

# Cocalico Care Center

## Parent Handbook

Revised July 2011

\*This handbook is subject to review and change by the Board of Directors of the Cocalico Care Center. You will be notified in writing of any changes.

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## INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to the Cocalico Care Center! The Cocalico Care Center, CCC is an outreach ministry of St. John's United Church of Christ. The children participate in prayers before meals and snacks, daily classroom devotions/lessons, and celebrate a monthly children's message with Pastor David Brumbaugh in the church sanctuary. This manual, while not an implied or expressed contract, states in general terms the policies our staff follow in regards to rules and regulations that are enforced in our facility. This manual is designed to assist families with immediate information when questions arise regarding certain policies and procedures.

If at any time you or your family have questions regarding the information that is presented in this manual, please see the Director of the Care Center or your child's classroom teacher. Each school year the center provides an opportunity for policies to be reviewed at our Open House and we encourage each family to participate in this informative event.

The Cocalico Care Center was started in 1989 and welcomes all families regardless of their race or religion. What started as an outreach mission of the church with one staff member and three students has grown over the last twenty years to a facility that services preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

The Cocalico Care Center continues to strive to provide a safe, loving & Christian environment for children of the Denver and the surrounding communities. Special thanks goes to the Foundation Committee, Consistory, and members of St. John's UCC. Without the support of excellent staff, outside sources, and volunteer aid, CCC would not be able to continue its mission.

## Mission Statement:

The Cocalico Care Center is an outreach ministry of St. John's United Church of Christ.

The purpose of the Cocalico Care Center's team of childhood professionals is:

To provide a safe, loving, & Christian environment.

To ensure that extensive learning and teaching is achieved through physical, social, academic, and moral experiences for every child using the PA State Standards.

To provide support for the parents/guardians and their children.

## Cocalico Care Center Structure & Licensing

The center is a non-profit organization that provides educational experiences and care for children 3 years of age to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. Our program is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and complies with the standards that are set forth by that department. The Cocalico Care Center depends on fees collected from parents, grants, donations, and fundraisers to purchase items for the facility.

The Center's structure consists of a volunteer Board of Directors made up of parents, the center director, church members, and the pastor of St. John's United Church of Christ. Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month and decisions concerning the center require approval of the Board.

The center is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, the Office of Child Development with an annual licensing inspection in the spring. The center is also a star recipient in the Keystone Stars program. This program identifies child care programs in Pennsylvania who **exceed** state health and safety requirements. The entire staff is registered with and are members of the Pennsylvania Child Care Association (PACCA) which supports high quality child care in the state.

## Curriculum Statement:

The preschool's *Creative Curriculum* is rooted in **educational philosophy and theory** as well as practice. It builds on Erik Erikson's stages of **socio-emotional development**, Jean Piaget's theories of **how children think and learn**, on **principles of physical development**, and on an **appreciation of cultural influences**.

The environment in *our preschool* classrooms helps children develop a sense of **trust and belonging**; encourages both **autonomy and self-control**; and fosters **competence and initiative**. This curriculum encourages teachers to recognize the interplay between **socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical growth**. Also recognized is the importance of the **role of culture in defining each child as an individual**.

Principles of a peaceful classroom atmosphere include the following:

Friendship: association, conversation, & belonging

Compassion: recognition of emotions, problem solving, & expression

Cooperation: consideration of others, & negotiation

Kindness: care-taking, gentleness, helping, generosity, respect, & encouragement

Our school-age curriculum is self-made and is designed to serve the interests of the children while utilizing the strengths of our staff. Web resources like *SEDL* and *Character Counts*, in addition to book resources from *School-Age Notes* enhance the curriculum for our kindergarten through fifth grade students.

Here at the Cocalico Care Center we believe that SACC children should be **engaged** in activities while **demonstrating peaceful conflict resolution** skills when needed. In addition, the students work to increase their **self-esteem** by developing skills like **independence, motivation, persistence, self-control, and empathy**.

