



First Christian Church
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Parent Handbook

(Last Revision Date: May 2023)

We welcome you and your child to First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry (FCCCCCM). First Christian Church Child Care Center always strives to create a loving, nurturing and safe environment for the children in our care. The policies set forth in this handbook are for the protection of all our children. We respect the role and influence of our parents in developing a quality program and look forward to working in partnership with you for the care of your child.

Admission is open to all regardless of race, creed, heritage, or ability. However, in order to maintain a safe environment for all children within our care, we reserve the right to refuse service or dismiss child or parent at any time with or without cause. The program accepts children ages 6 weeks through completion of the fifth grade.

The First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry is located within First Christian Church at the corner of 1st and Boulevard. The physical address of the center is 206 East First Street, Edmond, OK 73034. The mailing address is P.O. Box 3548 Edmond, OK 73083. The phone number is 405-341-2626. A fax machine is located within the main church office and can be reached by dialing 405-330-1337.

The center is open from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, year-round with the exception of holidays listed in the holiday section. Enrollment is based upon space availability using the date parents put their children on the waiting list. Priority status is given to church members, siblings of enrolled children, and staff children.

Statement of Origin

It is the nature of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to be concerned about the individual and individual needs. It is out of this concern for 'the least of these' that Ryland H. Oliver, First Christian Church minister in the early sixties, saw the need for a childcare center that would give quality care. It was the request of a single, divorced mother who needed to return to school to obtain her degree that the First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry was first envisioned. It was through tireless efforts of many that we obtained the very first childcare license issued by the state of Oklahoma. Today, the purpose of the First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry remains the same. Not only is quality care given, but the environment itself speaks to what we feel is important to each life - a Christian environment. Christian care is given by and for the children of God.

Philosophy

Here at First Christian, we believe a child's early experiences enrich and foster future growth. Children deserve to be treated and respected as individuals in our Christian environment that welcomes reason, exploration,

question, and imagination. We value each child's need for safety, security, warmth, and acceptance in the promise of God's love.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve children and families by providing an early learning environment that encourages the spiritual, physical, social-emotional, and intellectual development of each individual child at his or her own pace, following state and nationally accepted standards of childcare.

Accreditation

First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry has been nationally accredited through the National Accreditation Commission since 2007. NAC was chosen for our accreditation process for their extremely high standards which are continually revised to remain current with research and professional consensus of best practices in both early childhood education and business management. They also offer a Faith-Based Component to their accreditation that ensures we here at First Christian apply positive early childhood practices in the spiritual development of the children and continue to foster our partnership between the First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry and First Christian Church.

Security

FCCCCC is a secure facility, meaning all entry doors remain locked to the public during our hours of operation. Each family is given a key fob with which to enter the center at any time. Anyone not possessing an access fob must ring the bell at the north center door (by the front office) to gain admittance. The Director's office is in the middle of the center to help monitor doors and hallways. Children will not be released to anyone that is not on his or her pick-up list without written parental permission. Please be sure to provide at least three names of people authorized to pick up your child in the event of an emergency.

Waiting Lists

Due to the high demand for care at FCCCCCM, we enroll children from our waiting list. We keep extensive records of families that wish to have their child enrolled in the Center (based on the date the waiting list fee was paid in full). When an opening occurs in a specific age group, priority is given to those on the waiting list that are staff children, church members at First Christian Church Edmond, and siblings of children already enrolled in the center.

Parents are required to pay a \$30 waiting list fee for each child. The waiting list fee is non-refundable and does not guarantee admission. Every effort will be made to meet parent needs for care based on availability. Full time care is

offered for infant through pre-kindergarten age children. School age children may enroll in before and/or after school care and our summer school age program.

Enrollment Procedures

When a position becomes available in any classroom, parents from the waiting list (following the above procedure) are called and offered that space. They are given 24 hours to let the center know whether they choose to accept the offered position.

If they decline the position, the next name on the list is then offered the place. All immunizations and enrollment paperwork must be completed and the first week of tuition paid in full prior to any child attending the Center.

Parents are invited to spend a few hours with their child in their classroom prior to the first day of attendance. We welcome and honor parent involvement with the center as we partner to care for your children. Parents are welcome to call the center at 341-2626 to check on newly enrolled children, and the classroom teacher can be given a message to return your call during nap time. We understand that children and parents need adjustment time to a new childcare environment and are more than willing to assist families with this process.

At the time of enrollment, we ask parents to fill out a media release form stating their desires to include or not include children's photos in publications including web site photos.

Once enrolled, please make sure that we have all your CURRENT emergency numbers, updated immunization records, and any changes for emergency contacts.

Ages Served

FCCCCCM serves children 6 weeks of age through the summer after the completion of fifth grade. Children are placed into classes following the Edmond Public Schools cut-off date of September 1st. This means, for example, that a child must be two years old by September 1st of the current year to be placed into one of our two-year-old classrooms (Puppies or butterflies). All children from our two-year old classrooms and older through school-age will move up as a class the Monday following the first day of school each year for the Edmond Public School District.

