Carlow University
Early Learning Center

Family Handbook
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NONDESCRIPT IN SERVICES

SUBJECT: Nondiscrimination in Services

TO: Carlow University Early Learning Center Clients

FROM: Karian Wise, Supervisor, Early Learning Center

DATE: July 1st, 2016

Admission, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, limited English proficiency, national origin, age or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible 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 aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any client (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the following:

Carlow University Early Learning Center
3333 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health and Welfare Building
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

PA Human Relations Commission
301 Fifth Avenue
Suite 390, Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Western Regional Office
301 Fifth Avenue
Suite 410, Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
MISSION STATEMENT
Carlow University Early Learning Center, open since 1990, is a non-profit early childhood setting that provides a high quality, full-day, early educational program for children from six weeks to three years. Our mission is to provide children a balance of social, emotional, physical and intellectual development based on developmentally appropriate practices, and including the collaboration of the staff, parents, and their children.

PHILOSOPHY
The philosophy of Carlow University Early Learning Center maintains that children need a safe, comfortable and enriching environment in order to develop to their maximum potential. Carlow University Early Learning Center provides a secure, nurturing, early educational environment that uses developmentally appropriate activities, experiences, and materials to engage children in active, meaningful learning.

The following goals have been created to encourage the children to accomplish major developmental tasks in the areas of social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. The curriculum established within each developmental grouping will reflect the goals and philosophy.

The developmental goals for the children are:
- To foster positive self-identity and emotional well-being focusing on building self-confidence, self-esteem, independence, and self-control
- To develop social skills and strategies for coping with social issues
- To encourage language and literacy development
- To encourage children to think, reason, question, experiment, and problem solve
- To enhance physical development and skills using small and/or large muscle development
- To encourage and model sound health, safety, and nutritional practices
- To foster creative expression, representation, and appreciation for the arts
- To respect and value cultural diversity
- To enhance the awareness of the five senses: touch, taste, hear, smell and see

Carlow University Early Learning Center will also include the collaboration of the parents into the decisions and goals made for their children.

CURRICULUM
Carlow University Early Learning Center has developed a curriculum based on the research of child development theories and practice. We have used the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines as the basis for our curriculum, and the philosophy and theory of our curriculum is derived from the Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, as well as our own expertise. If, at any time, parents want to borrow one of the Creative Curriculum books to read, please let the Director know. Research in the field has shown that the foundation for children’s academic learning is through play. Play is the vehicle through which children build knowledge. Children need to experience all of the stages of play in order to learn and be able to grasp the concepts taught in academic learning. Children learn holistically –
physical, social-emotional and cognitive learning work together to shape the whole child. Children need to be actively engaged in the learning process using developmentally appropriate experiences that encourage children to pursue their own interests for what is real in their life and their community. We have developed a distinct curriculum for the Infant and Toddler classrooms.

**Infants and Toddlers**

Three separate classrooms comprise our Infant/Toddler spectrum. These include: Infants (ages six weeks to approximately one year), Young Toddlers (ages 1 – 2 years), and Older Toddlers (ages 2 – 3 years). This curriculum focuses on the individual needs of each child that relate to the social/emotional, physical, language, cognitive, and creative areas of development. While developing in all of these areas, infants and toddlers will use their senses to gain a sense of security and identity and to explore the people and objects in their world. The children are able to select activities and materials that interest them and learn by being actively involved.

The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers outlines what children learn during the first three years of life. It also outlines the experiences through which children achieve their learning goals, what teachers and parents can do to help children reach these goals, and the materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum.

**Infant and Toddler Goals and Objectives**

**Social/Emotional**

To learn about themselves:
- To feel valued and secure in their relationships
- To feel competent and proud about what they can do
- To feel supported as they express their independence

Examples: Looking at themselves in a mirror.
Positive reinforcement for doing things.

To learn about their feelings:
- To communicate a broad range of emotions through gestures, sounds and –over time –words
- To express their feelings in appropriate ways

Example: Recognize children’s feelings and encourage them to express feelings appropriately

To learn about others:
- to develop trusting relationships with nurturing adults
- to show interest in peers
- to demonstrate caring and cooperation
- to try roles and relationships through imitation and pretend play

Example: Provide children with materials to try roles and relationships thru imitation and pretend play.

**Language and Communication**

To learn about communicating:
- to express needs and thoughts without using words
- to identify with a home language
• to respond to verbal and nonverbal commands
• to communicate through language
Example: Encourage children to use language to express feelings.

Physical
To learn about moving and doing:
• to develop gross motor skills
• to develop fine motor skills
• to coordinate eye hand movements
• to develop self-help skills
Example: Encourage children to explore independently

Cognitive
To acquire thinking skills:
• to gain an understanding of basic concepts and relationships
• to apply knowledge of new situations
• to develop strategies for solving problems
Example: To develop strategies for solving problems using shape sorters, building blocks, and puzzles.

Creative Expressive
To foster creative expression and enhance sensory awareness:
• to develop sensory awareness of the five senses
• to develop representation and appreciation for art
Example: Creating texture collages

Infant and Toddler Weekly Lesson Plans
The teachers write weekly lesson plans based on five developmental areas of development. Teachers will create activities in each domain of development which will be posted for parents to view. The teachers will also write on their daily board other activities that were done throughout the day.

Individual Portfolios and Assessment
There are many ways that the teachers assess the children’s development. On a daily basis, the teachers observe and record happenings in the classroom for each child. The teachers write an anecdotal record for each child based on their observations. When a developmental profile is completed for a child, the teachers write individual goals for each child that focus on the cognitive, language, large- and fine-motor, social and self skills. The teachers will accompany these goals with an activity that will focus on meeting each individual goal. We welcome your input on these goals, and encourage your feedback. The child’s Primary Teacher will be the one recording and writing the observations, anecdotal records and goals and objectives for each child.

Parents are always welcome to view these individual portfolios and provide input on planning for their child. The teachers will also collect drawings and artwork compiled over time to keep in their portfolios to better help them assess their development.

Through the use of these portfolios, the teachers can identify difficulties in behavior and development, adapt curriculum plans to meet the needs of all children, and
use these goals and activities to guide in their curriculum planning. If the teachers have any developmental concerns in any areas, they will meet with parents to confidentially discuss other screenings and referrals if needed. If teachers suspect that a child has a developmental delay or any other special need, the teachers will confidentially discuss their concerns with the parents. Teachers will provide documentation, explain the concern, suggest next steps, and provide resources for the parents to obtain needed services, if necessary. Staff encourages and supports families to make the primary decisions about services that are needed for their child.

