



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Children First Inc., at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts of the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice.

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Some sections of this Parent Handbook may be modified to comply with current COVID-19 Protocols.

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1. MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to maximize each child's potential by providing an active, collaborative learning environment where children, families and educators become empowered for social, emotional, and academic success.

Vision

Our vision is a world where every child meets their maximum potential.

2. WELCOME

Welcome to Children First, Inc.!

We believe the strongest partnership in a child's life is that between the child's parents and the school in which their child attends. The goal that we strive to achieve is for our staff to team with parents to make this experience an excellent one for your entire family. We are committed to providing the highest quality of care to your child and to your family.

We have an Open-Door Policy and want your involvement. We encourage you to get involved and visit or volunteer in your child's classroom and always be an advocate for your child.

We serve children between the ages of 6 weeks old to 5 years old. Our daily program promotes your child's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development. We individualize our program to meet the needs of each child.

We continually train our staff using the most current research in child development and early education.

The beginning of school is an important time and please know that we are available to answer any questions that may come up. It is our hope that you and your child will develop a lifetime of wonderful memories while enrolled in our school.

3. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

At Children First, Inc. we know that children’s earliest experiences have a tremendous impact on their development. We respect parents as the primary and most important provider of care and nurturing. We believe parents and teachers are partners in children’s care and education.

Our school is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. We provide experiences that enrich and enhance each child’s cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. The members of our staff serve as positive role models and provide learning opportunities that are supportive, nurturing, warm, and responsive to each child’s individual needs.

4. LICENSING INFORMATION

4.1 Governmental Licensing Information

Children First, Inc. is licensed by the State of Arkansas and receives periodic inspections by the AR Department of Health and Human Services. Parents may request to view a copy of the minimum standards and the most recent licensing inspection report at any time.

4.2 Employee Screening

Every employee of Children First, Inc. goes through a rigorous screening process prior to employment. Each employee as required by DHS, must have a background check, criminal record check and a maltreatment check. This process must be updated every 2 years for employment. If an employee has not resided in the State of Arkansas for a period of six (6) years, a FBI background/fingerprint check is required prior to employment.

You may contact the local licensing office at 501-682-8590. The child-maltreatment hotline number is 1-800-482-5964.

5. ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at Children First Inc. is open to children from 6 weeks –5 years. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability, and without regard to a parent or guardian’s race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, or disability.

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Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, deposit, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt.

The Enrollment Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration. Children First reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

Continued enrollment at Children First, Inc. is contingent upon the parent's, emergency contact persons' and child's adherence to the policies and procedures of Children First, Inc. as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify Children First, Inc., immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit. The full-time program is a 12-month program. Enrolled spots will not be held for children who withdraw for the summer months. Should parents choose to withdraw; they will have to put the child(ren) back on the wait list as of the date of withdrawal.

A registration fee is charged twice yearly (February & September). At that time, the registration fee must be submitted for each student to secure a spot in the program for the upcoming school year. Changes will only occur if there is availability in the program requested for the upcoming school year.

5.1 Waiting List

Classes at Children First, Inc., typically remain full throughout the year. CFI keeps waiting lists, divided by age and program. A waiting list application form as well as a non-refundable application fee must be attached and submitted to the office to place a child on the waiting list. Applications will be filed in each age category according to the date the application form and fee are received. Once enrolled, the application fee applies to the child's first annual registration fee.

5.2 Hours and Days of Operation

Children First Inc. is open from 7:00am-6:00pm, Monday through Friday. Children First offers only a fulltime program for children ages six (6) weeks through five (5) years of age.

5.3 **Holidays Observed**

Children First recognizes the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
Memorial Day
4th of July
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day & The Day After
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

****If a holiday falls on a Saturday, Children First will observe the holiday the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, Children First will close the following Monday.***

6. TUITION

Tuition is charged by the week, regardless of attendance and may be paid by check, money order, or ACH debit. Tuition for each individual child is based upon the ratio of the group they are assigned to, not the chronological age of the child.

All parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Financial Agreement prior to enrollment of their child at Children First, Inc. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

There is no tuition credit or refund given for vacations, scheduled holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, pandemics, inclement weather or acts of God. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at Children First; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Director immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the Center Director.