\*Child assessment is provided and available to parents along with conferences three times a year. Assessment tools like checklists, anecdotes, and observations are used. The Cocalico Care Center staff will perform a 45 day evaluation on any new students using the *Ages and Stages* assessment tools, as well as utilizing the *Work Sampling System* as a curriculum-embedded performance assessment. (Parents will be provided permission slips during enrollment)

## **STARS Program:**

The Cocalico Care Center voluntarily participates in the Keystone STARS program, a Pennsylvania initiative for quality measurements and assurance in early childhood care. Currently, the Cocalico Care Center has earned a STAR 4 rating, on a 4 point scale. STAR levels are based on quality standards in four key areas:

Staff Education: early childhood teachers have training and knowledge for working with young children.

Learning Environment: the program has a variety of materials and activities for each age and level that makes it possible for children to learn something new every day.

Leadership & Management: a quality program has to have sound business practices to ensure your child's safety and early learning.

Family & Community Partnerships: parents and community members are encouraged to become a part of the child's learning progress.

## Enrollment Policy:

Enrollment at the Cocalico Care Center is open to all children from the age of 3 until the child completes 5<sup>th</sup> grade or until our quota is reached. 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's or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, marital status or disability. Any parent who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Cocalico Care Center Board of Directors  
659 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
PO Box 37  
Denver, PA 17517

Department of Public Welfare  
Bureau of Equal Opportunity  
Room 223, Health & Welfare Building  
PO Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Harrisburg Human Relations Commission  
Harrisburg Regional Office  
Riverfront Office Center  
1101 South Front Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17104

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Office for Civil Rights  
Suite 372, Public Ledger Building  
150 South Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Bureau of Equal Opportunity  
Central Region Office  
Patton House, Bldg # 56  
PO Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2675

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child by completing both sides of the Registration Form and paying the non-refundable \$30.00 annual registration fee. This fee is used to process information, secure placement in the program, and cover insurance costs.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed Registration Form, Emergency Contact form, completed Health Assessment (including proof of current immunizations), a signed Financial Agreement, Emergency Plan Contact page, Parent Handbook receipt, Media release form, IEP/GIEP form, and any other paperwork that may be needed in the child's file before entering the program.

The Registration form and Financial Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration. The Cocalico Care Center reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause. Continued enrollment is also based on timely payments of all fees and tuition.

*\*\*\*Parents are required to notify the Cocalico Care Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter changes. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any monies paid.*

## Tuition Policy:

Cash, checks, or money orders may be used to pay tuition. Receipts will be given for cash tuition payments. All cash payments must be handed directly to the Director, Administrative Assistant, or the Group Supervisor. Your canceled check will serve as your receipt for payments made, unless you request a weekly/monthly written receipt. Statements for tax purposes will be available by the third week of January.

A \$20.00 fee is charged for tuition checks that are returned by the bank. Returned checks will not be redeposited. Parents will be responsible for reissuing a second check. In the event that a check is returned due to insufficient funds, the following is expected:

1 <sup>st</sup> time	Payment of NSF(non sufficient funds) plus \$20.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> time	Payment of NSF plus \$20.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> time	\$20.00 plus all future payments need to be made in the form of cash, certified check or money order.

Tuition does not include fees for field trips or extra activities such as summer pool passes and special trips. The only extra items that *are* covered in the center's tuition rates are: Breakfast, Morning, and Afternoon Snacks.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at the Cocalico Care Center, however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Center Director immediately. If alternative arrangements for payments are approved, you will be notified by the Director.

The Cocalico Care Center does accept child care subsidies. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the agencies listed below to complete the required paperwork.

*Child Care Information Services*  
601 South Queen Street  
PO Box 2079  
Lancaster, PA 17608  
(717) 393-4004 or 1 (800) 937-4546

*Lancaster County Office of Assistance*  
832 Manor Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
(717) 299-7421 or (717) 299-7434

Parents of a subsidized child must pay the registration fee and complete all required paperwork on time to continue enrollment at the Cocalico Care Center. Parents of subsidized children are also required to sign a financial agreement, agreeing to be personally responsible for the payment of tuition, in the event they become ineligible to receive child care subsidies.

The center also offers a multiple child discount for siblings enrolled during the same school year. The youngest sibling pays the full tuition rate and each additional child's tuition is discounted by 20% per child. Discounts are only applicable when tuition payments are made on time. The full tuition rate, plus any additional late fees will be charged when tuition payments are late.