If any concerns arise about the child’s development, then further screenings and referrals will be discussed with the parents. Any Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), or other individualized plans will be addressed for children with disabilities and other special learning needs. The teachers are oriented when they are first hired and trained annually by the Director after that on how to use these assessment procedures and interpret the results and their meaning in terms of future learning opportunities for the child.

All families are encouraged to attend Parent/Teacher conferences with their child’s teacher. These meetings give parents a chance to confidentially discuss at length their child’s development and provide any input on their child’s goals and assessments. Each family will receive a copy of their child’s developmental profile. We ask parents to provide any input or feedback that they may have on their child’s profile. If at any time parents would like access to the information about the Teaching Strategies GOLD, please see the Director.

Parents will receive a developmental profile about their child three times a year. Teachers use the Teaching Strategies GOLD system to report all developmental outcomes. Teaching Strategies GOLD is an authentic, research-based performance assessment for children from birth-three years old. Parents are always offered the opportunity to conference with their child’s primary teacher when a developmental profile is completed. Set conferences are also scheduled during the fall and spring of each school year.

As a Keystone STARS 4-STAR Center, we are required to complete and input child assessment data for children enrolled in our center through Teaching Strategies GOLD Online, which gets sent to Pennsylvania’s Early Learning Network (ELN). At our parent intake meetings, parents receiving information regarding the ELN system. GOLD Online is a web-based, secure database that is accessible only to our teachers. After each teaching team completes their developmental profiles and the data is in the system, the ELN system receives a general report about the center and its classrooms’ outcomes for children. ELN is Pennsylvania’s electronic data system for gathering information on early childhood programs and for studying the development of children in those programs. ELN combines information about the program including the quality and experience of the staff, with information on your child’s development over time. This information is then used to build and maintain high quality early childhood programs. Your child’s name is not attached to this information, but rather an Outcome ID number is assigned to each child to maintain confidentiality. Within the ELN, parents are asked to fill out demographic information on the child and family. This information is sent to the state to influence funding of early childhood programs. This information will generate your child’s outcome ID.
The Family’s Role
The bridge between home and school is very important in your child’s world. Home and school must be connected in positive and respectful ways to help the children feel safe and secure. We value the family’s role in the education of the children and recognize that we need to build a partnership with families so we can work together to support children’s healthy development and learning.

Goals and Objectives for Working with Families
Goal 1: To build a partnership with families.
- To involve families in the program’s planning and evaluation process.
- To listen to and discuss families’ questions, concerns, observations, and insights about their children.
- To communicate regularly with families at arrival and departure times about how things are going for their child at home and at the program.
- To schedule regular conferences.
- To discuss with families ways to handle children’s challenging behaviors.
- To resolve differences with families in a respectful way.
- To help families gain access to community resources.

Goal 2: To support families in their parenting role.
- To demonstrate respect for a family’s approach to childrearing and their feelings about sharing the care of their child.
- To celebrate with families each new milestone in their child’s development.
- To incorporate family rituals and preferences in the daily life of the program.
- To offer workshops, meetings, and trainings on child development and other topics of interest to families.
- To help families network with one another for information and support.

Goal 3: To support families in their role as primary educators of their child.
- To encourage family involvement and participation in program activities.
- To provide families with strategies to support children’s learning at home.

Goal 4: To ensure that the home cultures of the children’s families are reflected in the program.
- To support children’s use of their home language.
- To encourage children’s awareness of and interest in home languages spoken at the program.
- To seek families’ assistance in learning about the children’s home culture.
- To include artifacts, customs and holidays from the children’s home cultures in the program’s environment, routines, and activities.
- To interact with children in a style that is respectful of their home culture.

STATE LICENSING
Carlow University Early Learning Center is licensed by the Department of Human Services. The purpose of licensing is to ensure that care of children in a childcare center is safe and healthful. We must comply with their standards to protect the health, safety, and rights of children and staff, and to reduce the risks to children in childcare.
centers. Therefore, the licensing agent will look at the environment as a whole, and also the files of staff and children to make sure that they are updated and complete.

NAEYC

Carlow University Early Learning Center is accredited by NAEYC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The purpose of NAEYC accreditation is to ensure the quality of children’s daily experiences and to promote positive child outcomes. The NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria have four areas of focus: Children, Teaching Staff, Partnerships, and Administration. Within these focus areas there are 10 standards that must be met. These standards include: Relationships, Curriculum, Teaching, Health, Assessment of Child Progress, Teachers, Families, Community Relationships, Physical Environment, and Leadership & Management. These 10 program standards define what NAEYC believes every early childhood program should be. Through its accreditation system, NAEYC uses the standards and criteria to define program quality and recognize programs that have demonstrated the capacity to sustain quality over time. If at any time, you would like to look at the NAEYC guidelines, please see the Director.

KEYSTONE STARS

Carlow University Early Learning Center has attained a STAR 4 rating from the Pennsylvania Keystone STARS Program. Research-based Performance Standards form the bedrock of this quality improvement program. The Keystone STARS Performance Standards reflect research-based indicators to improve outcomes for children. The standards are organized into four STAR levels that build upon each other in order to support continuous quality improvement. When a program meets the Performance Standards for a STAR level, they receive a STAR designation. A Keystone STAR designation informs parents that the center is committed to enhancing quality for the children and families in their program. The improvements in programming are designed to increase the capacity to support children’s learning and development; increase educational attainment among practitioners; and enhance professional skills and competencies in support of children’s learning and development.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

The teaching staff qualifications of the Center are built on state licensing regulations and NAEYC recommendations. All Lead Teachers have Bachelor’s degrees in early childhood or child development; all Assistant Teachers have Associate degrees in child care or pedagogy. All teachers must have child care experience, an updated health appraisal, references, and child abuse and criminal clearances from the state.

Throughout the year, volunteers, student workers and work-study students will assist teachers in the classrooms. They have been screened by Center administration and have fulfilled all state licensing requirements. They are never left alone with the children.

The ELC will also provide educational field experience for Carlow University students studying in Early Childhood Education or related fields. This will be under the supervision of the Center Director, teachers, and the college faculty.
POPULATION SERVED AND CONTINUITY OF CARE

The Early Learning Center serves children 6 weeks to 3 years of age. The Center is designed to be inclusive of all children regardless of race, religion, or disability (see Nondiscrimination Policy on pg. 2). Any IFSPs, IEPs or other individualized plans will be addressed for children with disabilities and other special learning needs.