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6.1 Contracts, Fees, and Deposits

An ACH (bank account or credit card) program can be used to pay tuition. A Tuition Express form must be submitted at the time of registration. There will be a \$25 fee charged for tuition payments returned to our bank. Parents will be responsible for providing a new ACH payment method if their account is declined.

Twice a year, upon re-enrollment, an annual registration fee of \$45 is collected. This fee is non-refundable.

6.2 Payment Schedule

Tuition rates for the school year are announced at the beginning of the year. Tuition is due on the 1st day of each week and shall be paid using your designated method of payment. The Tuition Express ACH program (via bank account withdrawal or credit card) used by any family who pays by credit and/or debit card, will be assessed a **3% processing fee** which will be added to your weekly tuition. A **\$25** fee will be charged for returned payments. Parents will be responsible for payment and fees. If at any future time the bank returns a parent's payment, future tuition payments may be limited to certified check or money order. Tuition does not include fees for other special events.

6.3 Late Fee Payments

Tuition is due no later than Wednesday at 6:00pm, or a late fee of \$10.00 will be charged. Any parent whose account is not paid by Thursday of the current week will be dropped from enrollment and will not be re-admitted until all amounts owed are paid in full.

6.4 Referral Credits

Children First, Inc. appreciates all its patrons and will offer a one (1) week tuition credit for one child if a child is enrolled because of a referral by a Children First family. Tuition credit will be applied to the referral family's account after the new family has been enrolled for two (2) weeks.

6.5 Family Discounts

Family discounts apply to customers who have two (2) or more actively enrolled children. The child with the lowest tuition charge for the week will receive a discount of \$10.

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6.6 Income Tax Records

For income tax purposes, a yearly statement for childcare expenses is available upon request and will be emailed to the parent.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

Within Children First, Inc. confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of Children First, your child's physician(s), therapist(s), and/or student interns who have a "need to know" to care for your child most appropriately and safely.

Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as Children First, Inc. strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with Children First., Inc.

Outside of Children First, Inc., confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of Children First, Inc. persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Parents are **NOT** allowed to discuss **any child** or **employee** through private email, social media, or group forums. This type of conversation will **NOT** be tolerated and could result in the family's dismissal from the school. Our confidentiality policy protects every child's and employee's privacy. If a parent or family member has a concern regarding another child or employee, they should contact the Director directly to discuss those concerns.

7.1 Violations of the Confidentiality Policy

Children First, Inc. takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with Children First, Inc. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families, and employees associated with Children First, Inc.

Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy and could be dismissed from the school.

Any parent who violates the Confidentiality Policy will not be permitted on Children First property thereafter.

7.2 **MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Children First, Inc. are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of Children First are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Children First take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. **Children First employees are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Children are subject to be interviewed by the licensing staff, by child maltreatment investigators, or by law enforcement for investigative purposes and/or determining compliance with licensing requirements.** The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of Children First Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.” Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season.
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g., car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child.
- ◆ Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

8. PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Children First, Inc. always requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of Children First is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Children First but is the responsibility of every parent or adult who enters the center.

Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. **Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on Children First property thereafter.** Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing school property.

8.1 Swearing/Cursing

No parent or guardian is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or guardian feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

8.2 Threatening of Employees, Children of Other Parents or Adults Associated with Children First, Inc.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Today, Children First, Inc. cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be fully prosecuted of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, Children First will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

8.3 Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children at Children First, Inc.:

While Children First does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the childcare facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

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Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or Director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

8.4 Smoking

For the health of all Children First employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on the property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of Children First. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

8.5 Entry Door Safety

For the safety of all the children, we have secured doors. Only people who are authorized can enter the building while children are present. When families enroll, they will receive a four (4) digit #.

Please do not hold the door open for unauthorized individuals. In addition, if you have forgotten your four (4) digits #, please do not follow another family in, but instead press the button to buzz the center director. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children, and families of Children First, Inc. Please be alert and immediately report any breaches or concerns to the office.