**Tuition Payments are due the Thursday before care. We can accept them up till 6:00PM**

## **Confidentiality:**

If parents/guardians have a concern regarding their child, they should feel free to speak directly to the lead teacher in their child's classroom or set up an appointment. Due to our commitment to protect the privacy of our children other staff are encouraged not to discuss these issues.

Children's records are confidential and are stored in a file cabinet that is locked in the Director's office. Staff may not disclose information concerning a child or family except in the course of inspections and investigations by the state or other designated officials. Due to confidentiality laws, staff will not discuss issues surrounding children with anyone other than their parent or legal guardian. Parents, guardians, and those with written authorization from a parent or guardian may have access to their child's file during regular business hours in the presence of the Director.

Families may request that their child's records be transferred to their new school by submitting a written request to the office.

## **Mandated Reporting:**

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 the Cocalico Care Center are considered mandated reporters, under law. The staff are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities for investigation, 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. Therefore, the Board of Directors and the Cocalico Care Center 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 the Cocalico Care Center **can not** 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 (i.e. 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 (persistent hunger)*

*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*

*Chronic Truancy*

*Failure to thrive*

## Parent Code of Conduct:

One of the goals of the Cocalico Care Center 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 staff, but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the facility. The center requires the parents of enrolled children at all times to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on center property thereafter. *Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Rights to Immediate Access for additional information regarding termination of care when the parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.*

1. **Swearing/Cursing:** No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language will not be tolerated. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the CCC Staff.

2. **Threatening of Employees, Children, Other Parents, or Adults Associated with the Cocalico Care Center:** Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. ALL THREATS will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the center will not assume the risk of a second chance. *Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.*

3. **Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children:** While parental verbal correction or discipline of children 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 staff and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures. Parents are *prohibited* from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. 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 by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and /or Director.

It is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All concerns should be brought to the staff's attention in a calm and respectful manner. At that point the CCC staff will address the issue with the other parent at an appropriate time. Teachers and/or the Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our center 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 our center.

4. **Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited anywhere on the center/church property, including the parking lot.

5. **Firearms:** With the exception of law enforcement personnel, no firearms or weapons are permitted at the CCC.

6. **Violations of the Confidentiality Policy:** Families need to recognize that this policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families, and employees associated with the Cocalico Care Center. Any parent who shares information that is considered to be confidential, pressures staff, or other parents for information which is not necessary for them to know will be considered to be in violation of the above named policy.

## **Family Communication:**

The Cocalico Care Center maintains a policy of open visitation. Parents or guardians may wish to speak with the classroom teacher in advance to be aware of special events or scheduling changes. Teachers conduct an educational observation of each child 45 days after their enrollment at the Cocalico Care Center and three times annually after that. A 60-day “Getting to Know You” meeting will be offered to newly enrolled families. Parent conferences are offered in October, February, and June, and parents may obtain a written report of the observation at these conferences. The Cocalico Care Center office has a list of social services and their telephone numbers that is available for parents upon their request. If a parent or a teacher suspects that a child may benefit from special interventions, the lead teacher will be available for discussion of the need. After discussion, if the need is still felt, a plan of action agreed upon by the parents, teachers, and the Director will be written to assist the parents to access appropriate social, mental health, educational, and/or medical services.

If a family has a grievance with any activity or policy of the care center, they should communicate that to the lead teacher in their child’s classroom. If an agreement is not reached, the family should consult with the Director. If there is still not satisfaction, the grievance should be put in writing and given to the Director who will respond in writing and after a meeting, the family and Director will decide if it should be taken to the Board of Directors for consideration.

## **Parent’s Right to Immediate Access:**

Biological parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at the Cocalico Care Center, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e. Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the Cocalico Care Center **must** be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) request 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 with the Cocalico Care Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law.

The Cocalico Care Center has the right to dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering center property. Due to the parents’ right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, CCC can not have a child at the center when the parent is prohibited access.

## Daily Programs:

*Daily Childcare, Preschool, Kindergarten Care, School Age Care, SACC Summer Care*

All children at the Cocalico Care Center will encounter daily activities that will challenge and encourage discovery/exploration. Using the *Creative Curriculum* in our preschool program and an assortment of materials for the School Age Curriculum as resources, our staff design developmentally appropriate activities in which children will practice all areas of development- cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, social-emotional, and communication- to enhance their daily experience. Outside activities happen daily as weather permits. Teachers are expected to provide outdoor experiences if the forecast temperature/wind chill is above 25 degrees or if the temperature/heat index is less than 90 degrees. We will not leave the building during an air quality alert or if there is any precipitation falling.

