

**Early Learning Center
at Deerfield Academy
Parent Handbook**



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IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND CURRICULUM

Mission

The mission of The Early Learning Center at Deerfield Academy (hereafter referred to as the Center) is to provide quality early education and care to the families of Deerfield Academy, affiliate schools (Eaglebrook, Bement, Stoneleigh-Burnham), and the community. We strive to provide a warm, safe and nurturing environment that encourages independence and self-respect, as well as a sensitivity to and an awareness of others and the environment.

We are committed to building relationships of mutual trust with both parents and their children. Recognizing the parent as the child's first educator and our partner allows us as teachers to co-construct a comprehensive foundation of learning for all children.

Philosophy

Our philosophy is based on fostering children's self-confidence and helping them build a positive self-image while encouraging the development of healthy social-emotional skills. We respect each child's unique pattern of growth and development and their capacity to learn. By creating an environment that piques children's curiosity and provides them with enriched opportunities, we hope they will develop a lifelong love for learning and a desire to take risks.

Program

The Center is located on Route 5 & 10, a half mile south of Deerfield Academy. We provide services for children from infancy through preschool with a low teacher/child ratio. All teachers are certified by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and participate in ongoing professional development.

Hours of operation are from 8 am-4 pm, Monday through Friday during the academic year (early drop off at 7:30 am and late day till 4:30 pm are available for an extra charge).

The Center is also open for seven weeks during the summer. Summer hours are 8 am-4 pm with no early or late hours.

Curriculum

Our curriculum connects the child to the world in which they live. We bring the child's family, culture, community, and natural environment into the classroom and use it as starting point to engage children in math, science, language, literacy, motor function, and the arts.

Lessons are purposefully planned to support executive functions and enhance the child's working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control, allowing them to manage their thoughts, emotions, and behavior.

We use scaffolding as a teaching strategy to assist the learner in developing a new skill or knowledge and promote engagement, motivation, critical thinking skills, and independence.

Core Values

Citizenship: Our goal is to create a safe environment where each child feels like a valued member and is encouraged to be respectful, empathic, compassionate, and inclusive.

Inquiry and Wonder: Our classrooms and curriculum are intentionally designed to trigger children's curiosity and sense of wonder so they will ask questions, make discoveries, share ideas, and better understand the world around them.

Reflection: Reflective practices allow the child to build memory, ask questions, investigate, make considerations, problem-solve, and be mindful.

Fun: When children have fun, the brain responds positively, optimal activation occurs, and information is processed more efficiently. Fun invites learners to explore, keeps them curious and motivated, and increases their attention span and memory.

Behavioral Expectations

We Are Kind.

We Take Care of Ourselves.

We Take Care of Our School and Community.

Teaching, modeling, and reviewing the Center's behavioral expectations will encourage children to practice their self-help and adaptive skills and become social thinkers who develop a strong sense of self and community.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Infant Daily Schedule

8:00 - 8:30 am	Arrival Check-in with teachers
8:30 - 9:30 am	Handwashing Morning feeding / snack Free exploration / social time / rocking / snuggling / tummy time
9:30 - 10:00 am	Diapering
10:00 - 11:00 am	Morning nap Free exploration / social time / rocking / snuggling / tummy time
11:00 - 11:30 am	Outside (weather permitting) Gross motor Stroller walks
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Handwashing Mid-day feeding / lunch Floor time / singing / reading
12:30 - 2:30 pm	Diapering Afternoon nap
2:30 - 3:00 pm	Handwashing Afternoon feeding / snack Diapering
3:00 - 3:45 pm	Free exploration / social time / rocking / snuggling / tummy time / floor time / singing / reading
3:45 - 3:50 pm	Check-in with teachers
3:50 - 4:00 pm	Departure

Toddler Daily Schedule

8:00 - 9:00 am	Arrival Handwashing Free play
9:00 - 9:45 am	Morning meeting Handwashing Morning snack
9:45 - 10:15 am	Free play Bathroom breaks Handwashing
10:15 - 10:45 am	Circle time Read aloud Directed lesson
10:45 - 11:30 am	Outside play (weather permitting)
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	Handwashing Lunch
12:00 - 12:30 pm	Bathroom breaks Handwashing Half-day pick-up
12:30 - 2:30 pm	Story time Rest time
2:30 - 3:00 pm	Bathroom breaks Handwashing Snack time
3:00 - 3:45 pm	Outside time or free play
3:45 - 3:50 pm	Check-in with teachers
3:50 - 4:00 pm	Departure

