program. It is our goal to work with the community, as well as parents/guardians to provide the best learning environment for each child. We encourage parents to stop in throughout the day and to take advantage of the opportunities to be involved in the child care site throughout the year. All parents and/or legal guardians are allowed to stop by unannounced at any time. Any other adult wishing to visit must provide a letter from the parent/legal guardian stating they have permission to visit the child in the child care site.

While visiting the child care site we ask that your visit not cause any disturbance to ensure the children are able to participate in the program without any interference. We also ask non-parent/legal guardians to limit their visit to an hour or less.

McCaskey Students are welcome to visit their child during times they do not have class. Any McCaskey Student visiting the center while they are to be in class will be reported to their Teen Elect Counselor.

Communication

Infants, toddlers and preschool children receive a daily report which informs parents of their child's day and what they ate. Informative newsletters are sent home monthly to update parents/guardians of upcoming activities and special events. Important information for parents can also be found on the dry erase/bulletin board located inside the child care site. Sign-in sheets are also located in this section.

Volunteers in our Program

Any person wishing to volunteer in our programs must follow the following guidelines: complete a Lancaster Recreation Commission Volunteer Application, obtain State Police, Child Abuse, and FBI clearances. The clearances must be less than one year old. A volunteer must also have a current physical, TB test and references.

Emergency Preparedness

To ensure the safety and welfare of children attending Lancaster Rec Child Care Programs, each center has a plan, posted at the facility. This plan explains where the immediate evacuation, in-place sheltering and evacuation locations are located. Families will also receive a letter with these site specific details on the first day their child attends. We will use one of the following protective actions in emergency situations:

- **Immediate Evacuation:** Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the center in the event of a fire, etc.
- **Lock Down:** Children and staff stay in the classroom with the door locked, lights off in the event of an intruder.
- **In-place sheltering:** Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- **Evacuation:** Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area.

A fire/emergency drill is practiced once a month.

Evaluating the Programs

Your input is very important to us. We use the information from families to make improvements in our programs. In May we ask each of our families to fill out a parent evaluation form. Please take time to review and complete the evaluation and return it to your child's Site Director by the end of the school year.

The children essentially are the program, and we value their input. Although we frequently receive feedback from the children through regular conversation, we also give each child the opportunity to participate in the formal evaluation process. During the last two weeks of the program our staff will give each child an evaluation form to complete. For children who cannot yet read, they may draw pictures of their likes and dislikes about the program.

Monitoring Notice

The Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey is monitored by picture. Each classroom has a camera that feeds directly into the Center Director's office. Classrooms are monitored on a regular basis throughout the day.

Want to Discuss Something?

The Lancaster Recreation Commission is grateful for the support and cooperation of the School District of Lancaster. However, we are solely responsible for the administration, planning and implementation of our programs. Any concern should be brought to the attention of the Director of Early Childhood Education.

The Lancaster Recreation Commission provides activities that will contribute to the physical, emotional, mental, and social development of your child. As Early Childhood Professionals, we understand that children learn at different rates and we value individuality, and encourage creativity at every age. Thank you again for utilizing us for your child care needs.

Need to Reach Us?

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Cell Phone: 717-286-3771

Emily Zimmerman, Early Childhood Education Specialist

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Marisol Rosario, Administrative Assistant (Registration and
Billing)

717-392-2115 x138 marosario@LancasterRec.org

Lancaster Rec Preschool (Lower Level): 717-989-0257 or
717-392-2115 x159

Lancaster Rec Preschool (Upper Level): 717-715-6884

Lancaster Rec Child Development Center at McCaskey: 717-
391-8618 (Mary Lee Salerno, Center Director)