The Center opens Monday through Friday, at 6:00am and closes at 6:00pm. Parents must use the computer in the parent information area to sign their children in and out of the program.

**Kindergarten** care begins at 8:30am and ends at 3:00pm Monday through Friday. Unless a child is enrolled in the Before and After School program, parents should arrive before 3:00 for prompt pickup. CCC will provide care for Cocalico School District students attending either morning or afternoon sessions. A packed lunch and drink must be provided from home.

**Preschool** begins at 8:45 am and ends at 12:00pm Monday through Friday. To avoid late pickup fees, parents should arrive before 12:00 to pick children up promptly. ( 3 year olds meet Tuesday and Thursdays and the 4 year old program runs on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays)

## Enrollment Fees:

Policy # 1.10

All families are charged a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$30.00 annually. This fee is collected during the families initial enrollment date and in May for the SACC Summer Camp program or the upcoming school year in September.

## Tuition:

All Tuition is paid on a weekly basis unless other terms have been discussed with office staff.  
Kindergarten and School Age Care tuition is based on 180 school days.  
Summer Care Tuition is paid weekly

Tuition is due on the *Thursday* **prior** to care, regardless of the child's attendance. Payments received after 6:00 PM on the Thursday prior to the week of care should include a \$15.00 late fee. Payments that are more than 2 weeks late, without prior arrangement, will incur a 10% late fee and will be considered grounds for dismissal from the Cocalico Care Center. Payments that are more than 30 days late, will incur a 20% late fee. After 60 days, non-paid accounts will be referred to a collection agency.

In the event that a check is returned due to insufficient funds, the following is expected:

1 <sup>st</sup> time	payment of NSF(non sufficient funds) plus \$20.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> time	payment of NSF plus \$20.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> time	\$20.00 fee plus all future payments must be made in the form of cash, certified check, or money order.

There is one tuition free vacation week, based on the number of days a child is enrolled in the program, and 3 tuition free sick days annually. New vacation and sick days begin the first day of school and end the last day of the summer program. *Each family will receive 2 tuition coupons for late fees each year to be used at the families discretion.*

**Sibling discount-** siblings enrolled at the same time will receive a 20% discount off the *oldest child's tuition.*

**Referrals-** a \$30 credit will be given for referrals for new families to CCC.

### **Half-day Preschool Program:**

All payments for the half day program are due the last *Thursday* of **each month**. Late payments will be dealt with in the following manner:

1<sup>st</sup> week late- a note will be sent home requesting payment.

2<sup>nd</sup> week late- a \$15.00 late fee will be charged via a bill. Services may be suspended at the discretion of the director after two weeks without payment.

*No credits will be made for illness or inclement weather. Parents may petition the board in writing for special consideration.*

\* Due to conflict of other programs offered by CCC, early drop offs and late pick ups cannot be tolerated. Half-day Preschool children may not enter the building until 8:45am. Late pickups will be charged at the rate of \$2.00 per minute for every minute past 12:00pm. Late charges will be administered by the Director via a bill.

## **Late Pick-up:**

Families weekly schedules are used to plan staffs hours of employment. The Cocalico Care Center offers flexible schedules for your convenience, however, children should be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their scheduled time of departure (never later than 6:00pm). If a parent finds that they will be arriving later than originally scheduled, notification is requested as soon a possible. Parents or guardians of children remaining at the center later than expected are subject to a late fee at the rate of \$2.00 for every minute after their scheduled pick up time.

## **Transitions:**

Students at the Cocalico Care Center are transitioned to a new classroom three times a year. These transition months are January, June, and the end of August. These move up dates are based on a child's development and the availability of space in the next classroom. Prior to a child's transition to a new classroom, the student will visit the new teacher/classroom and materials will be sent out to families via the family mailboxes. All material that has been collected in the child's portfolio will accompany them to the new room before they are sent home.