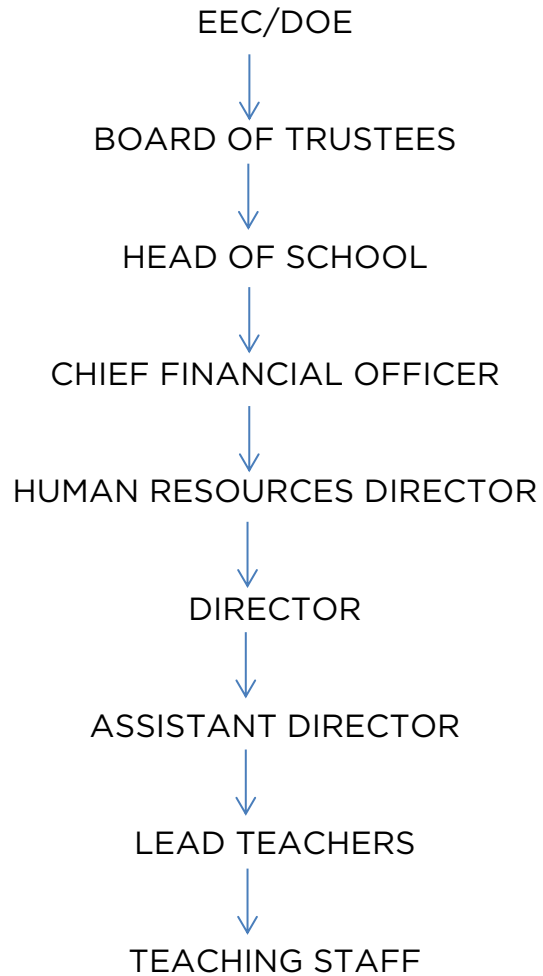
Preschool Daily Schedule

8:00 - 8:40 am	Arrival Handwashing Table activities Learning centers
8:40 - 9:00 am	Clean-up Singing / music / movement Handwashing
9:00 - 9:45 am	Morning snack Bathroom breaks Learning centers Clean-up
9:45 - 10:15 am	Circle time Read aloud Directed lesson
10:15 - 11:45 am	Outside play (weather permitting)
11:45 am - 12:30 pm	Yoga Handwashing Lunch Bathroom breaks
12:30 - 2:30 pm	Story time Nap / rest
2:30 - 3:00 pm	Story time Rest time
3:00 - 3:45 pm	Outside time or learning centers
3:45 - 3:50 pm	Check-in with teachers
3:50 - 4:00 pm	Departure

GOVERNANCE

Organizational Chart

EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE



ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

The Center does not discriminate against any individual based on race, color, religion, sex, transgender status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, age, disability, veteran status, or any other classification protected under state or federal law. Toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment.

Enrollment priority is given to Deerfield Academy employees first, affiliate school families second, and additional openings will be available to the children in the surrounding community. Entry into the ELC for non-Deerfield Academy families does not guarantee placement for the following academic year. Full-time schedule requests receive priority over part-time requests for new families.

Enrollment Priority Structure:

- Presently enrolled Deerfield Academy families
- New Deerfield Academy families
- Presently enrolled affiliate families (Eaglebrook, Bement, Stoneleigh-Burnham)
- Presently enrolled community families
- New affiliate families (Eaglebrook, Bement, Stoneleigh-Burnham)
- New community families

Every effort will be made to accommodate schedule requests; however, the Academy cannot guarantee care in every circumstance. The Academy reserves the right to change enrollment policies as business demands change.

All children should arrive by 9:30 am unless you have an appointment for your child. Parents picking up children in the morning for appointments should bring children back before lunchtime. Getting them back during nap time is very disruptive for everyone. Please try to make appointments in the afternoon. Please call the school if your child is home sick or won't be coming to school on their scheduled day.

Intake Procedure

- Before a child is enrolled, the director will schedule a visit with the child and parent so they can meet the teachers and spend time in the classroom.
- The director/teachers will be available to answer questions about the classroom and enrollment paperwork, procedures, and policies.
- The parent will be encouraged to share important information about their child
- Enrollment forms and the parent handbook, which includes the ELC's policies and procedures, will be emailed to the parent
- Parents are asked to read the handbook thoroughly and to contact the director with any questions
- Enrollment forms need to be completed prior to the child's start date

Waitlist Policy

The director will maintain a waitlist and call or email the parent when a slot becomes available. Admission decisions are based on the enrollment priorities and the date children were placed on the list.

The waitlist will be updated annually. You will be sent an email asking if you would like to remain on the list. If the director does not hear from you, they will assume you are no longer interested in services, and your child will be removed from the waitlist.

Reserving a Spot for an Age-Ineligible Child

Parents will be allowed to pay to reserve a spot for their child who is not old enough to attend. Our enrollment and waitlist policies apply when reserving a slot.