Tuition/Fee Policies

Accounts are paid in advance on Friday for the following week of childcare. Checks and/or money orders payable to FCCCCCM are accepted prior to

services rendered. Payment received after Tuesday of any week of care will be assessed a \$20 late fee.

The Center is staffed for a certain number of children based on enrollment. Weekly fees are due whether your child attends all week or not. Your fee will assure that there is a space in the program, and that all materials, staff, and food are available for the children each day.

Any family incurring a late charge on a Tuesday evening must have their account paid in full by that Friday night (at which time their account will be a full two weeks in arrears, as tuition is due the Friday before a week of care.) If the account is not paid in full by that point, the child may not attend care the following week until the account is paid in full.

Parents who withdraw children for a period of time (such as teacher's children out for the summer) without paying full tuition to reserve their place, will be expected to pay a new \$30 wait list fee to get their child back in at some point in the future.

The only way to guarantee a spot is if full tuition is paid. Every effort will be made to try to accommodate parents' and children's needs, but no place will be held open without receiving full tuition payments.

If an account remains delinquent for more than two weeks, the child may be dis-enrolled and his or her spot given to another waiting family.

There is a 10% discount for the third child in a family (oldest child).

Late Payment

Any fees not paid by Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. will have a late payment fee of \$20.00 added to the balance. Fees paid on a monthly basis are still due the first week of the month. To avoid late payment fees, please pay your tuition in advance.

Weekly Tuition Rates (As of June 2023)

Infant Classroom (Pandas and Piglets) - \$270.00
Toddler 1's (Lambs and Hearts) - \$250.00
Toddler 2's (Butterflies and Puppies) - \$230.00
Preschool 3's (Monkeys and Explorers) - \$225.00
Pre-Kindergarten (Ladybugs and Kids Club) - \$220.00

School Age:

Before and After - \$110

Summer Weeks or Out of School Weeks - \$185 (\$200, as of 8/21/23)

A \$175.00 Summer Activity Fee is charged for all school age children to help offset the cost of fieldtrips.

Tuition rates and fees are subject to change as is necessary and will be determined by the Child Care Committee.

Charge for Late Pick up of Children

An overtime charge will be made when children are left at the center past closing time. The charge will be \$1.00 per minute per child after 6:00 p.m. and will be added to your account and payable in the office. It is disturbing to young children to be left when most others have been picked up. If you find you will not be at the Center by 6:00 p.m., please call us so we can tell the child you are on the way. (The late fee will still be charged.) You can also notify someone on your authorized pickup list to come get the child prior to 6:00 p.m. and avoid any extra charges. This charge is center policy and is not at the discretion of the person waiting with your child.

Returned Checks

The returned check fee will be \$25. After two returned checks, only cash or money orders will be accepted.

Absence

There is no reduced rate for children who are ill or absent. If a child has an extended illness and will be away from the center for two or more weeks, contact the center Director. Tuition will still be due to hold the child's spot. Children absent for two weeks, who have not kept their tuition current, will be dropped from center enrollment.

DHS Assistance

We have a limited number of spaces allotted to DHS assisted children. We reserve the right to limit this number. We must have the current contract from DHS before the child starts or the parent must pay for private pay rate until the contract is received. If during the time your child is enrolled at the center and you become eligible to begin DHS assistance, please contact the director to determine availability of DHS spaces within the center.

All co-payments are due the first business day of the month and a \$20 late fee will be charged if not paid in full by the 15th of the month. DHS will not pay for late fees. Any payment for missed swipe days, activities, or co-payments not paid in full within one week of the charge, will result in withdrawal of the child. All DHS families are required to swipe daily.

Parents are required to pay enrollment and waiting list fees, late fees, as well as supply and activity fees such as field trips. DHS will not pay any of these fees. Waiting list fees are nonrefundable.

Any child not picked up by 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$1.00 per child per minute. DHS will not pay for late pick up fees.

Private pay parents are charged for all days whether the child attends or not. DHS assistance is not paid if a child is absent. Therefore, children with frequent absences (more than 5 days in any month unless documented by a doctor's note if due to illness or due to a scheduled leave approved by the director), the parent will forfeit the right to have their child attend the center with DHS assistance. The position will be offered to the parent as private pay if DHS assistance is terminated by the center. As a private pay parent, all tuition is due the Friday in advance of a week of care. Payment not received in advance is subject to late pay fees and dis-enrollment as outlined in the tuition section of the parent handbook. If you withdraw your child from the center, two weeks notice is required. Any balance unpaid by OKDHS will be your responsibility.

Arrival and Departure

Always bring your child inside the building and check them in on the computer by the front office. When you take your child to their classroom, always make sure the teacher sees that the child has entered the room. Whenever you pick up a child, again, make sure the teacher knows that you are taking them and proceed to check out at the front desk.

NEVER LEAVE AN UNATTENDED CAR RUNNING. This is for the protection of the children and to keep your vehicle from being stolen. Also never leave children unattended in your vehicle, for their safety.

Our policy is to only permit those persons listed on the enrollment form to pick up your child. If you wish to allow an additional person for a specific day, we will need a dated, signed, written note from you giving your permission. Please be advised that if you list a person on the enrollment form as authorized to pick up your child, they will be allowed to do so anytime. ANY CHANGES TO BE MADE TO THE PICKUP LIST NEED TO BE MADE IN WRITING. Anyone picking up a child from the center may be asked to show a driver's license to verify their identification. This policy will be strictly enforced for every child's protection. No child can leave for the day from the playground without being checked out in the office first.