There are three different developmental groupings:
- Infants – approximately 6 weeks to young one year olds
- Young Toddlers – one year olds and young two year olds
- Older Toddlers – two year olds and young three year olds

We make every effort to provide consistency for your child throughout their stay here at the ELC. Each group of children will be assigned three teachers who have primary responsibility for working with that group of children. The teaching staff provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and immediate care as needed to protect children’s well-being. The children will continue to have the same teachers and classmates throughout their three years with us, but will switch to a new classroom at the beginning of each new school year. This continuity-of-care model eliminates potential transition problems of children moving one at a time at a certain age, and having to get to know other teachers and a new group of children. We typically transition the groups to their new classrooms in late August; flexibility is there if needed. We realize that all children develop individually at different times and exceptions can be made if it will be beneficial to the child.

ADULT: CHILD RATIOS

These ratios of adult to children are the legal ratios that we follow for the Department of Human Services. Most often, these ratios are lower by the assistance of part-time employees, volunteers, and work-study students.

| Teachers: Infants          | 1:4 | Group size: 8 |
| Teachers: Young Toddlers  | 1:5 | Group size: 10 |
| Teachers: Older Toddlers  | 1:6 | Group size: 12 |

Teaching staff-child ratios within the group size are maintained during all hours of operation, including indoor time and outdoor time. These ratios and group sizes are maintained in order to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among the children. When full-time teachers in the rooms are off, the Director will maintain ratios by using floaters and/or work-study students. The Director may also need to be in the classrooms in order to maintain ratios when more than one teacher is off on a given day. When possible, you will always know in advance if your child’s teacher will be off, and who will be replacing the teacher for the day. The teacher replacing another teacher will always be familiar with the children of that group.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Teachers supervise all children at all times. Teachers must be able to hear, see, direct and assess each child in their care. Each teacher is assigned responsibility for supervision of specific children. The staff person shall know the names and whereabouts
of the children in her assigned group. The teacher will be physically present with the children in her group. Teaching staff supervise infants and toddlers by sight and sound at all times. When children are napping, teaching staff are aware of, and positioned so they can hear and see, any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, especially when they are actively engaged with children who are awake. Infants’ sleeping arrangements are in a crib; Toddlers sleep on mats with sheets covering the mats. Mats and cribs are placed at least 3 ft apart while in use. Teaching staff should check on sleeping children by standing near and/or looking into cribs at least 3 times per hour, careful not to disrupt their sleep. Teaching staff in each classroom must supervise and be assigned to specific areas that are near equipment where injury could occur such as climbers that are outside or inside.

SIDS POLICY

Infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for infant sleeping equipment. Infants capable of rolling over while sleeping may do so. Pillows, quilts, blankets, comforters, sheeplkins, stuffed toys, and other soft items are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants. Swaddling is not permissible. Infants are allowed to use sleep sacks, but these sacks must have holes for the children’s arms.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Children who are siblings of current ELC or Campus School families, as well as Carlow Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni will receive a preference at the Early Learning Center. We will serve the public as space allows. If at any time families served cannot communicate in English, we will establish a strategy to communicate in their language.

Each family enrolling in the Center will complete the following:

Enrollment Application – Parents will fill out the enrollment form and pay the application fee.

Admission Tour – Parents and child (where applicable) will visit the facility before being admitted to go on a tour and to review the following information: center schedule, hours, fees, meals, health policies, supervision policies, arrival, dismissal and pick-up policies, philosophy and curriculum, and what is needed for the parent to bring for the child.

Agreement Form – Parents and Director will sign a contract stating the monthly cost of care, child’s attendance schedule, and meals served. This will be updated every 6 months.

Emergency Contact Form – Parents will fill out the form stating general information about the parents, emergency contact and release persons, physician information, and signatures for allowing medical care and minor first aid. This form will be updated every 6 months. This information is kept confidential, but is immediately available to parents, the Director, regulatory authorities, and teaching staff who have consent from the parents.

Health Appraisal – Parents must provide an initial health report no later than 30 days following the first day of attendance. The initial health report for an infant must be
dated no more than 3 months prior to the first day of attendance; the initial report for a young toddler must be dated no more than 6 months prior to the first day of attendance; and the initial report for an older toddler must be dated no more than 1 year prior to the first day of attendance.

Updated health reports should follow the following schedule: At least every 6 months for an infant or young toddler; at least every 12 months for an older toddler (2 years of age or older). The Early Learning Center will not accept or retain any child who does not provide updated written verification from the child’s physician of administered immunizations in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

Exemption from immunization must be documented as follows: For religious beliefs or strong personal objection – documented by a written, signed and dated statement from the child’s parent or guardian. For reasons of medical needs – documented by a written, signed and dated statement from the child’s physician. If these immunization requirements are not met in accordance to the DPW, then the child will not be able to attend and/or will be asked to leave the Early Learning Center until the requirements are met. This information is kept confidential, but is immediately available to parents, the Director, regulatory authorities, and teaching staff who have consent from the parents.

**Family/Child Questionnaire** – Parents will fill out informational forms answering questions about the child and their family, what goals parents have for their children while enrolled at the Center, and what traditions or customs that the family may have. We use this to be more familiar with the family as a whole, and to incorporate the unique cultural backgrounds and the goals you have for your child into our curriculum.

**Parent Orientation Meeting** – After forms have been completed, typically the week before enrollment, the parents will meet with the classroom teachers to discuss the routine and procedures of the classroom the child is entering. We ask that parents help their child adjust by staying with him or her and engaging the child in the day’s activities to provide a gradual introduction into our program. All children transition differently, and the ELC teachers work with the parents to make each transition as easy as possible.

**TUITION: PAYMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

Should tuition or fees need to change, you will be informed of yearly increases in writing the month before the increase is due. The amount of the increase will be judged by what is vital to the budget. However, the intent of the ELC is to provide the highest quality childcare at the lowest possible cost. As a non-profit center, all monies are returned to the program in the form of highly qualified teachers, equipment, and supplies.

Please place the check in the Tuition Payment Box located on the wall in the Director’s office. You may also directly mail your tuition to the address listed on the Student Account statement. Receipts are processed by the Student Accounts Department of Carlow University.