8.6 Confrontational Interactions with Employees, other Parents or Associates of Children First

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Children First, Inc. or the parents of other children, it is expected that all

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disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

8.7 Policy for Handling Parent Concerns

If a parent has a concern, he/she should first discuss it with the lead teacher of the child's class. If the lead teacher and parent cannot resolve the concern together and to the satisfaction of both, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Center Director.

9. Social Media

This social media policy applies to parents, employees, students, and The Staff of Children First, Inc. This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e., You Tube)
- Micro-blogging (i.e., Twitter)

As part of our duty to safeguard children it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families and employees. We therefore require that:

- No photographs or video recordings taken within Children First settings or at Children First special events and outings with the children, are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your own child without written permission.

***Please sign the acknowledge statement page regarding permission located at the back of the handbook.**

- Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children. (This excludes those photographs taken by staff for the children's online learning journal, which are sometimes used for display in the setting, for use on Children First website and in other advertising material if parental permission is given).

- No public discussions are to be held or comments made on social media sites regarding Children First children, staff or Administrators (except appropriate use for marketing fundraising events) or that could be construed to have any impact on Children First's reputation or that would offend any member of staff or parent using the school.

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- If a parent names Children First on any social media platform, they must do so in a way that is not detrimental or derogatory to the school.
- Parents are not permitted to set-up private or public social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) accounts/groups related to Children First, Inc., without expressed written consent from the Center Director.

9.1 Violation of Social Media Policy

Any parent found to be in violation of the above or by posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality, bring Children First, Inc. into disrepute or that are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to Children First, Inc., its employees, or other children could result in immediate dismissal from the school.

10. PARENT’S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in the care of Children First, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Children First, Inc. must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

Any parents wishing to visit the school on non-court appointed days are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director and are allowed in the school only at the discretion of the Center Director. An employee of Children First, Inc. will always accompany the parent, throughout the school.

In the absence of a court order on file with Children First, Inc., both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Children First, Inc. **cannot**, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Children First, Inc. suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access Children First, Inc. staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

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11. DISMISSAL

Every effort will be made to resolve differences. However, circumstances that can result in a child /family's dismissal from the school, include, but are not limited to:

Behavior aspects of a child:

- Any child who is not yet ready for the group experience or whose needs cannot be met in a group setting (i.e.-cannot get along with other children, unable to follow class rules and teacher instructions, requires one-on-one attention from the teacher for most of the day)
- A child who continually places the safety of him/herself, other children, or staff members at risk.
- A child with behavior problems so severe that they cannot be accommodated within the scope of the regular program and regular staff-child ratio, or lack of a written plan or instructions from a psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or therapist specializing in young children.

Parental disregard for Center policy:

- Tuition is two (2) weeks overdue and there is not a written plan for payment of back tuition,
- Failure to pay the tuition according to the written plan,
- Consistent disregard for the hours of operation,
- Failure to treat the Children First staff and children with respect.

Children First reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time if the Center Director deems it necessary. Although families can be dismissed immediately, when possible, the school endeavors to follow the procedure below:

- Parents will be notified of the issue by teacher or office staff as soon as possible.
- Parents and teacher or office staff will set up a conference for discussion of problem within 48 hours.
- A follow-up conference will be scheduled 2 weeks later.
- If significant improvement is not observed, parents will be asked to seek outside assistance to aid in a solution.
- After a reasonable time, if a solution cannot be reached, the Center Director may communicate dismissal.

Any past due balances must be paid at the time of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collection. Ultimately, continued enrollment will be at the sole discretion of the Center Director.

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The Center Director or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave Children First property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately. Children First, Inc. will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal. Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with Children First, Inc. by calling, writing, or any other means, will be fully prosecuted of the law, by Children First, Inc.

12. WITHDRAWAL

A two (2) week written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason and should be submitted to childrenfirstinc@att.net.

13. COURT ORDERS AFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Children First, Inc. must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file Children First, Inc, administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Children First cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Children First, Inc., suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, Children First, Inc. is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of Children First cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. Children First, Inc. will report any violations of these orders to the court.

14. ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Upon arrival at Children First, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into school on the electronic tablet located outside the classroom doors. Children are required to be escorted by their parent or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be always supervised while in the school. Parents are required to help children put away their personal belongings and get settled for the day. Children First discourages idling vehicles be left in the parking lot unless the vehicle needs to idle in extreme heat or cold temperatures to maintain interior or engine temperatures. Parents are also required to not leave a sibling or other child in the car unattended while they drop off their child.

Children First discourages parents from sneaking out of the building to avoid separation issues with their child. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. Children First believes it is best for parents to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all of the child's things are put away, the parent will kiss, hug, and say goodbye to the child. This will prepare the child for their departure. The teacher present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Parents are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the parent of an anxious child drags out the departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. The professional employees/teachers of Children First are available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period.

15. Notification of Absence

Parents are encouraged to inform the school by 9:00am if a child will not be attending or will arrive late on a scheduled day.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the office not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our administrators to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the office, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. Children First will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

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15.1 Center's Right to Refuse Admission

Children First reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
3. Staff deems the child too ill to attend. Children First at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice. In the event of a policy change, families will be notified. Any such action shall apply to existing as well as to future families.
4. Domestic Situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at Children First if the child were to be present at the center.
5. Parents' failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
6. Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
7. Parents' failure to follow the tuition policy as outlined in this handbook. Parents' will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

16. PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents or other authorized adult are required to sign their child out of care on the electronic computer located outside the classroom doors. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on Children First premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child and are required to exit the building once they have signed their child out of care.

16.1 Late Pick-Up

Please be considerate of our teachers by picking up your child by the appropriate time. You will be charged **\$10.00 per child for the first minute for late pick-up. You will be charged \$2.00 for each additional minute. This fee will be paid to the office.** Please note that Children First, Inc. closes at 6:00 pm; therefore, late fees will accrue up until the time a family leaves the building. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or emergency pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time.

16.2 Persons appearing to be impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.

The staff of Children First will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of Children First to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit Children First from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, Children First staff will delay the impaired parent, if possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police, and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child and appears to the staff of Children First to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of Children First will contact the child's parents, local police, and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

16.3 Emergency Contact & Authorized Pick-Up People

At enrollment, parents will be required to include all persons who may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from Children First. In an emergency, the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency contact and one authorized pick-up person. State regulations require each family to have at least one emergency contact (other than a parent) and one authorized pick-up person. Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the list. Parents do not need to be listed as an emergency contact or authorized pick-up person. If staff is not familiar with the person picking up the child, a photo identification card will be required. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the admission information must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

17. EMERGENCY CLOSING, PANDEMIC, AND INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by the inclement weather message by text message, and/or the ProCare app.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, again parents will be notified of the closing by text message, and/or the ProCare app.

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Should the school need to close for any reason, **tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures.** All decisions are at the discretion of the center director.

17.1 **Pandemic Emergency Response**

In the event of a pandemic, Children First, Inc. will follow guidelines and directions implemented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal and Local Governments, and the AR Department of Health and Human Services (Child Care Licensing).

To ensure the safety of children, families, and staff, the school will monitor the situation and consider the guidance and suggestions from the authorities on the situation. Decisions made by the center will consider the safety of children, families, and staff. Decisions may include:

- Closure of the center
- Length of closure to be determined by the Center Director and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Federal and Local Governments,
- AR Department of Health and Human Services.
- Adjusted hours of service • Daily health checks of children and staff
- Limited entry into the building
- Limited access to the property

Children First will communicate these plans through a variety of methods such as mass texts and the ProCare app.

18. DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Discipline at Children First shall:

- Be individualized and consistent for each child.
- Be appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction shall be used, including:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.

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- Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, **which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the age of the child. Time-Out shall not be used for any child under the age of 2(two).**

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
- Subjecting children to psychological abuse or using coercion.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods for the child's age.

19. ITEMS FROM HOME

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

Children in classrooms with nap/rest time are permitted to bring a fitted sheet and blanket with their bedding supplies.

Your child should not bring candy, toys, or money from home. The following items should be kept at school or brought in daily. All items must be labeled with the child's first name and last name. Diapering creams/powders and sunscreen must be labeled with the child's full name.