Entry fobs are given to each family to use for the security locks on center doors and families can purchase a fob for \$5.00.

Withdrawal and Dismissal of Children

Center policy requires two weeks notice before withdrawing a child, with full tuition due for those two weeks whether the child attends or not. Center fobs must be returned on the last day of attendance. First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry reserves the right to dis-enroll any child who presents a

risk to the health and safety of other children or staff, or any child whose needs cannot be met in our program. (Please see specific policy sections on discipline/safety, biting, and special needs.) We also reserve the right to dis-enroll the children of any family out of compliance with center policy, or any family (with or without cause) at any time.

Schedules

A daily schedule is posted in each classroom. Every classroom has outside time every day, weather permitting. Included periodically in children's schedules for ages one and older are Spanish, music. Three and up will also participate in Worship and Wonder.

Holidays and Inclement Weather

Holidays that are recognized as Center closing days are New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will be closed on the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed on the following Monday. Rates will not reflect a change on weeks when we are closed for a holiday or inclement weather.

The center will also be closed the 2nd Friday of August for an in-service day. The day will be used for training staff and deep cleaning of the classrooms.

In the event of inclement weather, the Center will follow the policy of Edmond Public Schools for the first day of the event and the center will be closed. If it is announced that there will be no public school for Edmond Public schools due to inclement weather, then the Center will be closed for that first day.

Upon the center being closed for inclement weather, church property and childcare center management will consult together to determine if the Center will need to remain closed or will be able to be staffed and safely opened on subsequent days. If the center is able to open and Edmond Public School is still closed, all school aged children may be required to follow their regular school day. For example, we will continue to provide before and after school care if we are open and EPS is closed but we may not be able to provide school aged children care for the entire day at the center due to center ratios and staffing needs. We will make every effort to accommodate the school age children.

We will make every attempt to make parents/guardians aware of any closures. Closures will be posted on the Child Care Center Ministry web page (fcedmond.org, then click on Child Care Center), or via center Facebook page status notifications on your smart phone, (please become our "friend" on Facebook...we are FCC Child Care) and FCCCCCM voice mail. An e-mail

and text will be sent to families who have provided their service provider to the office. Please verify the e-mail on your account is correct.

Rates will not reflect a change on weeks when we are closed for inclement weather.

Personnel

A list of Center personnel is located on the information wall across from the front office.

All staff:

- Have passed a DHS Criminal History review.
- Have passed a National Fingerprint/back-ground check.
- Have taken and are continuing to take early childhood training, attend conferences and workshops including first aid, CPR, children's curriculum and development, and early childhood best practices—a minimum of 20 hours per year.
- Have education and experience in teaching young children
- Have the ability to relate to young children and their parents
- Agree with and support the philosophy and mission of the center

The staff of First Christian Church Child Care Center includes both full and part time employees. Every effort is made to provide stability for the children by retention of quality staff.

Babysitting

On occasion, parents will ask an employee to baby-sit. First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry discourages this practice. If baby-sitting does occur, FCCCCCM will not become a party to it and therefore will take no responsibility or liability for incidents arising from this situation.

Curriculum

The Child Care Center at First Christian Church is an outreach ministry. Learning in young children is the result of experiences with materials, ideas, and people. It is the responsibility of the teachers in the center to provide the appropriate experiences which reinforce skills and promote growth in all areas of development—spiritual, physical, emotional, social and cognitive.

The center provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum for each age level based on growth and change that occur in children and aligned with the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Recognizing that each child is an individual with unique growing patterns, learning styles, and gifts, the curriculum and the interactions of teachers will be responsive to individual needs. Lesson plans and evaluation of activities

are linked to authentic assessment of developmental milestones as demonstrated by children in our classrooms. Children are formally assessed twice per year prior to parent-teacher conferences, and portfolios are kept for each child to demonstrate growth and development over time.

Goals of curriculum for children:

- To develop a spiritual feeling of belonging
- To promote an opportunity to express individualism and to take part in group activities
- To promote health, physical growth, and motor development
- To increase independence in meeting and solving problems
- To strengthen inner emotional controls, recognize limits, and to influence growth toward self-discipline
- To encourage self-liking, self-confidence, and self-understanding
- To stimulate children to value children of different ages, backgrounds, and abilities
- To promote language and pre-reading skills
 - To promote free self-expression in art, music, and dancing
- To help children observe, seek, investigate, and acquire information to think critically
- To model and encourage basic moral and spiritual attitudes.

First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry supports the accreditation principles and National Accreditation Commission standards of excellence in the areas of learning programs, classroom environment, children’s activities, staff qualifications, and health and safety. We are proud to have a program that reflects our commitment to providing the highest quality childcare available.

Worship and Wonder

During the school year, children aged one year and older participate in Worship and Wonder weekly. Parents are always welcome and invited to attend. In case there is a conflict in scheduling, Worship and Wonder will be moved or cancelled as necessary.