- Tuition is due on the first care-giving day of the month, and no later than the 15th day of the month. If the 15th falls on the weekend, tuition is due the Friday before. Make checks payable to Carlow University Early Learning Center.
- Tuition not received by the 15th of the month will be charged a $25.00 late payment charge. You will receive a Late Tuition Notice if payment is late.
• Tuition not paid by the last care giving day of the month, including the late fee, will result in an automatic suspension of childcare for the next month until tuition is paid.
• A check returned to Carlow University for insufficient funds is assessed an additional $35.00 handling fee.
• The contracted amount must be paid every month. Sick days and missed days will not be deducted. Closed days are also not deducted from tuition.
• Part-time children can add extra days if there is room. You may not switch days; if your child comes on a day not regularly scheduled, you must pay for the extra day. The fee is different for each age group; and will change when fees increase. If you want to add an extra day, you must see the Director in advance to make sure that there is room, and to be charged the extra day fee.
• Extra day fees can be paid in a separate check or in the regular tuition check for the following month.
• There are no half-day fees. Children may not share days or split days (2 mornings does not equal 1 day).
• Minimum tuition/enrollment is two days per week.
• Any changes in days must go through the Director.
• All CCIS clients must sign an agreement that childcare checks will be mailed directly to Carlow University ELC before service will be provided.

VACATION POLICY
Families enrolled in the Center full-time and year-round are allotted one week of vacation credit per year, after one year of enrollment. The year will begin on the first day of enrollment. These days may not be taken individually. Vacation credits will be deducted from the monthly tuition based on the fees in your child’s classroom. If you are going to take your vacation credit, please see the Director to fill out a Vacation Request Form. There is no vacation credit for families enrolled part-time.

Faculty, Staff and Carlow students whose children are enrolled full-time, year-round may choose to take their one week vacation credit at Christmas, spring break or another time the University is closed, and are responsible for paying all other breaks.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE
All children must be signed in and out in their classroom daily. A sign up sheet is posted to sign in and out.

Parents are required to make visual and verbal contact with the teacher in charge when dropping off and picking up a child to ensure the safety of your child.
Children must arrive by 10:00 a.m. Your child will not be accepted into the classroom if you arrive after 10:00 a.m. There are, of course, exceptions when children have doctor’s appointments or emergencies happen. If a child has a doctor’s appointment, you must give a one-day notice to your child’s teacher. In order for your child to be admitted beyond 10:00 a.m., you must have a note from the doctor stating that you were at the office. Children will not be admitted for any reason beyond 11:45 a.m., as it is too disruptive to your child’s schedule and the rest of the child’s classroom. Please do not get upset with the teachers if they do not accept your child if you are late. The teachers are only trying to follow the Center policies.
Parking for drop-off and pick-up is permitted in the 15-minute spaces in front of Frances Warde Hall. You are required to have an Early Learning Center parking tag displayed in your car. Please see the Director if you did not receive a parking permit. Each family will receive two key cards to access the door to enter Frances Warde Hall on the third floor, the ground floor, and to get into the Center at the first floor stairwell. If you lose a card, there is a $10.00 replacement fee to replace it.

Parents are responsible for their own children and older siblings when the parents are in the Center. All children (including siblings) should stay with their parents at all times and are not permitted to run around the Center. Older children are not permitted to climb, jump or run in the rooms where other children are playing. The children are not permitted to go into any classroom without a parent.

If any child comes to the Center with a physical disability, accommodations will be made in order for that child to be able to function at the Center in an adaptive manner.

Parents are reminded that the Center closes at 6:00 p.m., and every effort to arrive before 5:50 p.m. should be made. Late pick-up results in anxiety for your child and inconveniences our staff. Any family still in the Center after 6:00 p.m. is responsible for paying the teachers’ overtime and will be charged accordingly. Therefore, if you will be unable to pick-up on time, please make arrangements for a designated person to pick up your child, and call the Center to inform the teachers. If you are unexpectedly detained by an emergency, please call the teacher directly as soon as possible. If you are consistently late picking up your child, childcare services may be terminated.

Families still in the Center after 6:00 p.m. will be charged $20.00 per quarter hour. There are always two teachers on duty; therefore, each teacher receives $10.00. This should be paid in cash or check directly to the teachers and you must sign a Late Pick-up Form. This fee may not be added into your tuition costs for the month. If a designated pick-up person is late, he/she will sign the form and the parents will be notified of the fee.

If someone other than the persons listed on your contact form will be picking up your child, please fill out a Parental Release Form from your child’s teacher. If you call and request that someone else is picking up your child, the teacher will fill out a Telephone Release Form that the pick up person will have to sign. Finally, while we do not want to offend anyone who comes to pick up your child, if the teacher does not know the person picking up your child, your child will not be released unless the person has ID that proves his or her identity.

**CALENDAR**

The center operates from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, year-round. Carlow University ELC will close in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year’s Eve
- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Holy Thursday and Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Wednesday before Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
THE EARLY LEARNING CENTER WILL BE CLOSED THE WEEK BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR’S DAY.

If the University closes or adds Holiday closings, we will let you know in as much advance notice as possible. We will close the Center if the University closes.

These holidays have already been calculated into the monthly fees, and only vacation credit may be deducted from the monthly fee (See Vacation Policy on page 11). There will be no tuition deduction for snow days or any other emergency closings.

We also have Teacher In-service Days. They are on different days each calendar year, so you are notified in advance as to which days we have scheduled for in-service. There is always one week at the end of August allotted for professional development and the teachers to transition all classrooms for the new school year. There is one other in-service day, typically in early spring, dedicated to professional development.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

To reach the Director or leave a message, please call (412) 578-6314.
To reach your child’s teacher call:
INFANTS (412) 578-8871
YOUNG TODDLERS (412) 578-8872
OLDER TODDLERS (412) 578-8873

In case of an emergency and you can’t reach your child’s teacher, please call the Director’s office and leave a message.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Infants: Individual daily schedules are developed between teachers and parents and are updated as often as necessary. Infants sleep in cribs, unless other arrangements are made between parents and teachers.

Toddlers: The general daily routine for these age groups is listed here. More precise schedules are posted in the classroom. Toddlers sleep on mats with a sheet brought from home that is labeled with their name.

- 7:00 – 8:00  Freeplay
- 8:00 – 8:45  Breakfast
- 9:00 – 11:30 Developmental Activities, Indoor and Outdoor Play, Snack
- 11:45 – 12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 – 3:00  Rest time
- 3:00 – 3:30  Snack
- 3:30 – 5:30  Outdoor or Indoor Play Activities
- 5:30 – 6:00  Quiet Activities/Clean up/Close

FIELD TRIPS

Children enrolled at the Early Learning Center will not be transported in any vehicle maintained by the University or any personal vehicle. The children will take walking excursions on the Carlow campus. The Older Toddler group, when within a 1:2
ratio may take walks to the local fire station, the Carnegie Library or a variety of other places in Oakland. When visiting the Carnegie Library or other far places, the children will be brought in strollers on the field trips. For closer field trips, the Carlow Police often allow an Officer to walk with the children and teachers for added safety, when available.