All School-Age children are walked to and from the Denver Elementary School building by CCC Staff at:

- 8:10 am ( for the start of the school day)
- 11:20 am ( to return AM kindergarten children to our program)
- 12:10 pm (to transport PM kindergarten children to school)
- 3:00 pm (To return school age children to CCC for after-school care)

## **Contracts:**

A contract (financial agreement) is to be completed and signed at the time of enrollment. This document includes the child's fee per week/month, services to be provided, days attending, arrival and departure times, designated persons authorized to pick up the child, and the number of sick days and vacation days allowed (if eligible).

## **Termination of Enrollment/Withdrawal:**

Students may be withdrawn from the program at anytime with written notification to the Director at least two weeks in advance. Tuition payment at the contracted rate will be expected up to the last day enrolled (two weeks after notification). If the correct notice is not given to the Director, any pre-paid tuition will not be refunded.

**CCC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to terminate services provided based on the occurrence of certain events. Events such as, but not limited to, a lack of cooperation with established rules or procedures by the child and/or parents or unacceptable behavior that is not supported by the Christian morals or values of St. John's UCC. If the center cannot guarantee the safety of the child, other children, or staff an immediate notification of enrollment termination will be made to the primary caregivers.**

## **Discipline:**

There will be a four week adjustment/probation period for children to grow accustomed to our preschool or school age program.

A child not cooperating in a group situation may be seated next to the teacher and reminded of acceptable behavior. Removal from the group for a period of time-out is the next tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates unacceptable behavior. This time is not used as a punishment, but as a time for the child to calm down, remember what behavior the teacher has requested, and decide for him/herself when he/she is ready to join the group with appropriate behavior.

Corporal punishment will not be used at the Cocalico Care Center. There is no hitting, slapping, or spanking permitted in any situation. Staff may need to physically intervene in any situation that may be harmful to a child or staff member. Discipline will not be imposed for failure to eat, sleep, or for toileting accidents. If a child consistently behaves inappropriately, the following steps will be taken:

1. The Director and or teacher will request a conference with the guardian of the child.
2. Cooperatively, a plan will be outlined with the goal of effecting a change in the behavior.
3. An outside consultant may be called in to observe the child in the classroom setting.
4. The guardian will be asked to seek professional counseling and the CCC staff will work within the counselor's guidelines.
5. If the disruptive behavior continues, the guardian or designated substitute will be called to immediately remove the child from the center.
6. The third time step #5 is enacted, the child will not be readmitted to the center. All deposits and tuition fees paid by the parent will remain with the center. Guardians may petition the Board for readmission at a later date.

The Director or Administrative Assistant will assist the guardian in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and they are required to leave the center property in a calm and respectful manner immediately. **Local authorities will be called if necessary.**

## Center Calendar:

Holidays and Days the Cocalico Care Center will be closed:

*Labor Day* - September 5, 2011

*Columbus Day*- October 10, 2011

*Thanksgiving*- Thursday & Friday November 24 & 25, 2011

*Christmas*- December 23<sup>th</sup>, 2011

*New Years*- (as needed care week December 26-29)

*Easter*- Good Friday April 6, 2012 and Easter Monday April 9, 2012

*Memorial Day*- May 28, 2012

*July 4<sup>th</sup>* - or celebrated day

Tuition is expected for weeks with holidays with the exception of December 25-December 31<sup>st</sup>. This week is used for “as needed care” and only families using the facility need to pay tuition that week. Parents are not charged for the days the center is closed.

The Cocalico Care Center is typically open for daycare when the Cocalico School District closes for bad weather. (Please check weather alerts for center closings)

The half-day preschool classes will be canceled in the event of a district weather closing. If the school district announces late starts, the classes will run as follows:

1 hour delay - CCC preschool will be held from 9:30-12:00

2 hour delay - CCC preschool will be held from 10:30-12:30

## **Leave of Absence (Absences):**

A leave of absence is an absence which extends for more than three consecutive weeks. This applies to Summer Camp weeks. A child that is withdrawn from the program without a “holding fee” ( the next annual registration fee) will be re-enrolled as space is available. A leave of absence will decrease the number of vacation and sick days available if applicable.