Health and Safety

Any staff member, parent, or visitor must be aware of personal bags or purses that might contain medication or other items that would be hazardous to young children. All purses, bags, diaper bags, backpacks, etc. must not be accessible to any child at any time.

Immunizations

Each child is required by the Oklahoma State Department of Health to have current immunizations. Some immunizations are given in combinations. An official copy of the record is needed before your child will be admitted. As a

courtesy to parents, notification of missing immunizations will be distributed during the first week of the month. However, it remains the parent's responsibility to keep all immunizations up to date with written documentation provided to the center. After a third notification of a missing immunization, parents will receive notice that the child will not be permitted to further attend care (with no reduction of tuition due), or the child may be dismissed.

Medication

Both DHS and the National Accreditation Commission require that parents sign an authorization for center staff to administer each medication. Medication instructions must be signed in on the medication record sheet in the child's classroom daily record by the parent. Staff will record the dose and time that medication is administered. All staff are trained to administer medication. Due to possible allergic reactions, we will not administer the initial dose of a medication, except with a physician's written permission for life-threatening situations.

Medications must be labeled with the child's name, in the original container, and has not expired. Prescription medication will be given only to the child whose name appears on the prescription label. (NO exceptions will be made.)

For Medications delivered by a device, parents or a physician must provide written instructions for use and demonstrate use of the device and any special care needed after use. Documentation of the demonstration for use and care is made on the medication form including date and staff in attendance. Training on use and care of the device is provided annually or as needed with staffing or device changes.

Medications given for chronic conditions should be accompanied by a doctor's note regarding times and frequency of administration. For chronic conditions, one medication form may be used for up to nine months.

Due to our Center national accreditation and best practices for our children, all over the counter medications must be in the original container and given in accordance to the directions listed on the label. If you or your child's doctor would like a different dosage or frequency for your child, a dated physician's note will be required listing your child's name, the date, and specific dosage/time of administration and dosage instructions.

We must ask that you please administer medication that is to be given twice a day to your child before and after childcare. If the medication requires food to be taken with it, we have been advised by a physician that milk or a cracker will suffice. If your child's medication is in the form of capsules and requires mixing with food (such as applesauce) please supply that food item as well. ALL refrigerated medications must be brought in a plastic baggy and the child's name must be on the medication label and on the baggy.

Medication left at the center without instructions for giving it to the child, or beyond its date of expiration, will be discarded. All medications will be kept in locked boxes, either in refrigerators or on shelves out of children's reach.

Breathing Treatments

Breathing treatments require specific instructions from the physician including your child's name and: 1) dosage; 2) prescriptive mixtures; 3) time frame for administering including minimum time lapse. Any change in medication treatment will require a new doctor's statement of instruction. Any on-going treatments must have a doctor's statement including the specific time period for the next evaluation.

Allergies

All known allergies must be listed on the enrollment form. Teachers and office staff should be made aware of any new allergies. We will work with families to accommodate food allergies after receiving medical documentation of the known allergy for our files. We usually can adapt our menus for children with special food needs and will work with families to determine the best substitutions for items your child cannot eat.

Any severe allergic reactions that would require medical intervention should be noted with a plan on what should be done should the need arise. This plan must be outlined by your physician in a written form. If an Epi-pen is administered to your child for any reason, 911 will be called.

Diapers

It is the responsibility of center parents to provide an adequate supply of diapers for your child. They are checked hourly here per state licensing requirements, and your child will be changed more often than that if needed. Should your child run out of diapers, center diapers will be used and be charged on to your account at the rate of \$1 per diaper...no exceptions.

Head Lice

If your child is found to have head lice, you will be called to pick up your child within one hour. You must shampoo your child's hair with a shampoo formula for head lice and ensure that all nits have been removed before returning to FCCCCM. You will be required to bring in the empty box of the "lice" shampoo as evidence that the treatment has occurred. A repeat shampooing is required one week later, and that label must be brought into the center office as well. Once your child returns to the center, you must have a teacher or center administrator check your child before you may leave them in our care for the day. If any nits are found, you may not leave your child with us. Additionally, if nits are found at a later time,

even that same day, you will have to return and remove your child from the center within one hour of the phone call once more. Your child may return to care once all lice and nits are removed (which may be on the same day if your schedule permits.) Once a child returns to the center after having had a case of lice, we reserve the right to check their hair prior to parent departure for the ten days of attendance following their return to care. (Please ask a teacher or administrator to perform this check to avoid receiving a phone call to pick up your child from care just a short time later.)

Daily Health Check

Each day as children arrive, teachers will do a quick health assessment for symptoms of colds, fever, contagious diseases, etc. If your child is found to be ill, you may not leave them for the day. (If you have just left them and they are found to be ill, you will be called to immediately return and remove them from care for the day.) Throughout the day, the children's health will be monitored and any sign of oncoming illness will be noted and communicated to the parent. When an ill child needs to be picked up, parents will be called first, and then any authorized individual on the child's pick-up list if parents cannot be reached or are unable to pick up the child within one hour of their notification. If parents or authorized individuals cannot pick up the child within one hour of being notified, we will call others on your child's pickup list.