Parents must always sign a permission slip for each walking excursion before children will be allowed to leave Carlow’s campus. If parents do not sign a permission slip, their child will remain at the Center with other remaining children and a teacher.

Monthly, a librarian from the Carnegie Library visits our Center for an early literacy program that includes stories, songs, and fingerplays. We may also have the local fire and police departments come to do safety workshops with the older children.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS

The staff of Carlow University Early Learning Center wants to build a collaborative partnership with parents in educating and caring for their children in order to build trust and mutual understanding. We do this informally through communicating verbally about your child on a daily basis. Please take some time to talk to your child’s teacher every day. Be sure to make teachers aware of any changes in your child’s life (moves, illnesses, parent out of town, etc.) so that they can be prepared for changes in your child’s behavior. Also, you can always call the teachers during the day to talk to them about your child. Please try to avoid calling at lunch and nap time. Please call the teachers if your child is going to be absent.

To enhance this partnership further, the staff will also provide consistent communication through:

Daily Sheets – Infants, Young Toddlers, and Older Toddlers all have daily communication sheets in their classrooms. Parents should fill these out daily to let the teachers know what your child needs throughout the day.

Message Boards – Classrooms have message boards that provide information on what was done that day. There is also a message board outside of the office that the Director will post notices on. Please read them.

Newsletters – At least monthly, the teachers will write newsletters about what is happening in their classrooms. The Director will also write newsletters or emails as needed to keep parents updated on center news.

Bulletin Boards/Notices – Each classroom has a bulletin board outside and/or inside their classrooms that have a place for parents to receive notices and newsletters. Daily schedules, lesson plans, and general notices will also be posted on bulletin boards or outside of classroom doors. Please check these places often. The large bulletin board in the hallway by the elevator provides the menus and health information, a map of campus, DHS certification and phone number, NAEYC certificate, and general information or notices.

Parent Meetings – As often as needed, the Director will plan to have meetings with parents and staff to discuss issues common to a majority of parents. Notices will be sent home informing parents of these meetings and topics. Suggestions for meetings are always welcome.

Parent Committee – The committee, formed by parents who have volunteered their time to be an integral part of the Center, will meet to enhance the connection between home
and the center. The parents will be able to collaborate with staff members to discuss, develop, and implement any experiences or activities that will benefit the children, families, and staff of the center (for example: fundraising, volunteering services, social functions). The meetings will also be used to discuss issues or concerns common to a majority of parents about classrooms or the Center, and to have an opportunity to provide input regarding policies and procedures that benefit the Center as a whole.

**Evaluation** – Parents will evaluate the program quality. The Director will periodically ask parents to fill out an evaluation of the program.

**Parent/Teacher Meetings and Conferences** – Formal Parent/Teacher conferences are held two times per year for the purpose of discussing your child’s developmental progress. If needed, at parent or teacher request, parent/teacher meetings can be held as often as needed whenever any concerns or problems arise.

**Volunteers** – Parents are encouraged and welcome to come help the teachers in the room or visit to do a special activity. Please see your child’s teacher if you want to visit.

**Website** – Parents have access to a TeacherWeb website for the Early Learning Center. Teachers and the Director will post lesson plans, newsletters, and other Center reminders on this website. The Director and teachers will send out a link to the site to all families.

**PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS WITH CONCERNS**

The staff and administration understand that parents sometimes have questions or concerns about the program or policies. These procedures are made to make sure problems and concerns are taken care of quickly and effectively. The following procedures should be followed to address any concerns you may have:

Parents should first talk to their child’s teacher about any questions or concerns, being careful not to talk about children in front of them or other parents. If you need more time than at arrival, please request a phone conference or private meeting. It is not permissible to call the teachers at home to discuss Center issues. Discussions of concerns between families and staff about specific children must be held in private. At any time, the parent or teacher can request the Director be present at the meetings.

If, after talking with the teacher, a parent feels the issue has not been resolved and/or if questions remain, please contact the Director. The Director will talk to families in the office or on the phone during Center hours of operation.

If there are any further concerns about the same subject, the Director can call on the Executive Director to offer any further assistance to the problem. A final determination of the problem will be discussed with the parent.

Any problems or concerns that arise can also be discussed with the Parent Advisory Committee at meetings, provided these first steps have been taken.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Department of Human Services regulations state that a staff person “may not disclose information concerning a child or family, except in the course of inspections and investigations by agents of the Department.” Therefore, staff must keep confidentiality concerning children at all times. The staff will not disclose information regarding the children as to illness (although the illness itself will be posted), biting or other behaviors, or the developmental progress of other children. Teachers will only discuss your child with you.
Other than DHS, Keystone STARS and NAEYC assessors (who are all held to confidentiality), only the parents, the Director, and teachers to whom parents have given permission will have access to a child’s file. Any other person needing access to a child’s file for screening and assessment purposes will need a signed permission form from the parent to have access. Individual records are kept confidential and are in a locked cabinet in the Director’s office.

In order to provide mutual respect and consideration for other children and families, we ask that parents not discuss children other than their own, classroom situations, or teachers while within the Carlow community. Please follow the PROCEDURES FOR CONCERNS if any questions or problems arise.

If parents would like staff to share their child’s information to other service providers or programs, please see the Director to sign a consent form.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The Early Learning Center teachers will create a safe, active, age-appropriate environment for your child. They will set clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior. Teachers encourage appropriate behavior by reminding the children of the rules and rationale appropriate to their age. If inappropriate behavior does occur (such as hitting, pushing, biting, calling names or teasing, etc.), the teachers will discuss the situation with the child, redirect them to a more acceptable behavior or activity, and apply logical natural consequences appropriate to their age and developmental level. When a child’s response is aggressive, unacceptable, or harmful, the teachers will intervene quickly and apply the previously mentioned strategies. The teachers will use positive guidance in talking to the children. They will guide the children to resolve conflicts and model appropriate skills that will help children begin to solve their problems on their own. Older children are encouraged to verbalize their wants and feelings; teachers help younger children recognize their feelings. Physical punishment, harsh, or humiliating discipline techniques will not be utilized or tolerated. While at the Center, we ask that parents not use harsh discipline tactics either. Also, parents may not discipline children other than their own. It is the job of the teachers to handle the classroom behaviors of other children.