Fee Schedule

Academic year fees are paid every month from September to May. Parents are responsible for their full fee regardless of absences and holidays. Parents are charged for three vacation weeks (two in December and one in March).

Fees are paid via FACTS, a tuition management company that automates all parent payments. FACTS offers the convenience of an automated payment plan for childcare payments. FACTS is not a loan, so there are no credit checks or interest charges. Monthly payments for this program begin in September and conclude in May, and you can choose your payment due date. There is no penalty for pre-payment.

Deerfield Academy employees have the option of paying childcare tuition by payroll deduction.

Late Fees

Center staff understand that parents' schedules can be demanding and sometimes unpredictable. However, to show respect to your Center's teachers and their length of the day, please make every effort to pick your child up on time every day. If you are running late, please call the Center @ (413) 774-6626.

- Except in the case of an emergency, a late fee will be applied.
- A \$10.00 will be charged (per child) if parents are late for any part of the first ten minutes beyond their scheduled pick-up time.
- An additional \$20 will be charged every ten minutes beyond the first ten minutes.
- The late fee for any part of a half-hour beyond 30 minutes is an additional \$50.

Summer Session

During the summer, we offer a seven-week summer session for current families. The summer session begins a week after the academic program ends. The hours are from 8 am-4 pm, and priorities are given to two working parents. Fees are paid via FACTS.

Early Drop Off and Extended Day Fee

There is a fee for early drop-off (before 8 am) and extended days (until 4:30 pm). These spaces are limited, and we will make every effort to accommodate you. Please ask for the current fees.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Academy's top priority is to provide a healthy and safe environment for your child. The following policies are in place to accomplish this:

When Your Child Becomes Sick

Staff will take precautions when children become ill while at the Center. For the health and safety of other children and the smooth operations of the Center, parents should **not** bring children to the Center if they are symptomatic of a contagious condition. A child must be well enough to participate in Center activities with **reasonable comfort, including being outside with the group during scheduled outside time**. This means that care for your child given by Center staff must be able to be provided without compromising the care of the other children. Generally, if a child's appearance or behavior is different, if they are unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, and difficult to awaken, please keep them at home until their health has improved.

Symptoms of Infectious Disease

Children who exhibit symptoms of infectious diseases, such as gastrointestinal, respiratory, and skin rashes, should not be present at the Center if it is determined that any of the following exist:

- respiratory symptoms including, but not limited to, difficult or rapid breathing, severe coughing, high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing, inability to lie comfortably due to continuous cough;
- fever (over 100.4 degrees);
- unusual lethargy;
- irritability, persistent crying;
- diarrhea;
- vomiting;
- mouth sores unless the physician states that the child is noninfectious;
- rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the rash is not due to a communicable disease;
- purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conductive with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and treated as required;
- tuberculosis until the child is noninfectious;
- impetigo until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered;
- head lice and free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites;
- strep infection, until 24 hours after medical treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- sore throat, especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present;
- hepatitis A unless treated by a physician;
- chicken pox until the last blister has healed over;
- itching that is persistent in the body or scalp;
- or other signs of serious illness.

Some illnesses may require that your child be evaluated by a physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner, and a parent provides a note stating that the child poses no health risk to the other children. The director and/or teachers will inform you when this is necessary.

The Center staff will make the final decision concerning whether a child presenting symptoms of illness should be present at the Center and among other children.

If a child develops symptoms of an infectious disease while at the Center, or if staff feel that a child is unable to keep up with the activities of the day and it is in the best interests of the child to go home, the child will be offered his/her cot or other comfortable spot in which to rest quietly. The child's parents will then be contacted, and it is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements for the child to be picked up as soon as possible. Parents must provide the center with the names of two or more people who could assume temporary care of their child in the event that they cannot be reached and the child needs to go home. We strongly advise that you have a contingency backup plan for days when your child cannot attend school due to illness. According to the Center's Health Manual, the Center Director will notify parents immediately in writing when a communicable disease has been introduced into the Center.

Medical Evaluations and Immunizations

At the start of care each year, parents must ensure their children have satisfied the State mandated medical evaluation and supplied completed forms in compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health requirements for immunization against polio, tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, mumps, HIB, and German measles. In addition, for all children aged 19 months or older, a record must be provided stating a child has either received one dose of varicella vaccine or has already had chicken pox. Children older than nine months and under the age of four years must be screened for lead poisoning unless the examination is objected to on religious grounds. Parents are responsible for updating their child's files for immunizations annually.