If a child takes a leave of absence from the center for more than three consecutive weeks, a written request must be submitted to the office at least four weeks prior to the first day of leave. Leaves may not extend beyond twelve weeks.

Full tuition is due whether your child is in attendance or not. Sick days will be allowed without charge as long as your child’s name is on the school daily newsletter and or you call the center at least one hour before care is scheduled. Vacation during the year, equivalent to your normal weekly care, will be given without charge. For example, if you contract for 4 days of care per week, you are allowed 4 vacation days per year at no charge. Tuition for any other vacation time will be the normal weekly tuition. The Director will review care usage and note any adjustments in the children’s records.

If your child will not attend the Cocalico Care Center on a scheduled day of care, please inform the staff as soon as possible. Attendance is taken daily. Parents or those on the emergency contact form will be called if the child is not at the center at their scheduled arrival time.

## **Meals:**

Breakfast, morning and afternoon snacks are served daily. *Parents need to provide packed lunches for their children.* Children enrolled in daily care who arrive before 7:45 am are offered breakfast. Morning snack is served around 10:00 am and afternoon snack is approximately 3:15pm. Menus are posted outside of the office and are available from the office if desired.

We do our best to assist children with special diets, however, it is the parents responsibility to check the snack menu to inform teachers of any concerns. The Cocalico Care Center does its best to make reasonable accommodations on a case by case basis for those children on special diets due to allergies or for those individuals addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Snacks to celebrate special occasions such as birthdays may be brought to the center, however, the teacher must be notified in advance and dietary concerns taken into consideration. Please provide non-sugary, healthy snacks! The care center does not serve soda, hard candy, and chocolate to the children.

Mealtimes are important social times. Teachers will sit with and interact with the children, modeling appropriate table manners. Children are encouraged to become self-sufficient and to use appropriate table manners as well. A relaxed environment is the key to successful meal times. Our goal is to provide children with a well-balanced, tasty meal in an atmosphere where they will want to try all of the foods we offer.

An extra fee will be charged to families when lunches are forgotten.

## **Emergency Procedures:**

The Cocalico Care Center is required to annually train the center staff in Fire Safety, Water Safety, and First Aid. In addition, regular fire, emergency, and weather drills are conducted at the facility.

If it becomes necessary to evacuate our center, we have three evacuation sites including Denver Elementary School, Kiddy Korner at Faith Luthern Church at 357 Walnut Street in Denver, and Ephrata Church of the Brethren Children's Center at 201 Crescent Avenue in Ephrata. Transportation to these sites (in an emergency) will be provided by the staff of St. John's United Church of Christ and the Cocalico Care Center. We will use the radio station WJTL 90.3FM and TV station WGAL 8, and facilities web-sites to get information to parents regarding the emergency. Parents will be contacted by telephone only after the safety and well being of the children is taken care of. We ask that you do not try to call the center during emergencies so we can keep our line open for the emergency calls that need to be made.

Parents' responsibilities are to read the letter concerning our plan and return the completed Emergency Plan Child Care Pick-up Authorization. This will be kept in a binder that is taken during emergencies if we must evacuate the center.

We hope that we will never have to use our emergency plan, but it gives us a secure feeling knowing that a written plan is in place and we are prepared for any emergency. (Parents wishing to see the entire plan, may do so by contacting the Director)

### **\*\*Statewide Health Events\*\***

In the event of a need to respond to a state or national alert, The Cocalico Care Center will follow the protocol of the Cocalico School District. For example: if the district is forced to close for health events, the Cocalico Care Center will remain closed as long as the school district remains closed.

The center will be open weather permitting on days that school is closed due to weather or unrelated emergencies if attendance warrants.

## **Items from Home:**

Except for toys that are shared on special “show and share” days, all personal items are discouraged and will be removed from a child if they are brought out into the classroom. Any items that are shared at the center must have your child’s name or initials on it. Electronic toys and toys of “aggression” are not allowed at CCC and must be kept at home. (Guns, GI Joe, Power Rangers, Pokemon, etc.)

The Cocalico Care Center will not be responsible for broken, lost or stolen items.

Parents are requested to bring an extra set of seasonal clothing including appropriate under and outerwear for your child. These items are used in case of accidents where clothing becomes wet or soiled. Parents are also encouraged to send a SMALL cuddly toy, sheet or blanket for any child that attends class during nap time. Rest items will be stored in individual (labeled) bags and sent home each week to be washed.