Exclusion Due to Illness

Parents must notify the center if their child develops a contagious disease or has been directly exposed to one.

Following an absence for a contagious disease, a physician's written statement can be required for readmission to the center.

Ill children must remain home 24 hours after symptoms resolve before returning to the center. If your child has had any temperature over 100.5 degrees, any vomiting, or any diarrhea in the last 24 hours, he or she may not be left in care. Please do not give your child a medication to reduce fever and bring them in to the center. An ill child will expose others and does not feel well enough to be in care.

OKDHS illness exclusion guidelines are listed below for your convenience (effective 11-20-08):

Recommended exclusion criteria for centers serving only well children:

Children with the following signs or symptoms of illness are excluded from a center caring for well children.

1. Fever, defined as axillary (armpit) temperature of 100.5 degrees or higher

2. Diarrhea, defined as runny or watery stools with increased frequency of loose stools
3. Vomiting two or more times in a 24-hour period
4. Undiagnosed body rash, except diaper rash
5. Sore throat with fever and swollen glands
6. Eye discharge, defined as thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye
7. Yellowish skin or eyes
8. Severe coughing, where a child gets red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing
9. Signs or symptoms of possible illness, such as lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, or any other unusual signs until a medical evaluation allows inclusion

The above criteria are minimum state standards. FCCCCCM reserves the right to send any child home or to a physician for diagnosis of any condition within said physician's scope of practice and can reserve the right of admission until a physician's note is received. Some examples of these conditions may include a temperature over 100.5 degrees, any vomiting, any diarrhea, any undiagnosed rash, eye pinkness or matting, or any time that we feel your child is not well enough to be with care.

Parents will be notified if any of the following are suspected or are present for a child: temperature over 100.5, breathing difficulty, diarrhea, mouth sores, pinkeye, Scabies, impetigo, ringworm, shingles, mumps, rubella, irritability over a period, persistent crying, uncontrolled coughing, vomiting, rash, head lice, strep throat, tuberculosis, chicken pox, pertussis (whooping cough), measles or hepatitis A. We will notify parents by phone when one of the previous symptoms are present and allow for up to an hour for the child to be picked-up. The child will remain in the office away from other children.

When an individual within a classroom has a physician's diagnosis of a contagious illness, a note will be placed on the classroom door for a period of forty-eight hours alerting parents to the possible exposure.

Food and Nutrition

The Center will supply meals and snacks of quantity and quality to supplement food served at home, so that the daily nutritional needs of the child are met. Mealtime is a vital part of the curriculum and is designed with nutritional and social needs of children in mind. Children are encouraged to serve and feed themselves whenever possible. Staff is present to assist the children, as well as to model appropriate behavior for mealtimes.

Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack will be served family-style. Children in attendance at mealtime will be served that meal. Breakfast is served to school aged children at 7:30 a.m. during the school year and 8:00 a.m. during the summer. All other children are served between 8:00 and 8:30

a.m. If your child arrives at the center after 8:30, they should have been served breakfast prior to being dropped off.

Lunch is served by class beginning at 10:50 a.m. Any time a child needs to arrive at the Center after 10:00 a.m., you should notify the Center so they may be added to the lunch count. Parents should feed their children if they will be arriving after their class has eaten lunch. Afternoon snacks are served beginning at 3:00 p.m. No outside food can be brought in and left with the classroom teacher to feed to the child while he or she is at the center.

Due to OKDHS guidelines, home-made or home prepared items may not be served to children. Parents are welcome to purchase pre-packaged or bakery items for special occasions. (A commercial ingredient label must be attached to the item to allow our teachers to check for any food allergy components. No items containing nut or nut by products or made in a facility where nuts or processed may be used.) Periodically our menus include food representative of a variety of cultures. First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. All participants in attendance are served meals at no extra charge to the parent and without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Alternate provisions will be made for children with allergies and/or special nutrition needs. In accordance with federal law and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326- Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity provider and employer. You may also write to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs Section, Room 310, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105.

Accidents

First Aid will be administered to all minor injuries. In the event of serious accidents, parents will be notified, and the child will be taken to OU Medical Center Edmond (at 2nd and Bryant). Many of our staff members have been trained in infant, child and adult CPR and first aid training.

Environment

First Christian Church Child Care Center always strives to create a loving, nurturing and safe environment. No smoking is allowed on the premises at any time. Should any adult act verbally or physically in such a way as to disturb that environment, it shall be cause to refuse service to that family or terminate employment of that person immediately and without notice. Examples of behaviors that would be disruptive to the Center include but are not limited to: carrying a weapon onto the premises (unless part of a work

uniform); yelling; using threatening words or gestures; touching or speaking to staff or children in an inappropriate manner.

We provide activities and learning experiences for each child's needs, abilities, and developmental level. Our learning centers offer block play, dramatic play, reading, science, art, and manipulatives for exploration and problem solving. Children work and play together in small groups in the learning centers around the room. Children become involved in meaningful activities.

Visitors

Visitors in the center other than parents of enrolled children shall:

- Obtain permission from the director prior to the visit
- Have a valid reason for observing
- Not visit for longer than 2 hours
- Be in the presence of center staff at all times
- Only observe while the center director or assistant director is on site.