CPR, First Aid, and Transportation to the Hospital

In the case of an emergency or illness (such as a seizure, a serious fall, or serious cut), the teacher in charge will begin administration of emergency CPR or first aid while the assistant teacher or second teacher takes the other children to another area of the room. Both staff members should respond in a calm and reasonable manner.

1. Other staff will be alerted to send for assistance, be it the Program Director or another person in the center.
2. In the event a situation arises that is life-threatening or the child cannot be comfortably restrained in a car, an ambulance will be called immediately. The parent will be called to meet the child and staff at the hospital. The teacher or other designated staff will accompany the child in the ambulance. The child's file will be taken, including permission forms and pertinent insurance information if the center has it.
3. If the emergency is non-life threatening, then the child will remain at the center and wait for his/her parent or designated emergency person to pick him/her up.
4. If a parent comes to pick up the child and needs assistance, the teacher or Program Director may offer to accompany the parent and child.
5. When parents cannot be reached, those listed as emergency contacts will be called in a further attempt to reach the parents. In the event a parent cannot be reached immediately, a designated staff member will continue to attempt to reach the parents. If necessary, the child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance, and the child's whole file will be taken, including permission forms.
6. If support is needed in determining the appropriate procedure to follow (whether an ambulance should be called or not), the program's health consultant may be called at the Deerfield Academy Health Center.
7. The program will immediately report to the Department of Early Education and Care any injury to or illness of any child that occurs during the hours while the child is enrolled in care and requires hospitalization or emergency medical treatment.

Emergencies While on a Field Trip

1. If an accident or acute illness occurs on a field trip, the lead teacher will take charge of the emergency, assess the situation, and give CPR or first aid as needed. The method, urgency, and transportation for the child to receive medical treatment will be determined by the lead teacher based on the severity of the emergency or illness. If necessary, an ambulance will be called.
2. The program director, or other designated adult, will be contacted by the lead teacher as soon as possible and informed of the nature and extent of the injury and the proposed plan of action.
3. As a preventative measure, before departure from the center, the Program Director and/or lead teacher will determine appropriate guidelines to be followed during the field trip to ensure continuity and safety of the children, including: a first aid kit will be taken in all vehicles on all field trips. Emergency information, including contacts and telephone numbers, will be taken on all field trips.

Plan for Mildly Ill Children

Children who are mildly ill may remain in school if they are not contagious (refer to Plan for Infectious Disease), and they can participate in the daily program, including outside time. If a child's condition worsens or if it is determined that the child poses a threat to the health of the other children, or if the child cannot be cared for by the classroom staff, the Program Director will contact the child's parent(s). The parent(s) will be asked to pick up the child. The child will be

cared for in a quiet area, a classroom, or in the office by a teacher, qualified staff member, or by the Program Director until the parent(s) arrives to take the child home. Any toys, blankets, or cots used by an ill child will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by other children.

Medication Administration

The Center will work with parents to administer medication to children according to the following guidelines:

1. A parent must administer the first dosage at home in case of an allergic reaction.
2. All medication must be given to the teacher directly by the parent.
3. All medications will be stored in the kitchen out of the reach of children (in the cupboard designated by the Red Cross or on the refrigerator door shelf if refrigeration is necessary).
4. The lead teacher will be responsible for the administration of the medication. In her/his absence, the Program Director will be responsible.
5. The Center will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to normal skin), which will include the child's name, the time, and date of each administration, the dosage, and the name of the staff person administering the medication. This completed record will become part of the child's file.
6. All unused medication will be returned to the parent.

Guidelines for Readmitting: Symptom-Free for 24 Hours

If your child becomes ill during the day and you are called and asked to pick them up, they may not return to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

We encourage parents to use the guidelines below for determining if their child is healthy enough to return to school after absence due to illness. Also, please consult the Director for more information on specific conditions, treatment, and returning to school. Some ailments have state-mandated quarantines. The Center reserves the right to request a physician's written authorization for a child to re-enter the classroom after having a communicable disease.

- Chicken Pox: Exclude until all blisters have dried into scabs, about six days after rash onset.
- Cold Sores: Exclude until the fever is gone and all sores are crusted over. A written diagnosis from the child's doctor on the cause of the child's cold sores is required before re-admittance.
- Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye): Exclude until 24 hours after treatment begins.
- Diarrhea (Infectious): Generally, exclude until stool has returned to normal form. Each specific disease situation needs to be evaluated on an individual basis. Exclude until diarrhea is gone for at least 24 hours.
- Fever: Exclude until the fever is gone for a least 24 hours.
- Fifth Disease: Exclude until the fever is gone for 24 hours and the child is well enough to participate in normal daily activities (sores may still be present).