## **Children's Records:**

At the time of admission, various forms need to be completed to satisfy both the Department of Public Welfare and the Cocalico Care Center Board of Directors. They include: Contract, Registration, Financial Agreement, Health Assessment, Getting to Know You enrollment forms, and various permission slips. These forms are updated annually in September (at the start of the school year) as the PA Department of Welfare requires. They are also checked 6 months later for any updates that may be needed.

A Child Health Assessment must be completed and on file no later than 30 days from the date of enrollment. In addition, a health assessment must be completed at each recommended pediatric visit as prescribed by the American Academy of Pediatrics:

3 years, 4 years, 5 years, 6 years, 8 years, 10 years, & 11 years old

Health Assessment forms are available in the office. The Cocalico Care Center shall implement dismissal policies if health records are not maintained appropriately. All children's records are confidential and are stored in the Director's office.

## **Children's Safety:**

Your child's safety is our primary concern. State safety health guidelines are used to determine activities and the physical environment for the center. All vehicles must be turned off and keys removed when dropping off and picking up children. The center requests that siblings not be left in the vehicle and that proper restraints are used according to state regulations.

## **Release and Identification Procedures:**

At the time of enrollment, parents provide a list of individuals that have permission to pick their children up from the Cocalico Care Center. A person's complete name, address, and phone number will be kept on file. Emergency pick-up arrangements may be made by phoning the office. If an individual is not listed on the emergency pick up list they can be added by informing the center in writing or with a phone call. The following steps will be followed during an emergency pick up:

- 1) Call or inform the center of the change in pick up arrangements
- 2) Include the name, time, and description of the person arriving
- 3) Pick up person must show a photo license or other photo id.

## **Discipline Philosophy:**

Discipline, or behavior management, involves teaching and modeling good character and self control so that children will make appropriate choices. To accomplish this, the CCC staff will use positive guidance, redirection, and the establishment of developmentally appropriate boundaries. The staff will also encourage children to be fair, respect property, respect other people, and learn to be responsible for their actions.

CCC staff will not use physical punishment or verbal abuse, as these approaches encourage children to respond in similar ways.

Aggressive behavior is not acceptable. The CCC staff will be pro-active in the intervention that is necessary, trying to defuse the situation by redirecting the children involved. They will intervene immediately if a situation develops that endangers other children or staff. If deemed appropriate by staff, parents of children involved in an act of aggression will be notified. Due to the laws regarding confidentiality, staff may not disclose the name(s) of any other children involved in such an incident.

**If appropriate behavior management strategies are not effective, parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and Director to discuss the situation.** If necessary, parents may be asked to seek support services to assist the teachers in managing the child's behavior during an informal meeting or conference.

The Cocalico Care Center reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to terminate services provided to a child based on the occurrence of certain events such as the lack of cooperation by the child and/or parents or guardians with established rules or procedures. CCC does not provide one-on-one attention; alternate care arrangements will need to be made.

## **Health Policy:**

Policy # 1.25

The Cocalico Care Center follows the guidelines found in the *Model Child Care Health Policies* published by the Caring For Our Children Foundation of the American Association of Pediatrics.

Through the Department of Public Welfare, CCC has the responsibility to refuse care to ill children on any given day or to request that a child be removed from the center if the child is determined by the staff to be too ill to remain in care or the child displays symptoms of a contagious illness.

Exclusion of children from the program will be based on whether there are adequate facilities and staff available to meet the needs of both the ill child and the other children in the group. *Children will be excluded if:*

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities of the program.
2. The staff cannot care for the sick child without interfering with the care or the other children.
3. The child has any symptoms that indicate a contagious disease or an immediate need for medical evaluation as described in the booklet, *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care & Schools*. \* published by the American Academy of Pediatrics

If the child care staff are uncertain about whether the child's illness poses an increased risk to others, the child will be excluded until a physician or licensed nurse practitioner notifies the child care program that the child may attend.