Most often the teachers will anticipate and eliminate potential problems before they happen. If another child hurts a child, an Incident Report will be written and signed by the parents of both children; the teachers will not disclose the names of the other child involved. The report will include what happened and how the incident was treated. Upon serious incidents such as broken skin because of a bite or a scratch, the parents will be called immediately. By permission of the parent in writing, an antibiotic ointment can be applied if the parent previously provided ointment. If it is a biting incident and the skin is significantly open, then the child should see a physician to reduce the risk of infection.

PROCEDURES FOR EXCESSIVE INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Children demonstrate inappropriate behaviors for a variety of reasons. Some reasons include, but are not limited to: Inability to express themselves with words; frustration or anger; attention; showing independence; or exploring limits. The teachers are trained to allow children to do this safely and guide children in a developmentally
appropriate way. Please be cognizant that our program is inclusive to all children, regardless of developmental or physical ability.

If a child is continuously exerting inappropriate behaviors such as (but not limited to) biting, hitting, scratching, pushing, pulling hair, calling names, or teasing, the following procedures, as appropriate for the child’s age and developmental level, will be followed.

This procedure is used to help children acquire acceptable behavior and develop the skills needed to succeed. Children will not be removed or suspended from the program because of these behaviors.

The teachers will take care of the hurt child first. They will comfort the child and talk about the situation. They will make special efforts to protect potential victims. The teachers will talk to the child’s parents about the incident including what happened, the child’s response, relevant information about the stage of child development, the comfort/support and first aid given by staff, and strategies implemented to prevent reoccurrence. Also, an Incident Report will be written for the parents of both children to sign and return.

If the incident broke the skin, the parent will be called immediately after we wash the cut with soap and water. With written permission, we will administer an antibiotic ointment for an open bite, cut, or scratch. If the incident is a bite and the skin is significantly open, then the child should see a physician to reduce the risk of infection.

The teachers then direct their attention to the child who performed the behavior, explaining in simple language that the behavior is not acceptable. They will discuss the situation with the child (where appropriate), and explain what is acceptable such as gentle touches, using words, biting a teething ring. The teachers communicate expectations firmly and clearly.

The teachers will observe and monitor the child’s behavior looking for any predictable patterns or times when these behaviors might occur.

The teachers will shadow the child, making every effort to stop the behavior before it happens. They will explain and model appropriate behavior. The Director will lower staff ratios if possible. The Director may also observe the behavior and offer classroom interventions.

The teachers and the Director will meet with the parents to discuss the problem and possible solutions. They will work together to provide consistency in dealing with the behaviors and explore the reasons for the behavior. They will meet as often as needed.

If the teachers and the parents feel it is necessary, outside resources such as inclusion specialists, play or behavior therapists, and early intervention specialists may be used to provide on-site observations at the center, along with small group meetings with staff and families. These experts in the field will work with the classroom staff to explore ways to manage the behavior in the classroom. They will do this by developing and implementing strategies for increasing appropriate behaviors and decreasing disruptive behaviors.

Staff, parents, and specialists will meet to discuss solutions that are in the best interest of the child. Staff encourages and supports families to make the primary decisions about services that are needed for their child. The staff will help parents obtain these needed services if necessary.
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency procedures and evacuation routes are posted at the door of each classroom. Please read them, as they are for the safety of your child while in care. Local police and fire authorities have been notified of our location and we work with Campus Police to assure speedy response times for any emergency. The nursing staff of Carlow’s Health Services is also available for consultation and treatment. The teachers are all trained in First Aid and CPR. Monthly fire drills are also conducted at the Center.

If any child should need emergency medical or dental care, he will be transported to Children’s Hospital Emergency Room by ambulance, and parents will be contacted immediately. A teacher who has current CPR and First Aid training will accompany the child and remain at the hospital until parents arrive. The child’s emergency consent form and any individual emergency care plans will be taken to the hospital with the teacher.

For minor injuries, first-aid kits are on hand. Teachers will clean the injury with soap and water and apply ice and bandages as needed. Teachers are not permitted to use any antibiotic creams or gels unless the parent has given written consent. All minor injuries that occur are reported to the parent on an Incident Report for the parent to sign and return to the teacher. We alert parents by phone on an individual basis as needed.

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is defined as: serious physical or mental injury that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental; or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; or serious physical neglect of a child under 18 years of age.

Pennsylvania law requires that persons who work with children and “have reason to believe, on the basis of their medical, professional, or other training and experience, that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is a victim of child abuse” are required to report suspected child abuse to Child Line. They are also required to notify the person in charge of the institution of suspected abuse and to make a written report. All staff members are familiar with this policy. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action, unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

If a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect of a child in the program, in order to protect the rights of the accused staff person as well as protect the children in the program, that staff member will be given a leave of absence without pay until it is determined if the staff member is found guilty or not guilty of the accusation. If found guilty, the staff member will be terminated.

DIAPERING POLICIES

For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following policies are in effect:

- Only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups are to be used unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use. The medical reason must be documented by the child’s physician.
- Clothing that is soiled is immediately placed in a plastic bag and sent home for laundering.
• Teachers check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every two hours when children are awake or when children wake from a nap.
• Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
• Teachers change children’s diapers or soiled underwear only in the designated changing areas.
• Each changing area is at least three feet from other areas that children use and is used exclusively for one designated group of children.
• At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when the child is being changed on an elevated surface.
• Diaper changing procedures are posted and followed in each changing area.
• Surfaces used for changing are not used for any other purpose.
• Teachers follow diaper changing procedures as posted at each changing area.
• Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering material have a lid that opens and closes tightly, is hands-free, and is not accessible to children.

HAND WASHING POLICIES
Hand-washing procedures are posted and followed by adults and children who are able. Hand washing is required by all who work with the children to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
Staff assist children with hand washing as needed.
Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing fecal material from clothing.
In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

Children and adults wash their hands:
on arrival for the day
after diapering or using the toilet. The use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants.
After handling body fluids - i.e. wiping noses, coughing on a hand, or touching any mucus, blood, or vomit.
Before meals and snacks and before preparing or serving food.
After playing in water that is shared by two or more people.
After handling pets or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals
When moving from one classroom to another

Adults also wash their hands:
before and after feeding a child
before and after administering medication
after assisting a child with toileting
after handling garbage or cleaning
Wearing gloves is optional unless handling blood or body fluids that may contain blood.
GLOVES ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR HAND WASHING.
Hand-washing procedures that are followed by adults and children:
Use liquid soap and warm water.
Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails.
Rinse well.
Dry hands with a paper towel, then use paper towel to turn off the water.

WATER PLAY
Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease.
No child drinks the water that children play in.
Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play.
Fresh water is always used and the water is changed if a new group (indicating a different classroom) participates in the water play activity.
The water is drained when the activity period is over. The water flows freely through the water play table and out through a drain in the table.