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Infants, Older Infants & Older Infant 2's	TODDLER, 2's, 3's, & 4's
Filled bottles (label bottles & caps)	Nap Items – Crib sheet and light blanket – Must be taken home to wash on Friday's (full name)
Baby Food (full name & date)	2 changes of clothing (including shoes and socks) (full name)
Diapers & Wipes (full name)	Lunch Items (full name and date on each container)
Diaper Rash Cream (if desired)	A filled Water Bottle (must be taken home DAILY for washing) (full name)
2-3 Changes of Clothing (full name)	
Security items such as pacifiers (full name)	
Light blanket (full name)	

20. DRESS CODE

20.1 Children

Clothing:

Children are engaged in various activities during the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.

Coats, hats, and gloves must be provided in the winter months.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

Children ages 3 through 5 are required to always have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center. Children under 3 years of age are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center always. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

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All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. Children First is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

21. Water Activities

During summer months, water activities will be allowed which may include sprinklers, splash tables, spray bottles, and other creative ways to stay cool. At no time do we allow wading pools that the children would be immersed in. At the beginning of each summer teachers will announce their class water day schedules.

22. CHILDCARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

22.1 Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. ALL EMPLOYEES of Children First, Inc. are considered mandated reporters, under this law.

The employees of Children First, Inc. are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Children First, Inc. take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of Children First, Inc. cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season.
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g., car seats, seat belts) ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
- ◆ Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time

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- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child.
- ◆ Sending a child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

22.2 **PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the center's office prior to the child's first day of attendance. Per licensing regulations, all children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at Children First, Inc. If you choose not to have your child immunized, please ask about how to obtain an immunization waiver. Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please discuss this with the Center Director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

Parents are required to update all health and immunization related information at least quarterly, or as needed. Information is kept confidential and is only shared on a "need to know" basis. Classroom teachers are always given copies of emergency contacts, emergency releases, and allergy information.

22.3 **Children with Severe Allergies**

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Severe Allergies" form which is in the registration link/paperwork, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every twelve months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases Children First, Inc. from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Severe Allergies" form, provided Children First, Inc. exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein. It is the parent's

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responsibility to monitor the expiration date of their child's medication and replace with the updated medication. Children First, Inc., reserves the right to exclude any child with severe allergies who do not have up-to-date rescue medications in their classroom. Attendance can resume once the proper medications are provided and accompanying paperwork for the medication is completed.

22.4 Communicable Diseases

Children First, Inc. follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. Children First, Inc. reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the Center Director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to school the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken on the forehead.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur 3(three) or more times during the school day. Children may return to school when they have been free from loose bowels or diarrhea for 24 hours without medication.

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Children excluded from the program due to vomiting may not return to the program until they are symptom free, without medication, for 24 hours.

Children will be sent home after vomiting once and he/she is not permitted to return to school the following day at a minimum.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the school. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. Children First, Inc. will take all measures necessary to protect your child’s confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child’s absence from school.

22.5 Biting

Children sometimes bite other children. Although not all children bite, biting is considered a normal stage in a child’s development. Children may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent to hurt another child.

Karen Miller, author of *Things to Do with Toddlers and Twos*, suggests that children may bite for any of the following reasons:

- **Teething:** Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the itch and stops the pain for a moment.
- **Sensory Exploration:** Toddlers are very good at using all their senses to learn about the world. The “oral mode,” an important style of learning for infants, continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just their playmates.
- **Cause and Effect:** Toddlers are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often, the response is dramatic: there is a lot of noise and attention from adults.
- **Self-Assertion:** This is probably the most common reason young children bite. It is a way to express frustration when they do not yet have the language skills to do so.

Sensory exploration activities, opportunity to explore cause and effect, and offering toddler’s options and alternative ways to reduce frustrations.

When a child receives a bite, that child is immediately comforted, the bite is washed with soap, and a Band-Aid is applied if the skin is broken. The teacher

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will tell the child who bit, “It is not okay to bite. Biting hurts very much.” If possible, the teacher will try to encourage the child who received the bite to express his/her feelings. “It hurts” or “Don’t bite me” are statements that teachers will model for the child to repeat. The teacher will then redirect the child to another area of the classroom.