## Medication:

The CCC staff will only administer medication to your child if the medication is in the original container and the parent signs a Medication Request Form. CCC requests that parents do not leave medication with children. It is the parent's responsibility to turn the form and container of medicine into a teacher. This must be done each day when the parent drops off the child. CCC staff will record the amount dispensed and the time that it was given along with their initials on the Medication Request Form. This paperwork is stored in the child's file and the staff can confirm the dosage if necessary at pick up time.

*Suntan lotion, sun block, hand lotion, diaper rash ointment, and many other items marked "Keep out of reach of children"* may be dispensed with a parent or guardian's signature on a specific permission slip or one of the Medication Request Forms. **These items will be locked in the center medicine cabinet out of the reach of children.**

The Cocalico Care Center will not be held accountable for any reactions or problems with medications when the doctor's and parent's instructions have been followed.

The Cocalico Care Center does its best to keep any medical conditions confidential. At times it is necessary to post medical alerts on teacher rosters. These forms are kept with the teacher at all times alerting staff of allergies or other medical concerns. They are stored in such a manner that only teachers handle the information notices.

### Permission Slips:

On occasion, your child’s class will have the opportunity to take small field trips. Effort is made to include as many children as possible. If the event warrants a permission slip (see example below) one will be sent home and you will be asked to respond. If you are uncomfortable with the inclusion of your child in the special activity, you will have three options. One, you can keep your child home on that day and use a vacation or sick day credit. Two, you can come along and be a parent volunteer with the class. Three, we will find another class for your child to visit for the duration of the field trip.

#### Field Trip Permission Slip

Child’s name: \_\_\_\_\_

The children from the Cocalico Care Center’s \_\_\_\_\_ program will be taking a field trip on \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ .Please complete and return the bottom portion of this form to your child’s teacher. Your child needs to arrive at CCC by \_\_\_\_\_ to participate. Please have your child wear appropriate and comfortable clothing and shoes.

\*\*\*\*\*

Child’s name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my child to accompany the class on this field trip. I understand that the Cocalico Care Center assumes no responsibility for accident or injury in the transportation of my child to and from the school.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my child to accompany the class on this field trip, but only if I accompany the class on the field trip.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give permission for my child to accompany the class on this field trip and request that CCC find another class for my child during this time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Engagement and Partnership:**

The Cocalico Care Center has created several ways that your family can be involved in the planning and decision-making process here. Teachers offer two conferences a year where individual goals are discussed for your child. We encourage you to share thoughts regarding these goals and suggest areas of concentration that you would like our staff to work on with your son/daughter. Family Surveys are periodically sent out requesting feedback regarding the program and your comfort within our building. If you ever have a suggestion, cards are located at the tuition drop box. These requests are always acknowledged and discussed as information becomes available. If necessary, the suggestion will be brought before the Board of Directors for a vote.

Finally, announcements regarding openings on our Board of Directors are sent out as needed. This typically happens in the fall and members are asked to serve 1 year terms. If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding the care that is taking place here at the Cocalico Care Center, please feel free to contact the Director or the President of the Board.

*The center phone number is - 717-336-4007*

or

The Church Secretary could direct you on how to contact the President of the Board. *The Church office phone number is- 717-336-7600*

## **Referral Policies:**

Through the use of observations, samples of work, and completed checklists, lead teachers will address concerns with the Cocalico Care Center School-age Coordinator and Director. An informal meeting or exchange of information will be scheduled with the individual child's family to discuss concerns and create an individual plan for the student. A time line will be created to follow any progress that is made and track additional observations.

After the initial meeting, staff will investigate outside sources of support and assistance for the family. This information will be shared with the parents and referrals will be made accordingly.

## Fingerprint Reader:

As a part of the Cocalico Care Center's computer/software upgrade, an electronic check-in system has been installed for our families convenience. This new technology will not only provide *accuracy* regarding families schedules and billing, but will provide another level to the security being offered at this facility.

As a part of this upgrade, parents, guardians, and authorized emergency pick-up people will have electronic data gathered from a fingerprint scanner. This data will be stored in the Cocalico Care Center's Procure Software System ONLY. This encrypted image, specific for each individual, **will only be used in regard to attendance sign-in and out procedures.** The data will connect with each families individual account, allowing only pre-determined individuals to sign children in/out of the Cocalico Care Center. This data will be deleted from the system as families accounts are closed.