ILLNESS
In order to provide a healthy environment for children and teachers, it is important to keep your child at home when he or she is ill. The teachers and cleaning staff do everything possible to keep the Center clean and free from illness. Please remember that bringing a child who is ill to school compromises every other person in the center and the illnesses may spread from person to person.

DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE CENTER IF HE OR SHE HAS HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE LAST 24 HOURS:
Diarrhea – frequent loose or watery stools compared to child's normal pattern.
After 2 loose or watery stools the child will be sent home and should stay home until the child is naturally free from diarrhea for 24 hours.
Unidentified rash – rash must be identified and treated if needed by a physician in writing in order to come to school. If a rash is identified while in school, the parent will be called to take the child to get the rash identified by a physician. If it is not contagious, the child can return to school upon receiving a physician’s permission.
Fever – a temperature elevation of 101 degrees or more. Your child will be sent home and should stay home until the child is naturally fever free for 24 hours.
Vomiting – vomited more than 1 time in 24 hours. If your child vomits at the Center two times in one day, your child will be sent home. Your child should stay home until the vomiting has ended for at least 24 hours.

Parents will be notified if their child has any of the previously mentioned symptoms and they are expected to pick up the child within one hour. A child who is ill will be made comfortable in a location away from others where he will be supervised by a familiar caregiver. An Illness Report will be filled out by the teacher and signed by the parent. It will include the child's symptoms and when the child can return to the Center. The Center reserves the right to request proof of treatment, such as a doctor’s release.
In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease, all parents will be notified by an **Illness Alert** posted on the classroom door. Parents should report all communicable illnesses to the Director as soon as possible. For confidentiality purposes, the name of the child who is ill will not be given to other parents.

Children with contagious diseases must not attend the Center during the contagious period. Some guidelines for returning to the Center are (but not limited to):

- **Strep Throat** – 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **Chicken Pox or Shingles** – 7 days from onset of rash or until all lesions are crusted
- **Common Cold/Flu** – excluded if accompanied by fever and/or if child is unable to participate in normal daily activities. Child can return to school 24 hours after a fever is gone and/or child is able to resume normal activities.
- **Impetigo** – exclude until sores are healed
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth** – after fever and blisters are gone
- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye)** – 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun, or a physician’s permission to return if not contagious.
- **Ringworm** – excluded until after first treatment, and body lesions that are not dried are covered.

Where all illnesses and communicable diseases are concerned, the Center follows the advice and guidelines of the Allegheny County Health Department and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

**The Center does reserve the right to exclude a child due to illness if:**

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
- The illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- The illness poses a risk of spread of disease to others.

If any of these criteria are met, the child may be excluded regardless of the type of illness.

**MEDICATION**

With the exceptions of diaper rash ointments, teething gels and sunscreen, prescription medications will only be administered to children with these restrictions:

- Medicine that must be ingested by the child WILL NOT be administered by a teacher.
- Only topical prescription medication (ointments or creams) will be administered by our staff.
- All medications must be in the original container with doctor’s instructions intact for that child.

Medications must be labeled with the child’s first and last names, the date that the prescription was filled, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store the medication.
Parent must complete a Medication Log to give written permission for the teacher to administer the medication. All medications must be given to a teacher for storage. DO NOT PLACE MEDICATIONS IN REFRIGERATORS OR STORAGE BINS. When these conditions are met, the medication will be administered.

MEALS/NUTRITION

Parents are responsible for providing all formula and/or food for the day for their child. The Center will provide milk for all meals for toddlers. The teaching staff will work with families to ensure that all food brought from home meets the USDA’s CACFP food guidelines by discussing the CACFP meal patterns for all children. All foods and beverages brought from home must be labeled with the child’s name and date. Staff will make sure that all food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits and vegetables or commercially prepared packaged food in factory-sealed containers.

Children may eat breakfast at the Center from 8:00 to 8:45 a.m. Children arriving later should be fed breakfast at home. Meal patterns are posted for your information based on the USDA CACFP guidelines. Using “Keeping Kids Safe – A Guide for Safe Food Handling and Sanitation” produced by the USDA as a reference and guide for food safety, the Center takes every precaution to ensure food safety. Teaching staff will discard foods with expired dates. Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of the children’s reach.

Staff will not offer children younger than 4 years of age the following food: hot dogs – whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. The child’s food must be cut into pieces no larger than ¼-inch square for infants and ½ inch square for toddler/twos, according to each child’s chewing and swallowing capability. Food for lunches should be cut before being brought to school. Food will not be served to the child if it does not meet these requirements.

Nutritional policies and practices for infants:

Teaching staff will work with the families to ensure that the food brought from home is based on the infants’ individual nutritional needs and developmental stage.

The Center supports breastfeeding by: accepting, storing, and serving breast milk for feedings and accepting breast milk in ready-to-feed sanitary containers labeled with the infant’s name and date. The breast milk can be stored in a refrigerator for no longer than 24 hours or in a freezer for no longer than 3 months. The staff will gently mix, not shake, the milk before feeding to the infant. The Center will provide a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinating feedings with the infant’s mother.

Bottle feedings DO NOT contain solid foods unless the child’s health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. Adding solids to bottles increases risks of choking, food allergies, and obesity.

After one hour, teachers discard any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed or is not refrigerated. If staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than 5 minutes.
No milk, including human milk, and no other infant foods are warmed in a microwave oven.

Teaching staff do not offer solid foods and fruit juices to infants younger than six months of age, unless that practice is recommended by the child’s health care provider and approved by families.

Sweetened beverages are avoided. If juice is served, 100% fruit juice is used and the amount is limited to no more than four ounces per child daily.

The program does not feed cow’s milk to infants younger than 12 months of age. The program only serves whole milk to children between the ages of 12 months and 24 months. Children older than 24 months receive 2% milk.

CLEANING AND SANITIZATION

The cleaning and sanitizing of all surfaces in the facility is indicated on a Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table that is posted in each classroom. The teaching staff is responsible for a majority of the cleaning and sanitization of surfaces. The housekeeping staff cleans the Center after hours and is responsible for the floors, carpets, and the bathroom facilities. A Bleach/Water mix is used to clean, disinfect, and sanitize all surfaces in the facility. Ventilation and sanitation, rather than sprays, air freshening chemicals, or deodorizers, control odors in inhabited areas of the facility and in custodial closets.