Consistent with the CDC confidentiality policy, parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents of the child who bit are informed and work together with the teachers with the intention of helping to prevent further incidents of biting. We recognize how upset parents may be when they learn their child received a bite; however, we also recognize that biting is a normal component of child development. Despite our many concerted efforts to prevent biting incidents, they are bound to occur. Our school does not exclude children because of biting alone.

Please feel free to ask the staff any questions about young children biting. Parents should understand and take comfort in knowing that biting is a normal stage during a child’s development, and, like all stages, he/she will quickly outgrow it.

For more information on biting, we suggest reading the book, Things to Do with Toddlers and Twos by Karen Miller.

22.6 **Dispensing of Medications**

Upon arrival, parents are required to complete a **Medication Form** if a child must receive medication during the day. The medication permission form lists the **child’s name, name of medication, dosage, and time to administer** with the date. The medication **MUST** be presented to Children First in the original container. The form is good for the days listed or the duration of the medicine. **The only staff permitted to dispense medication is the Center Director or the Assistant Director.**

To allow management to control and monitor medications, they will be given at 8:00am, 12:00pm, and 4:00pm. Parents are asked to adjust the doses given at home to correspond with these times.

Children First, Inc. will only dispense un-expired, over the counter and/or prescription medication that is in original, labeled containers, and is accompanied by a doctor’s note with explicit dosage and administration instructions. Children First, will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor’s note is written and for whom the medication container is labeled. One doctor’s note per course of treatment is required. If a child, for example, is to be given a course of

antibiotics for 10 days, the doctor’s note must identify the dates that the medication is to be given.

Medication **may not** be stored in a child’s cubby, lunch box or backpack. Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date. Parents and teachers are not allowed to administer any kind of vitamins or medications by adding them to the child’s bottle, cup, or thermos.

Instructions to give “**as needed**” are not valid.
All medication must be turned into the office for safekeeping.

22.7 **Fire/Emergency Drills**

Children First, Inc. conducts monthly fire, emergency/evacuation, and lockdown drills. Parents, staff, and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency/lockdown drill or real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the school. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child into the school. Parents may wait with the child’s class in the designated safe zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, the Center Director or designated staff member will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time, any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. When parents arrive to pick up their child, we ask that you wait until the director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and has given the staff permission to release children. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. Children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

22.8 **Medical Emergencies**

In case of critical illness or injury during school hours, appropriate first aid or CPR will be given immediately, and the appropriate emergency personnel will be contacted. If needed, Children First, Inc. has the authority to have your child transported to the nearest hospital. Parents will also be notified immediately.

***Please sign the acknowledge statement page regarding permission to transport your child located at the back of the handbook.**

22.9 **Surgery**

Children may not attend school the same day that they have surgery. Young children recover quickly, but there is always a risk of reactions to anesthetics. The Center does not have the materials or staff to react to such emergencies.

22.10 **SIDS Prevention**

In accordance with commonly recognized SIDS prevention techniques and AR Department of Health & Human Services requirements, we put all infants (younger than 12 months) to sleep on their backs without the use of infant sleep positioners (unless ordered by a physician). We will only make exceptions if you provide us with documentation from your pediatrician. If infants arrive to the program asleep, or fall asleep, in equipment not specifically designed for infant sleep, the infant will be removed and placed in appropriate infant sleep equipment. All the following elements (soft blankets, pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, and soft toys) are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants younger than 12 months.

***Please sign the acknowledge statement page regarding SIDS in accordance with Carter's Law located at the back of the handbook.**

22.11 **Incident/Accident Reports**

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be placed in the child's classroom folder. If you wish to have an in-depth discussion or meeting with your teacher regarding an Incident/Accident Report, we ask that you schedule a specific time frame with your teacher.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up.

However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the day.

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Should a person other than the parent or one designated to act “in loco parentis” pick-up the child, a parent or person designated to act “in loco parentis” must sign the Incident/Accident Report and leave a copy with the center director.