Rest

Periodic quiet times and activities will be scheduled through out the day to provide adequate rest for the children. Each classroom will have a quiet place which will always be available when a child needs rest or quiet. In addition, a rest period of about two hours will be scheduled in the early afternoon. All preschool and kindergarten children will lie quietly on mats during this time. Although the children are not required to sleep, the environment will be conducive to rest. Each child will be provided with a sheet by the center that will be washed weekly or more frequently if necessary. Children may bring in a small pillow, blanket, and a soft toy if they wish.

Child Abuse

The state of Oklahoma defines child abuse as the harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child. This includes non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or neglect (10 O.S.D. Sec. 7102).

Every person, private person or professional who has reason to believe that a child has been abused is mandated by law to promptly report suspected abuse. A person making a report in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the reporter is kept confidential. The Director and staff of First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry are obliged to report any suspected child abuse under this statute. The Statewide Child Abuse Hotline is reached at (800) 522-3511. If your child tells us in no uncertain terms that he or she received an injury at your hand, we are mandated to report this to OKDHS. There is no assumption of guilt in any way, but we are mandated to make the call.

Outdoor Play

All children will spend time each day engaged in climbing, balancing, sliding, swinging, riding and playing with others. Each room's daily schedule includes at least two outdoor times. State licensing requires that we include outdoor time each day when weather permits. In the event of inclement weather, children will be provided a recess period in the gymnasium. Children who are well enough to attend FCCCCCM must be well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play.

The Center requires a note from a physician if your child cannot participate in any activities. Please watch the weather and prepare your child's clothing accordingly. Children do not go outside if the temperature/wind chill is lower than 32 degrees Fahrenheit, or higher than 95 as an actual temperature or heat index.

Transporting Children

First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry transports children to schools within a reasonable distance to the center. Check in the office for a listing, as it may change each summer based on the schools attended by currently enrolled students. Transportation availability is determined by enrolled children's needs, as well as starting and ending school times at those specific campuses. The routes we use are developed at the end of each summer season to meet those needs and these are the only times during the day when we will transport children. In the event that your child's class has a special activity and will be getting out of school at a time not on our regular schedule, you will be responsible to find alternative transportation for that day at that time.

If your child is enrolled for both morning and afternoon school transportation and your child is not here for morning transportation, we will not pick up your child unless we are notified to do so by noon that day. If your child is only transported in the afternoons and they will not need to be picked up after school, you must notify the center as well. The center must be notified by noon if a child becomes ill during the morning at school, will be participating in any extracurricular activities, or for any reason will not need to be picked up by us. If a child becomes ill in the afternoon, please call the center immediately so we can take him/her off our pick-up list. If a parent does NOT call to change the transportation for their child, a \$25 fee will be assessed to their account.

In order to ensure the safety of all children we transport we require that they remain seated with their seatbelts fastened until the driver allows them to unbuckle. We also require that the children are quiet and orderly, speaking to each other in quiet voices while the buses are in motion. These rules are to provide safe and efficient transportation to and from schools and field trips. If

your child is unable to follow these safety rules, we reserve the right to terminate transportation or center care for your child.

If class field trips are scheduled, parents are always welcome to attend. The field trips will originate at the Child Care Center and all children must return to the Child Care Center before being released. Children may not be dropped off at the field trip location under any circumstances or be picked up by a parent from a field trip location.

Clothing

Children should be dressed comfortably for messy, active play. Clothing should be durable, washable, and clearly marked with your child's name in indelible ink. The center is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing. Shoes must be always worn. In the interest of safety, please do not allow your child to come to school in hard-soled boots or any type of shoe with a slick sole. Flip-flops and backless sandals are not appropriate for the childcare setting. Please send your child in tennis shoes or other closed-toed rubber-soled shoes. Cowboy boots, sandals, crocs, jellies, and flip-flops are fun, but are not safe for climbing, running, or riding a tricycle. Each child, regardless of age, is required to have a change of clothing in his/her class. Infants and toddlers (and any child learning toileting skills) might need to have several changes of clothing available each day. We have a limited supply of extra clothing items here at the center that may be used, when necessary, though children often become embarrassed by accidents and intensely dislike wearing someone else's clothes.

If your child is ever sent home in center clothing, please launder, and return them to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

Toys

Please do not send any toys to school with your child. Toys from home can be a source of conflict between the owner and other children wanting to play with the new toy. Toys can also become damaged, lost, or misplaced, and FCCCCCM accepts no responsibility for any toys brought into the classroom. The only exceptions to this policy are a scheduled Show-and-Tell time if desired by your child's teachers and one comfort item from home for use during initial separation or naptime.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special time for children. Parents are welcome to bring treats that are commercially pre-packaged, non-potentially hazardous food items for his/her child's class if they desire. If you have questions about what is allowed, please ask in the office. A commercial ingredient label must be attached and clearly legible in order for the classroom teacher to check for any applicable food allergy components. All items must be labeled clearly as

nut free and not made in a facility that processes nuts. We do not allow party invitations to be distributed unless all children in the class have been included.