- Giardiasis: For those with diarrhea only, exclude until the child has started treatment and diarrhea has not been present for at least 24 hours.
- Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease: Same as Fifth Disease.
- Impetigo: Exclude until sores are healed or can be covered with bandages or until the child has been treated with antibiotics for at least a full 24 hours.
- Head: Lice Exclude until the first treatment has been completed, and no live lice and no nits can be seen.
- Roseola: Exclude until the fever is gone for at least 24 hours.

Staff will be trained in the proper administration of medication by a certified CPR and First Aid Instructor. In addition, the staff will review medication administration procedures on an annual basis.

With the written permission of their child's health practitioner, parents will be allowed to train staff in the implementation of their child's individual health care plan.

Plan for Infection Control

The teacher shall ensure that staff and children wash their hands with liquid soap and running water using friction. Hands shall be dried with individual or disposable towels. Staff and children shall wash their hands minimally at the following times:

1. Before eating or handling food;
 - a. After toileting;
 - b. After coming into contact with bodily fluids and discharges;
 - c. After handling center animals or their equipment; and
 - d. After cleaning.

The program director or teachers shall ensure that the specific equipment, items, or surfaces are washed with soap and water and disinfected with a botanical disinfectant.

1. After each use:
 - a. Sinks and faucets used for hand washing after the sink is used for rinsing a toilet training chair;
 - b. Toys mouthed by children;
 - c. Mops used for cleaning bodily fluids; and
 - d. Thermometers
2. At least daily:
 - a. Toilets and toilet seats;
 - b. Sinks and sink faucets;
 - c. Drinking fountains;

- d. Water table and water play equipment;
- e. Play tables;
- f. Smooth-surfaced non-porous floors;
- g. Mop used for cleaning; and
- h. Cloth washcloths and towels.

3. At least monthly or more frequently as needed to maintain cleanliness when wet or soiled and before use by another child:
- a. Cots, mats, or other approved sleeping equipment;
 - b. Sheets, blankets, or other coverings
 - c. Machine washable fabric toys.

All staff should wear non-latex gloves when they come into contact with blood or body fluids. Specifically, gloves should be worn during diapering, toileting, when administering first aid for a cut, bleeding wound, or bloody nose, or when feeding an infant breast milk. Gloves should never be reused and should be changed between children being handled. Proper disposal of infectious materials is required. Any disposable materials containing liquid, semi-liquid, or dry, caked blood will need to be disposed of in the secured trash receptacle in the janitor's closet and marked "Biohazardous waste." The bags should be removed and securely tied each time the receptacle is emptied. Cloth items that come into contact with blood or bodily fluids will be double-bagged and sent home. Each staff member will be trained in the above Infection Control Procedures upon employment and before working with the children and then annually.

Safe Sleep for Infants

To protect the health and welfare of children and in keeping with the intent of regulation regarding SIDS-risk-reduction practices, the Early Learning Center will adhere to safe-sleep practices for all children under 12 months of age.

The Sleep for Infants policy will be available to parents upon intake. A signature will be required to acknowledge that the policy has been reviewed.

Teachers will be aware of the policy and trained in safe-sleep practices.

The policy includes but is not limited to information about infants sleeping in their backs, firm sleep surfaces, appropriate mattresses, the absence of soft objects and loose bedding, the use of bottles, and supervision.

STUDENT SUSPENSION & TERMINATION POLICIES

Suspension Policy

A child will be suspended from the program if health records are not up to date. The child may return as soon as the health records are in compliance.

Dismissal or Disenrollment

In the event a child is disruptive while attending the center, after attempts to resolve the disruption have been exhausted, the center reserves the right to dismiss the child from attending the center. In this case, first, the director will schedule a conference with the parent(s) and the child's teachers to develop a plan to correct and prevent this negative behavior. If appropriate, a list of referral services will be provided to aid the parent(s). Once the plan is agreed upon by both parties, the child may return to the program. However, if the negative behavior should continue to occur, the child may be terminated from the program. Similarly, if a parent is disruptive or unwilling to comply with the policies of the Center, their child may be dismissed from attending the center. A Grievance regarding this dismissal may be filed with the Chief Financial Officer of Deerfield Academy at P. O. Box 87, Deerfield, MA 01342.

Parents are responsible for full payment of their fees while their child is suspended for any reason. Otherwise, their child's slot cannot be held for them.

Child Guidance Policy

Our child guidance policy at the Center is based upon a solid understanding of a child's developmental abilities and needs and respect for each child's self-esteem and self-confidence. Teachers shall provide each child with guidance that helps the child develop self-control and self-discipline, as well as a positive self-concept. Discipline and behavior guidance used by each teacher will at all times be constructive, positive, and appropriate to the developmental age of each child.