Procedures for standard precautions:
- Surfaces that come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of a material that can be sanitized.
- Staff use barriers and techniques, such as Kleenex and gloves, that minimize contact of mucous membranes or of openings in skin with potentially infectious body fluids and that reduce the spread of infectious disease.
- When spill of body fluids occur, staff clean them up immediately with detergent followed by water rinsing.
- After cleaning, staff sanitize nonporous surfaces by using the procedure for sanitizing designated changing surfaces that are listed on the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table.
- Staff clean rugs and carpeting by blotting, spot cleaning with a disinfectant. Housekeeping staff shampoo rugs as needed.
- Staff dispose of contaminated material in a plastic bag with a secure tie that is placed in a closed container.
- A toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion is washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, sanitized, and air dried.
- If a child or staff person is allergic to anything in the environment, needed precautions will be taken according to health professionals’ recommendations or requirements. If any staff or children have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishing or supplies the program will comply with recommendations from the appropriate health professionals in order to maintain safe areas for them in the facility.
• A maintenance staff is provided by Carlow University to maintain the facility and the equipment used.

• Smoking, firearms, or any other hazards that put children at risk are prohibited on the Carlow University campus.

• Children and adults are protected from hazards by (but not limited to) covering electrical outlets, covering radiator knobs, making hanging cords inaccessible to the children, cleaning up spills promptly, securing rugs, and excluding baby walkers from the Center.

• First-aid kits are readily available and maintained for each group of children. The kits include gloves, thermometers, band-aids, gauze pads, medical tape, soap, emergency forms, and any emergency medication that a child may need. Staff take the first-aid kits with them whenever they take the children outside to the playground, to the gross-motor room, or on walks and excursions away from the Center.

• Teachers will limit the amount of outdoor time and physical activity as a precaution during any air pollution or ozone action alerts.

CLOTHING AND ITEMS NEEDED

Children should be dressed in durable, comfortable clothing. They will play outside in all seasons, and appropriate gear should be provided. Children must wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. When in the sun, sun protective clothing and sunscreen should be worn. You must bring your own child’s sunscreen and sign a consent form for the teachers to be able to apply the sunscreen on your child. Children should wear tennis shoes and socks for active play all year round. Sandals and flip-flops do not provide adequate protection, often cause falls, and therefore should not be worn. In case of insect-borne disease and with the recommendation of the health department to use insect repellent, we will apply insect repellents containing DEET once a day with your written permission.

To best serve the needs of your child at the lowest possible cost, parents are required to provide the following items:

Infants:
• All formula/breast milk and food per day – all bottles must be taken home and cleaned daily. Clean bottles and nipples must be used for each feeding. Pre-made bottles must have a cap for storage in the refrigerator. NO GLASS BOTTLES. You must place child’s name or initials and date on all bottles and containers.
• 2 crib sheets and 2 blankets
• Diapers as needed
• 4 or more containers of hypoallergenic, unscented wipes per month
• 3 or more extra changes of clothes

Toddlers:
• All food per day – food not refrigerated can be stored in child’s basket. Please do not bring large boxes or containers of food. We do not have enough storage. Use only the space provided in your child’s basket. Place child’s name or initials and date on all food containers.
• 2 crib sheets and 2 blankets
• Diapers as needed
• 2 or more extra changes of clothes
• 4 or more containers of hypoallergenic unscented wipes per month
• 1 bulk snack per month to be shared between all children, as well as 2 fresh fruit/vegetable snacks per month. Teachers will put up sign up sheets as needed.
• 4 or more pairs of underpants and changes of clothes while potty training.

**Everything brought in for your child must be labeled with his/her name or initials.**

**For your child’s safety, these items are not to be brought to the Center:**
• Chewing gum or hard candy
• Money
• Foods that are considered choking hazards:
  o hot dogs (food that is the most common cause of choking), and other meat sticks, whole or sliced into rounds
  o hard candy
  o peanuts
  o nuts (must be chopped finely)
  o seeds
  o raw peas
  o hard pretzels or chips
  o rice cakes
  o whole grapes (should be halved or quartered)
  o raw carrot rounds
  o popcorn
  o spoonfuls of peanut butter
  o marshmallows
  o chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole
  o fish or meat with bones

**TOYS**

The Early Learning Center provides ample appropriate play materials for the children. Therefore, toys should be left at home. At no time should toy guns, swords, or action figures be brought from home. Security items such as dolls, teddy bears and blankets are always accepted. Books from home are always welcome.

**ANIMAL AND PET POLICY**

The Center does not allow any classroom pets beyond fish. If we have any animal visits to any classroom, the animal must appear to be in good health. Visiting animals will have documentation that the animal is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with the children. Teaching staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals, instructing children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Program staff make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed in the classroom.
BIRTHDAYS/SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Birthdays are very important to you and your child and we will help you celebrate. For classroom celebrations, please make arrangements with your child’s teacher for the time and day that works best. We allow you to bring a simple treat for your child to share such as fruits, muffins, cupcakes, or cookies. We do not recommend treat bags filled with candy, gum, balloons or whistles. Please do not plan to have games and characters come to the Center, as it is not appropriate for a childcare setting.

Of course, parents are always welcome to participate in the classroom, especially for birthdays and special events. While we generally don’t celebrate holidays at the Center, we celebrate each child by incorporating each child’s culture into our classrooms and curriculum. If you have a special activity or tradition/custom that you want to share with your child’s class, please speak to your child’s teacher to make arrangements.

WEATHER WATCH

Carlow University Early Learning Center will operate as usual, except under extraordinary weather conditions or unsafe conditions. For closing information, please listen to, or watch KDKA, WPXI, and WTAE. If the University closes or delays, the Early Learning Center will close or delay according to their schedule. You may also sign up for Carlow’s E2Campus Emergency Notification system on Carlow’s website: www.carlow.edu

Note: Cancellation of the Campus School does not necessarily indicate closing the Center. Listen or watch for Carlow University or Carlow Early Learning Center. We DO NOT follow Pittsburgh Public School closings and delays.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

Each family must give at least one month’s notice to the Director when planning to withdraw from the Center. Failure to give at least one month’s notice will result in charges for childcare that you may not have used. At that time, an exit interview may be scheduled by the family to review the child’s file and experiences.
HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

I have read the policies outlined in the Carlow University Early Learning Center Parent Handbook, and I agree to support them.

I understand that these policies may change, and I will be notified in writing of any changes.

Child’s name: _________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian signature: _________________________________________________
Date: __________________

Parent/Guardian signature: _________________________________________________
Date: __________________

Please return this signed and dated page to your child’s lead teacher or to the Director.