Guidance and Discipline

Discipline and guidance shall be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child. It shall be directed at teaching the child acceptable behavior and learning to develop inner controls. When redirecting or guiding a child's behavior, age, intellectual development, emotional make-up and past experiences will be considered and consistency will be maintained in setting rules and limits for your children. Corporal punishment is not consistent with this objective and is prohibited in the Center. The following is a list of alternate forms of positive discipline that will be used:

- Tell the child what he/she CAN do
- Establish eye contact when speaking with the child
- Give choices whenever possible, but only when the child really has a choice
- Encourage children to solve their own problems and work out conflicts whenever possible
- Redirect children to another activity
- Hold a child until he/she can gain control of himself/herself
- Remove child from a situation

Limits of Behavior:

CHILDREN MAY NOT HURT OTHERS

CHILDREN MAY NOT DO ANYTHING TO HURT THEMSELVES

CHILDREN MAY NOT DAMAGE OR DESTROY EQUIPMENT

When a child is unable to be settled down after a reasonable amount of time, parents will be notified to assist with their child. Hitting, kicking, spitting, biting, hostile verbal behavior and any other behavior which may hurt another child are not permitted.

Each child will be dealt with individually. If a child continually misbehaves, we will discuss the behavior with you. We hope that together we can develop a behavior management strategy which will control the behavior. If an intervention can be made and will end the problem behavior, the child may remain enrolled. If we cannot together end the behavior, you will be asked to make other childcare arrangements. We reserve the right to terminate care if your child is a threat to himself or others or we cannot get the negative behavior under control in order to ensure the best quality environment for the majority of enrolled children in the center.

Toddler Biting

Research suggests that biting may be a normal developmental phase for some infants and toddlers. However, in some cases, this phase may be

prolonged in nature, and we cannot allow other children in our care to be hurt. All bites will be documented, and parents of both the child bitten and the biter will be notified in writing. Teachers will shadow the biter, staying in close proximity and watching for signs of frustration. They will attempt to anticipate biting situations and teach non-biting responses. After all preventative steps have been tried by staff members and the child continues to bite routinely, or if any child has three bites in one day, the director will call the parent to pick up the child for the remainder of the day. Chronic biting may require that the biter be suspended from enrollment for a period of time (days, weeks, etc.) with no reduction in the amount of tuition due. If the child returns to the center, continues to bite and is endangering other children, the child may be terminated from the program.

Children with Special Needs

We understand that there are developmental concerns that arise during the early childhood years. We believe in educating the whole child and meeting them wherever they are on the developmental continuum; however, our facility and staff may not be equipped to address all children's needs. We want to maintain the best environment for the children currently enrolled in our program, as well as provide the least restrictive environment for the child with special needs. Therefore, it is the policy of First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry to make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities. It is our intent to integrate children with special needs into our program to the extent feasible, given each child's abilities and limitations. Ultimately, our program may not provide the least restrictive environment if accommodations result in significant difficulty or expense to the program, if adaptations for behaviors fundamentally alter the nature of our existing program, or are not readily achievable; or if the child's condition will pose or does pose a significant threat to the learning, health, or safety of other children or of staff in the center, and there are no reasonable means of removing that threat. The Director may require documentation that the child is receiving proper outside services. After consultation with the parents, the child, the teachers involved and, if necessary, the child's doctors, the Director will make a case-by-case decision whether our center is capable of properly meeting the needs of the child in question. If we are unable to assist your child, we will make every attempt to direct you to the proper resources.

Releasing Children and Custody Information

Children will be released only by written permission of the parents. At the time of enrollment authorization can be give to individuals who may frequently pick up a child. This information will be stored in the child's file and in our computer database.

Individuals may be asked to show picture ID to verify their identity. If a person is to pick up a child and is not on your authorization list, parents must provide this information to us in writing.

When the parents of a child attending FCCCCCM file for divorce or separation, the parents should provide the center with a copy of any valid court documentation establishing superior custody rights of either parent (or third party). Unless a copy of a valid court order is provided to the center, the center will presume that both parents have equal custody rights regarding the child. Until such time as a copy of a valid court order is given to the Center Director of FCCCCCM, the center staff will allow the child to be picked up at the center by those persons listed to be able to do so with the center office. Once a copy of a valid court order establishing superior custody rights of either parent (or third party) is received by the center, only the custodial parent will be allowed to alter the names of who may pick up the child at the center.

Once the center receives a copy of a valid court order, the center will strive to follow the wording of that order with regards to who may pick up the child at the center on any given day. If the non-custodial parent tries to pick up the child without documentation of a court order and permission of the custodial parent, law enforcement officials will be notified. If the custodial parent has custody until 6:00 p.m. on Friday, the Center will only release the child to the custodial parent until 6:00 p.m. on Friday. If the court order clearly spells out the beginning of the noncustodial parent's visitation to be a time when the child is still at the center, the center will release the child to the non-custodial parent only after the time spelled out in the court order when visitation is to begin.

If the custodial parent wishes the non-custodial parent to pick up the child at the center at a time other than the clearly spelled out time in the court order for the visitation of the non-custodial parent (or does not wish the child to be picked up at the center at all by the non-custodial parent), these wishes must be clearly expressed to the Director of the center. Rescinding or modification of the custodial parent's expressed wishes must be done so in writing.