The children are involved in the process of establishing rules to ensure their safety and the rights of all the children. These discussions occur at circle time and spontaneously as conflicts arise. Teachers use positive language to set limits, letting a child know what she/he can do instead of the unacceptable behavior. Teachers give choices when possible and redirect children to appropriate activities. Children are encouraged to work on resolving their own conflicts with the support and guidance of the teachers. A teacher will intervene if a child is physically endangered by another child. The teacher first gives comfort and attention to the injured party and then helps both children talk about what happened. We ask them to express their feelings and talk about the

situation with each other and the teacher. With toddlers, the teacher will verbalize and help “label” what the child is feeling, thereby teaching them to use language to express their feelings. With toddlers, we use prevention, redirection, distraction, active listening, and clear limit setting. Our goal for preschool children is to help the child process feelings, recognize consequences, explore alternative solutions and outcomes and develop self-control.

Discipline practices shall support the child’s behavior with positive guidance and a clear limit setting that fosters the child’s ability to be self-disciplined.

- Corporal punishment shall not be used.
- No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment.
- No child shall be denied food as a form of punishment.
- No child shall be subjected to force-feeding.
- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
- No child shall be confined to a swing, high chair, or any other piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision.

We believe that parents and teachers must work together to deal with persistent behavioral issues, such as biting or unusual or dangerous aggression to self or other children and teachers. If a child appears to be unusually stressed, anxious, or otherwise motivated to engage in negative behaviors, parents will be consulted. An individual behavior plan may be developed to address the specific behavior.

Termination Policy

A child’s adjustment to the classroom and the appropriateness of Deerfield’s early care and education environment for each child is our foremost concern and responsibility. If the teaching team and the director feel that the program is not meeting a child’s needs, parents will be requested to withdraw the child from the Center on a mutually agreeable timeline. Other reasons that may result in the termination of enrollment by the Center are as follows:

- Non-payment of tuition
- Lack of cooperation from parents with the program’s efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child’s needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences
- Abusive behaviors and/or verbal threats by parents toward the teaching team
- Chronic failure by parents to pick up child(ren) on time
- Parents disciplining, in any way, children other than their own child(ren) while at the program
- The child exhibits special needs or needs related to a serious illness that is not possible to meet at the program. In this case, the program staff will make every effort to involve parents, and possibly other resource persons (as appropriate), in order to decide together on the best course of action for this, prior to any termination.

PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff members have mandated reporters according to Massachusetts General Law C119, Section 51A.

1. If a staff member has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child, she/he must file a report with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
2. The staff member must document her/his observations, including the child's name, date, time, child's injuries, child's behavior, and any other pertinent information.
3. The staff member will discuss this information with the Program Director.
4. The Program Director and/or staff person will make a verbal report to DCF, followed by a required written report 51A within 48 hours.
5. If a staff member feels that an incident should be reported to DCF and the Program Director disagrees, the staff member will report to DCF directly.
6. All concerns of suspected abuse and neglect reported to DCF will be communicated to the parents by the Program Director unless DCF indicates otherwise.

The procedure for identifying and reporting child abuse/neglect while in the care of the Early Learning Center at Deerfield Academy.

1. It is the Early Learning Center's commitment to protect all children in their care from abuse and neglect.
2. Any report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child will be immediately reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).
3. A meeting will be held with the staff member in question to inform her/him of the filed report.
4. The staff member in question will be immediately suspended from the program with pay pending the outcome of the DCF and EEC investigations.
5. If DCF screens out the report, the Program Director and Human Resource Director at Deerfield Academy have the option of having the staff member remain on suspension pending the EEC investigation or allowing the staff member to return to the classroom. The decision will be based on the seriousness of the allegations and the facts available.
6. If the allegation of abuse and neglect are substantiated, it will be the decision of the Program Director and Human Resource Director whether or not the staff member will be reinstated.
7. The Program Director and staff will cooperate fully with all investigations.

NAP POLICY

The children will be provided with a place to sleep, rest, or engage in a quiet activity for a period of time that is appropriate to the needs of the children. The children will be provided with an individually marked cot. Parents need to provide blankets and sheets.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The director and teaching team at the Center work to create an environment that fosters mutual respect and open direct communication and is also sensitive to others' needs. The Center is committed to responding to and resolving all parent concerns and grievances as quickly as possible.

Concerns and grievances are most effectively addressed within the Center. If a specific classroom concern arises, parents should address the issue with the appropriate teacher. We encourage parents to discuss more general center and policy concerns with the Director, who will involve teachers as needed. The Director may arrange a special conference to assist in addressing parent concerns.

If you, as a parent, have a concern or questions, we ask that you contact the director or your child's teacher immediately to address the issue to everyone's mutual satisfaction.