Although Children First, Inc. has an extensive safety awareness program along with frequent inspection and regular maintenance of the building, grounds and equipment, accidents may occur. When such accidents occur and require medical attention, parents should contact their health insurance provider for reimbursement of all medical costs. Children First, Inc. is not responsible for providing primary health insurance for any children. The responsibility for paying for medical treatment lies entirely with the parent.

22.12 **Food Policy**

All meals are enjoyed family style, with the children and teachers sitting at tables to promote good manners, eating habits, and socialization skills. The following is a guideline to help assist you in planning a healthy lunch for your child. These patterns are from the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. You may access the complete USDA CACFP meal pattern packet online at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/blocks2.pdf.

All age groups:

All food items must be labeled with your child’s name. Children First, Inc. does not permit children to share or exchange food items.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor’s note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instruction for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policies contained herein for further information.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e., lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets).

Children First, Inc. never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time for behavior reasons.

Food can be used by teachers for classroom lessons.

22.13 **Peanut/Nut Free Classrooms**

Due to the extreme nature of some allergic reactions to peanuts/nuts and products containing peanuts and/or nuts in some children, Children First, Inc. may have classrooms that are peanut/nut free. Your child's teacher will notify you if the classroom is peanut/nut free. The teacher will also notify you of any other allergies in the classroom. Per our Confidentiality Policy, only the allergen will be identified, not the child.

Parents of children in an allergen aware classroom are responsible for providing foods that are free of the identified allergen for their child's lunch. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts or nuts have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut/nut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, Plain Chocolate M & M's have this statement on the label.

Infant Classrooms:

Children enrolled in the infant through 1 1/2 year old classrooms must have all food items for consumption prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks, and juice bottles. Prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to be sure that your child will not run out. If breastfeeding, bottles must be labeled with child's name, date, and the time & date the milk was expressed. Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a water bath prior to feeding. No bottles will be microwaved. All bottles must be taken home by the parents each night to be washed.

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

Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Teachers will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding will be discarded.

Per DHS requirements, the routine use of food, bottles and formula shall be agreed upon by the classroom teacher and parent. Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their child, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when, and how much. Parents will be notified by the ProCare app as to what their child ate.

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Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the center during the day to feed their child. Appropriate, private feeding locations will be made available. Please discuss your desire to come to the center to breastfeed your child with the classroom teacher.

Toddler and Preschool Classrooms:

Children First, Inc. offers children, a half-hour lunch at approximately 10:30 a.m. and an afternoon snack at approximately 2:30 p.m. Children First, Inc. does not serve breakfast, but you may bring it with you.

All meals are family style, with the children sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. Staff will encourage children to eat their main entrée first, followed by healthy snacks.

We are committed to teaching and fostering good nutrition as an integral part of the early childhood experience. To help promote healthy, well balanced eating habits, parents are required to provide a sensible lunch for their children each school day. Lunches should include a sandwich (or main entrée item) and healthy sides such as fruit, vegetables, and the like. Parents should limit sweets/treats. Candy bars, sodas, or candy treats are not permitted in school lunches. Please be aware of potential choking hazards with children under 4-years-old. These foods include hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, spoonful of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots, or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. All uneaten food will be placed back in the child's lunch so parents can see what items and how much their child consumed during the day. Parents should limit the number of choices offered in their child's lunch, as children often become distracted by the choices. Parents should provide enough food so that their child is satisfied, but not so much that food is wasted.

Children First, Inc. prohibits any food item in glass containers (except Baby food in the infant classrooms).

Parents may place lunches containing milk, cheese, yogurt, and/or other food items requiring refrigeration in their classroom refrigerator or include an ice pack in their child's lunchbox.

All food items provided in your child's lunch must be labeled with your child's name. Simply labeling the child's lunch box/bag is not sufficient. Children will not be permitted to consume any food item not labeled with his/her name.

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22.14 Firearms and Weapons

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunition, and/or weapon on Center property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

22.15 Lice Policy

Upon detection of live lice and/or nits on a child, The CDC will contact the child's parent/guardian. Children with live lice and/or nits who have **NOT** been treated may not attend school. The child may return to school after treatment with an over the counter or prescription medication and thorough combing has been completed. The class will be notified and information regarding steps for parents to follow will be sent home. Once a child has been treated for lice and/or nits and returns to school, frequent re-checks will be done to ensure that treatment was effective.

Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. Head lice are a common occurrence among young children. Head lice spreads from person to person by direct contact with hair or by sharing items such as hats, brushes, etc.

23. CURRICULUM

Each class's curriculum is planned so each child is challenged at their own level. Activities that hold the child's interest and are developmentally appropriate prevent disruptive behavior. Please follow the lesson plan under the ProCare app weekly.

Parents of all Three (3) and Four (4) year old children must have a copy of the Kindergarten Readiness Skill Checklist prepared by the AR Department of Education. (See last page of handbook).

24. POLICY CHANGES

Children First, Inc. reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to change any policies through written communication with families.

Children First, Inc., utilizes e-mail as the prime form of communication. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure we always have an up-to-date e-mail address on file.

25. SCHOOL INFORMATION

Center Director/Owner – Vicki Durham

Address – 2400 West Markham Dr., Little Rock, AR 72205

Phone (501) 374-0944

Fax (501) 374-0004

Website- childrenfirstinc.com

Email – childrenfirstinc@att.net

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

Please read this handbook carefully and refer any questions you may have to the Center Director.

After you have read this handbook, please complete this acknowledgement, and return to your Center Director on or before your child's first day.

By my signature, I hereby acknowledge that I have received the Children's First Parent Handbook and have had the opportunity to have any questions or concerns that I may have addressed.

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Please Print): _____

Child's Name (Please Print): _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Signature): _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGED:

CHILDREN FIRST:

By: _____

**THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO
CHILDREN FIRST**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

After you have read this handbook, please complete this acknowledgement, and return to your Center Director on or before your child's first day.

By my signature, I hereby acknowledge that I have read the information pertaining to **Social Media and Photo and Video Recordings.**

Permission _____

No Permission _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Please Print): _____

Child's Name (Please Print): _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Signature): _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGED:

CHILDREN FIRST:

By: _____

**THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

After you have read this handbook, please complete this acknowledgement, and return to your Center Director on or before your child's first day.

By my signature, I hereby acknowledge that I have read and give my permission to allow my child to be transported to a local hospital in case of an emergency.

Permission _____

No Permission _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Please Print): _____

Child's Name (Please Print): _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Signature): _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGED:

CHILDREN FIRST:

By: _____

**THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO
CHILDREN FIRST**

Parent Handbook
CHILDREN FIRST, INC.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

After you have read this handbook, please complete this acknowledgement, and return to your Center Director on or before your child's first day.

By my signature, I hereby acknowledge that I have received the documentation pertaining to SIDS from Children First, Inc.

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Please Print): _____

Child's Name (Please Print): _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Signature): _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGED:

CHILDREN FIRST:

By: _____

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Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist for Families

There is much that families and other caregivers can do to support school readiness. School readiness occurs when families, schools, early environments, and communities support and serve ALL children, so they have access to opportunities that promote success in both school and life. Children's skills and development are dependent upon the relationships and interactions they have with the people in their lives before going to kindergarten. The Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist helps families and caregivers identify a range of skills, knowledge, and behaviors children master as they move through the pre-kindergarten year. Admission to kindergarten is not dependent on mastery of any or all these indicators. The Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Human Services encourages families and caregivers to use this checklist to help children enter kindergarten with confidence. If you have concerns about your child's development, contact your primary care physician or the county health department in your community.

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After you have read this handbook, please complete this acknowledgement, and return to your Center Director on or before your child's first day.

By my signature, I hereby acknowledge that I have received the **Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist for Families** approved by the AR Department of Education and Department of Human Services.

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Please Print): _____

Child's Name (Please Print): _____

Primary Parent or Guardian Full Name (Signature): _____

Date: _____

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Effective 1/1/2023
Version 1.1

Children First, Inc. at its option, may change, delete, suspend,
or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice.
In the event of a policy change, families will be notified.
Any such action shall apply to existing as well as to future families.