

The Owl's Nest Parent Handbook

Cedars Preparatory Academy's Infant and Toddler Center Policies and Procedures

Purpose

Our program values the whole child, and strives to enrich their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical abilities. The Owl's Nest provides daily activities for infants and toddlers to grow, explore, and learn in a safe and nurturing environment.

Infant/Toddler Program

Serves ages 6 weeks – 2 years

Maximum enrollment – 24

Curriculum

Infancy to age five are the most important years of a child's brain development. Infants and toddlers in our care will be involved in daily activities to enrich their minds, activate their senses, and stimulate creativity and problem solving.

Play is the work of young children, and will be the main focus of each day. Teachers will work with, care for and talk to children, in free play and teacher led activities.

Books, songs, finger-plays, flannel boards and story telling will be used to expand vocabulary. Large indoor and outdoor play areas will be used for building gross motor skills.

Meals

You will need to send a nutritious lunch and at least 2 snacks with drinks. Breakfast can be sent for children arriving before 8:00 am.

Lunch and snacks need to be in a thermal bag with an ice pack. Meals must be nutritious and balanced – protein, fruit, vegetable, and grain product. The Owl's Nest is a PEANUT-FREE facility. *Therefore, children absolutely may not bring any foods made with or containing peanuts, peanut butter, peanut flour, etc.*



Meals (Continued)

Drinks must only be milk, water or 100% fruit juice. Please include any utensils, bowls, and bibs needed for meals.

Infants will need breast milk or formula and baby food. Breast milk bottles need to be filled prior to arrival, and will be stored in the refrigerator. Powder formula must be premeasured and bottles need to contain exact amount of water. **It is very important that all bottles, cups and containers are labeled with your child's name each day.**

Provisions

You will need to provide the following items: diapers, wipes, diaper cream (if needed) and change of clothes. We ask that you bring diapers and wipes in bulk. Teachers will notify you, on your child's daily report, when you are running low on these items.

Visitors

Only parents or approved pick-up friends/family members of enrolled children will be allowed to visit the center. Parents are always welcome to stop in and visit, however we do ask that you consider visiting during play times, instead of nap times in order to not disrupt rest time.

Illness/Contagious Disease

When your child becomes ill in our care, we will separate him/her from the other children. We will call you to come and pick up your child immediately, as we do not have accommodations or staff to care for sick children.

Please help us protect all of the children and staff at the center. PLEASE FIND ALTERNATE CARE IF YOUR CHILD IS ILL. Children must be free of fever over 100.4 degrees, without medication, and must have not vomited for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.

Children who display the following symptoms may not remain at the center or be brought to the center:

- 1.) Fever 100.4 degrees or higher during the previous 24 hour period
- 2.) Diagnosis of a contagious disease*
- 3.) Profuse colored nasal discharge
- 4.) Reddened or discharging eyes
- 5.) Diarrhea or vomiting
- 6.) Constant coughing, sneezing or wheezing
- 7.) Rash, sore throat, headache or abdominal pain.

*Parents are required to notify staff immediately if the child is diagnosed with or exposed to a contagious or infectious disease. In turn, we will notify you if your child is exposed to a communicable or infectious disease while in our care.

Center Sanitation Procedures

All food tables and high chairs are sanitized before and after meals. Staff will clean and sanitize bathrooms, doorknobs, and play areas and play mats each day. Floors are mopped and vacuumed at the end of the day. Fabric items, cot and crib sheets are laundered once a week.

Accident/Emergency

Your child's safety is a top priority to us. In the event your child needs medical attention, a trained staff member will administer first aid and/or CPR on the child. In the event of a serious accident or emergency, 911 will be called, parents will be contacted and a staff member will accompany child to hospital. Accident reports will be filled out on any injuries and kept on file at the center. A copy will be sent home to parent.

Emergency Procedures

- 1.) **Fire:** Alarm will sound. Staff and children will leave center through front door and meet on side lawn. Infants will be wheeled out in a crib. Teachers will take attendance.
- 2.) **Tornado:** If under a tornado warning, staff and children will enter interior bathrooms. Teacher will take attendance and notify parents.
- 3.) **Lock Down:** If under a lock down, infants and toddlers will stay in the middle room of the Owl's Nest until law enforcement arrive, or threat has expired. Teachers will take attendance and notify parents.

Discipline Policy

We view discipline as a means of encouraging self-control, rather than thinking of it as a punishment for unacceptable behavior. If a toddler is losing control or is having difficulties that could cause harm to himself or others, we will remove the child from the situation and redirect him/her to another activity.

A teacher will then explain to the child why they were removed from the area. Teachers will work closely with children to help them learn natural consequences of actions and behaviors.

Children will always be aware of their limits and they will know what is expected of them. Positive behaviors are modeled and encouraged. Toddlers will be encouraged to "use their words" in order to work out conflicts. Young children are egocentric by nature and are just beginning to learn that other individuals have needs and feelings.

Withdrawing Policy

If, after a child has been at the center for at least three weeks, and it is clear that his/her behavior is detrimental to the rest of the group, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child. The decision will only be made after careful consideration between teachers, parents and the director. Written or oral notification of a child must be given no fewer than two weeks prior to the child's last day.

Arrival/Pick-up

Children, and their belongings, must be brought into the front door of the center each morning. Separation anxiety is completely normal for infants and toddlers. It is just their way of letting mom and dad know they are missed and loved.

It is very important for parents to remain cheerful. Prolonged and/or hesitant goodbyes make children feel worried. We know it is very hard to leave crying babies, but you can leave knowing that they will be loved and cared for all day, (and will most likely stop crying by the time you are in your car!).

Please note that children must be picked-up by 5:30 pm. Late fees will be assessed.

Toys from Home

Bringing a security item from home is encouraged, such as a stuffed animal or blanket for rest time. Other toys from home are not allowed, because they are distracting, and often cause conflicts during the day.

Pacifier Use

If your child needs a pacifier to sleep, you may send one in a labeled container. Due to safety precautions, pacifier clips are not allowed.

Young infants will only use pacifiers during awake times, per parent's wishes. Older infants and toddlers will not use pacifiers during awake times. This is time for speech and language development, and pacifiers can hinder this; as well as spread germs if another child picks up a friend's pacifier.

Dress Code

Please dress your child in weather appropriate, comfortable play clothes and shoes. If your child is potty training we ask that they wear elastic waist bottoms, and a separate top.

An extra set of clothes will need to be kept at the center at all times. We will go outside daily, if it is below 90 degrees and above 32 degrees, and not raining. Please send appropriate outerwear – coats, hats, mittens, sunscreen, sunhats, etc. Remember to label all items. For your child's safety, shoes must be closed toe, with rubber soles. No sandals, crocs, boots, flip-flops.