If, however, after speaking/meeting with the director, a parent feels their concern has not been resolved satisfactorily; parents are encouraged to speak with the Director of Human Resources, who may be reached at 413-774-1403. Please contact the Assistant Director in the absence of the Director.

Biting Policy

Toddlers sometimes bite other children. Biting is considered a normal part of development. Toddlers may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent to hurt another child. The teachers take action to reduce the number of biting incidents, largely by trying to prevent or redirect the behavior. If a child is bitten, appropriate first aid is given, and an incident report is completed. Consistent with our privacy policies, parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents of the biter are informed, and parents and teachers work together in hopes of preventing further incidents of biting.

EMERGENCY/CONTINGENCY PLANS

Contingency Plans for Emergency Situations

1. In case of a fire, natural disaster, or situation necessitating the evacuation of the building:
 - a. the director will contact Deerfield Academy Security, who will keep in touch with local police and authorities to determine whether to evacuate or shelter in place in the event of a natural disaster.
 - b. there are two escape routes in each of the two classrooms, which are located on the first floor.
 - c. the children will be immediately evacuated from the building to the hardtop area near the white sheds, and the director or teacher will call Deerfield Academy Security. D.A. Security will bring vans to the center so the children can be transported to the Administration Building on campus. Once evacuated, the lead teacher or director will contact the fire department or appropriate authority by cell phone.
 - d. an emergency text or email will be sent from the director or teacher.
 - e. a designated teacher in each classroom will check the room for any children and take the attendance and emergency contact information before exiting the building. A headcount and roll call will be done immediately after the children have safely exited the building.
2. In case of a power outage, loss of heat, or loss of water occurring during the spring, summer, or fall, when temperatures are moderate and no other safety issues exist, the children will remain at the center until parents are able to pick them up in a timely fashion.

Sheltering in Place

Deerfield Academy Campus Security will notify the Early Learning Center staff members that a shelter-in-place has been issued. The teachers and children will engage in quiet activities. The children and staff will resume regular activity once Campus Security has indicated that the shelter-in-place has ended.

Lockdown Procedure

Deerfield Academy Security will notify the Early Learning Center staff members that a lockdown has been issued and that there could be a potential threat from an intruder. The staff will put down the shades, shut off the lights, and lock the interior and exterior doors. The staff in the main building will direct the children to the basement for quiet activities, and the team in the infant building will bring the children into the bathroom. The staff and children will remain in lockdown until the police or other emergency personnel can respond and address the threat.

The doors to the Early Learning Center will be locked from 9:00-3:00. If you need to enter the building during that time, please call or message the teachers or director, and they will let you in.

Plan for Missing Children

Teachers will report when a child is missing to the director. The director will conduct a thorough search of the grounds and building before contacting family members and police. In the event of a child missing during an emergency (fire or other disaster), emergency authorities will be contacted immediately.

Snow Policy

The Center will close if a state of emergency has been issued due to inclement weather. We strongly urge parents to assess the weather risks before sending their child(ren) to school when the conditions are hazardous.

REFERRAL PLAN FOR SOCIAL SERVICE AND EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

1. The program director and lead teacher are responsible for implementing this plan.
2. When a teacher is concerned about a child's social, emotional, and physical development or learning abilities, the teacher will notify the director.
3. The director will gather information from the teaching staff to determine child and family needs. Together they will observe the child in various situations throughout the child's day. The director will meet with the classroom teachers to discuss observations and appropriate classroom management options. The director will decide whether further intervention is warranted and document concerns, actions taken, and decisions made, to be included in the child's file.
4. Parents will be notified about concerns by the director. A meeting will be scheduled with the teacher, director, and parent(s). At that meeting, the child's situation will be discussed, and referral information and assistance will be provided by the director.
5. The director will document the meeting, concerns, and plans for action, including follow-up procedures.
6. The director will follow up with the parents to re-evaluate the original concern and to discuss any further action if needed.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Parents will provide a healthy and nutritious lunch, morning snack, and afternoon snack, which include items from the four basic food groups. Please send foods low in sugar and additives to promote healthy eating habits. Wholesome eating habits have a positive influence on children's health and growth.

We will not serve any nut products or products made with nut oils if there is a child enrolled that has an allergy. To protect the safety of all our children, we need you to be diligent and read all labels of the food you may bring in for your children. Food containing nuts or nut oils will be returned home. We have instituted this policy to ensure the safety and well-being of all our children, and we appreciate your support in this endeavor. Safe alternative options are soy butter or sunflower butter. All foods for toddlers and children under three years of age should be cut into quarters to prevent choking. Some foods that fall into this category include cherry tomatoes, grapes, apple slices, cheese, hot dogs, and raw carrots.