It is the policy of the center not to take sides during any divorce or separation proceeding. We are committed to the best interests of all children. We believe that the interests of the child are better met when parents communicate with the center about the needs of the child. The certainty of who may pick up the child acts as a stabilizing factor for the child and the center during a very emotional and difficult time. It will be the responsibility of the family to provide written documentation of requirements set forth in court documents. The center staff will not interpret court documents but will make every effort to follow court decrees.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Hospital Information

In case of severe injury or acute illness, the child will be transported by ambulance immediately to OU Medical Center Edmond (2nd and Bryant). At the same time, the parent or guardian will be called and advised of the injury or illness, and where the child has been taken. If a parent cannot be reached, a person listed on the enrollment form will be called. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain until the parent arrives and is informed of the situation. Written reports of all accidents will be submitted to the center Director and a copy placed in the child's file.

Fire Procedure

Specific procedures are provided for center staff and children to follow in case of a fire. Monthly fire drills are held and exit route maps (both primary and secondary) are posted in each classroom. All children and staff exit the building and gather on the East playground and East lot sidewalk. In the case of an actual emergency (and not a drill), we will reenter the building or relocate to our secondary location (the Edmond Public Library) pending instructions from the Edmond Fire Department.

Tornado/Severe Weather Procedure

Specific procedures are provided for center staff and children for severe weather alerts and tornado drills are practiced monthly. Children are escorted to the lowest level of the church building and will remain there until such time as it is safe to return to classrooms.

Parents and children arriving during any drills are asked to either accompany the class to the designated area, or to leave the child in the teacher's care where the class is assembled.

Disaster Plan

In the event that the center would need to be evacuated for any reason, children will be walked across the street to the library. The children will remain at the library until an all-clear has been established. Examples of an evacuation event might include: electrical outages in the building, a threat called into the center, plumbing leaks, etc. Children will remain in the supervision of FCCCCM teachers until all parents are notified and arrive to pick up the children.

Security

As mentioned earlier, FCCCCM is a secure facility, meaning all entry doors remain locked to the public during our hours of operation. Each family is

given a key fob with which to enter the center at any time. Anyone not possessing an access key must ring the bell at the north center door (by the front office) to gain admittance. The Director's office is in the middle of the center to help monitor doors and hallways. Children will not be released to anyone that is not on his or her pick-up list without written parental permission.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Visiting Classrooms

Parents are always welcome to visit, observe and participate in their child's class at any time. If you wish to eat a meal with your child, please tell the child's teacher so we can set a place for you and also notify the kitchen of an extra meal. We hope to develop a positive and open relationship with each of you as we share in these very important years in your child's life.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are held at least twice during the year, and informally whenever needed. We want to work together for the best interest of the children. You may request a conference with your child's teacher or the Director at any time.

Family Traditions and Values

Your child's family traditions, values, and religious background are very important to us here at FCCCCCM. Getting to know your child as an individual and about his or her home life is a vital part of helping us to provide him with an early childhood experience that he deserves and will enjoy. Ongoing communication between your family and your child's caregivers will help the teachers provide the best care environment for your child.

Concerns Procedure

We recognize that on occasion differences of opinion may arise between parents and staff. The following procedure will be followed to ensure resolution of any concerns parents may experience with center procedures or policies.

1. Verbal concern expressed to teacher on duty—if resolved no further action is needed.
2. Written incident report outlining concern shared with Lead teacher and Administration—if concern is not resolved by step 1.
3. Parent contacted by Lead teacher—concern resolved—no further action, report filed.

4. In the event a concern is not resolved with steps 1 to 3, Administration will arrange a mutually convenient conference time with parent to discuss and resolve concerns.

5. Parents will be asked to follow the chain of command, i.e., the above steps and if they still want to discuss the concern further, then they can contact the FCC Associate Pastor, and lastly the Child Care Committee Moderator.

Child Care Committee

The administrative organization that governs policy of the First Christian Church Child Care Center Ministry is the Child Care Committee. The committee is comprised by eleven lay people of the church and parents from the center under the direction of the committee moderator. This committee meets monthly to oversee the operation and determine policies of the center.

Parent Activity Committee

A Parent Activity Committee, made up of parent volunteers, acts as a support group for the Director, staff and parents of the center. This group meets on an as-needed basis only. All parents are welcome and encouraged to join this committee. All ideas, suggestions and comments on subjects pertinent to parent needs are brought before this committee. This group may also be involved in any fundraising needs and parent workshops.

Family functions will be held throughout the year. Parents will be notified of all activities.

Parent Resources and Newsletter

We here in Edmond are fortunate to have a wealth of early childhood and family resources available in our community. Within the center, parent resources are available in the middle hallway outside of the Director's Office and by the front office.

Books and videos can be checked out, and brochures relevant to early childhood are available for any parent as needed. Monthly newsletters and notes sent home help keep communication lines open between parents and center staff. We also have a web site link through www.fccedmond.org (the church's web site), and two center Facebook pages.

If you are unable to find the early childhood resources you seek, center administration will be more than happy to assist you.