Some tips to make foods safer are:

- Cut into quarters lengthwise, then into small pieces
- Peel fruits and cut them in half lengthwise
- Chop finely or into thin strips

The following is a list of items to plan your child's daily snacks/lunches. These are suggestions we've seen children eat with pleasure. We realize the list is incomplete, so if there are foods you question, just ask us.

The following are suggestions:

- Breads, flatbreads, low-sugar cereals (an easy snack, and the children love cereal), oatmeal, rice, and pasta
- Sandwiches: soy butter, sunflower butter, all-fruit jam, tuna, egg salad, turkey salad, grilled cheese, cold cuts, turkey & cranberry sauce
- Bagels, bagel pizzas, rolls, cinnamon/raisin bread, waffles/pancakes with applesauce, French toast, low-sugar homemade muffins/quick breads, crackers, pretzels, rice cakes, tortilla chips, soups, hummus
- Fish sticks, chicken nuggets, beans, eggs, or any leftover dinners
- Fresh fruits (cut and peeled if needed), applesauce, fruit salad, canned fruit in light syrup, fresh vegetables w/ dip, salad, pickles, popcorn (we cannot serve popcorn to children under three years of age)
- Milk, yogurt, cheese

For lunch, each child begins with their main item, followed by their fruit/vegetable choice, etc. If children want milk with their lunch, you can provide it daily or send in ½ gallon of milk with your child's name on it. Water is always available to drink. Please do not send juice.

Food for Birthdays and Special Occasions

Before sending in food for birthdays or special occasions, please check with the teacher or the director about food restrictions or allergies that may exist in your child's classroom.

We thank you for your cooperation in helping us to help your children.

TOYS FROM HOME

It is difficult for teachers to keep track of toys brought from home, and pieces of “special, favorite” toys may get lost or broken. Children have a difficult time sharing toys from home, disrupting classroom operations. For these reasons, we ask you, parents, to refrain from allowing children to bring toys from home. All toys and materials at The Early Learning Center have been chosen for their educational potential, durability, and safety. Children may bring special security objects—a blanket or stuffed animals—to aid the transition from home during naptime.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Center staff will bring children outside every day unless the weather is very severe and below 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Outdoor play is considered a basic part of our program. Our policy is that if your child is not well enough to play outdoors, then she/he is not well enough to attend. Fresh air and exercise are important to keep young children healthy. Children thoroughly enjoy the outdoors when dressed warmly. It is not possible for us to provide the individual 1-to-1 attention a sick child requires to keep him/her inside.

FIELD TRIP TRANSPORTATION

The Early Learning Center will transport children to and from a field trip destination in vans owned and maintained by Deerfield Academy. The teachers will verify attendance against a written list at each interval (departures and arrivals) of the trip. In addition, the van will be checked thoroughly for passengers after the children leave the vehicle at the field trip destination and upon returning to school.

Parents will be required to give written permission for their children to attend a field trip.

PARENT INFORMATION, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents' Rights

Parents have the right to contact EEC for information regarding our programs' regulatory compliance history. The telephone number is (413) 788-8401, and the address is 95 Liberty Street, Springfield, MA 01103. Additional Parental Rights are listed below.

Right to Visit

You have a right to make unannounced visits to your child's room while your child is in it. Parents of children at The Early Learning Center are welcome to visit anytime their child is in attendance, whether or not their visit is planned.

Parent Input

The director and teachers welcome any and all parent input. A suggestion box, located just inside the entryway, is there for your use and convenience. Your suggestions and inquiries will be addressed with Human Resources if we are not able to meet your needs. Parents are always encouraged to email or call the director with concerns or questions.

Conferences

You have a right to request an individual conference with the program's staff at any time.

Portfolios/Progress Reports/Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Toddlers and Preschoolers: December and May
- Infants: November, February and May

Your Child's Records

Information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. The center's staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

The only persons permitted to see your child's record will be the director, the classroom teacher, the parent or legal guardian, and the state licensing examiner.

Information will not be given to others without a parent's or legal guardian's written consent. This program's policy is not to disclose the names of children

who may have caused injuries to other children while at the program. This is to safeguard each family's privacy data.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMITTEE

Purpose

To promote and cultivate a sense of community between Deerfield Academy, the Early Learning Center, parents, and teachers by working together to enrich the educational experiences of the children we serve.

Mission

The mission of the Parent/Teacher Committee is to support our purpose by enhancing the curriculum, providing training, and planning school/community events through volunteerism and the contribution of ideas.

Members

The group would be comprised of parents, teachers, the assistant director, and the director who meet several times per year.