

Parent Handbook

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PARENT HANDBOOK

Mission Statement

The Nook Daycare: An individualized learning experience where children, parents, and teachers grow together to instill children with a love of learning.

Specific Goals for the Program

- The Nook Daycare Center's purpose is to serve and guide your child in a loving, fun-filled, safe, learning environment.
- The Nook Daycare Center believes childhood is a time for exploring, creating, discovering oneself and meeting the world through many hands-on experiences. It's a time for blossoming and being cherished.
- The Nook Daycare Center's administrators and caregivers are committed to the belief that children can achieve. We believe that most of life's learning, including how to learn, occurs in the first five years of life.
- Our facility is clean and inviting with lots of materials and equipment for both indoor and outdoor activities that your child can use to explore at his/her own pace. This is the perfect place for your child to blossom. We have carefully selected a loving and caring staff. And, together we will work to provide whatever is developmentally appropriate for your child, and help him/her to reach their full potential.
- We respect parents as the most significant providers of care and nurturance. We are pleased to be an extension of the parents.
- Play is essential; it is the way young children learn. With our low student-teacher ratios, our program can be as individualized as possible. The children will refine their social-emotional, language, cognitive, gross-motor, and fine-motor skills throughout our curriculum

Ages of Admittance

Children from six weeks to 36 months of age: **Once the child turns 3, they would have to find alternate care.** Preschool is 3 - 5 years old. **Once the child turns 6, they would need to find alternate care.**

Enrollment Policies

Admission into The Nook Daycare Center is determined by the availability of space for a particular group and your position on the waiting list. Orientation for admission will be made by appointment. We reserve the right to accept or reject enrollment applications.

Before a child is enrolled into The Nook Daycare Center, the following items are mandatory:

- **\$250.00 Annual Enrollment Fee—nonrefundable: starting 1/1/2018, all families will be required to pay this annual enrollment fee at the time of enrollment and every March after.**
 - Current physical examination form documenting all updated immunizations *-must be updated every 2 years and as your child receives immunizations on schedule-Director will send frequent reminders*
- Copy of Child's Birth Certificate (within 30 days of start)
- Verification of diet restriction, if any, from the parent or doctor.
- First month of tuition

Once a spot is offered to you, you have 24 hours to either accept or decline the space. If you choose to accept, you have 1 week from when the space is available to start care. If you choose not to start more than a week after the spot becomes available, you are still responsible for payment. If you choose to not pay, you will lose your space.

In order to pull out of the program or switch your days within the program, The Nook Daycare requires at least a 30-day notice.

Certified Birth Certificate Requirement

The parent or guardian of any child to be enrolled for the first time must provide a certified copy of the child's birth certificate. We will make a copy and provide it to the parent or guardian no later than the end of the next business day. **Please note we are**

required by law to notify the Illinois State Police of local law enforcement agencies if the parent or guardian fails to submit proof of the child's identity within the 30-day time frame.

Hours of Operation

The center operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM, except for listed holidays and vacations. The Nook South Loop operates between the hours of 6:30 AM until 6:00 PM.

Arrival

Admitting hours start as early, but not before, 7:00 AM (Except for South Loop at 6:30 AM). Children can never be allowed on the premises before operating hours or without permission from the Director. As part of the morning routine, we ask that you walk your child completely in the classroom.

Separation of Child from Parent

Drop off at school may be difficult for the parent as well as the child. If the child cries at the moment of separation, he/she will rarely continue for more than a few minutes.

Remember, it usually takes at least 3 or 4 weeks for a child to completely adjust. Give the situation some time and encourage your child. This will make the separation less frightening. Our staff is trained to deal with separation anxiety and will make every effort to help make the transition smooth. Parents are also very encouraged to say goodbye to their child every morning. Although it may be hard at first, it shows the child that you are leaving but you will return. Phone calls, texts, emails, or even random visits are ALWAYS welcome to check on your child throughout the day.

Departure

At the time of pick up, please identify yourself. After you obtain your child, please sign your child out. If someone beside yourself is authorized to pick up your child, please have identification (state id or license) available. The person will not be able to pick up the child until confirmation is made.

Late Pick Up

We close at 6:00 PM. Chronic tardiness will be assessed for appropriateness for the program. **Late pick-ups require additional staff time.** Late fees will be applied.

The first fifteen minutes will cost \$15.00, and increase \$1.00 per minute thereafter. ALL LATE FEES MUST BE PAID BEFORE THE CHILD IS ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THE PROGRAM.

After 15 minutes, if there is no one present to pick up the child, attempts will be made to contact the parent(s). After unsuccessful attempts to contact the parent(s), attempts to contact an individual on the Emergency Contact List, to pick up the child. And last, after unsuccessful attempts to contact someone on the Emergency Contact List, we will go to the nearest police station.

The Director or teacher will follow police instructions and remain with the child until the situation is resolved (parent arrives or law enforcement officials take responsibility for the child).

Sign-In/Sign-Out/Pick-up Person Notification

It is required by law that you sign your child in and out everyday. At sign out time, only the designated person can sign the child out. **We will not release your child to anyone other than those listed on the Designated Pick-Up Person form.** Any person, other than the parent, authorized to pick up, must be on the pick-up list, and must show a picture id (State Identification Card or Driver's License). If for any reason there is a person not listed and needs to pick up the child, the parent must give authorization in advance. Whenever taking a person off the pick up list, parents must do so in writing. Please note: designated person must be 18 years of age or older.

Dismissal from the Program

We reserve the right to dismiss a child for any reason. Some reasons may include:

1. Parents/guardian or child jeopardizes the health and safety of other children.
2. Parents/guardian or child displays abusive conduct towards staff, other children, or the school property.
3. Parents/guardian is uncooperative with the staff, operating policies, admission agreement, or become delinquent in payment fees.

We believe that every parent, child, or staff is entitled to be treated with respect at all times. If there is a problem, we want to deal with it as professionally and efficiently as possible. By working together as a team, we can provide the best care possible for your child. If a situation occurs that angers or upsets you, we will try to rectify the situation immediately. Please keep in mind that people make mistakes. If you still feel the need to threaten the staff in any way, your relationship with the center will be terminated at once and you will be provided with a list of childcare providers to help locate alternate services for your child.

- Our rates include organic meals, snacks and drinks. Field trips are extra.
- When both siblings are enrolled in one of our programs, we apply a 10% discount to the oldest child
- The tuition is due on the 1st of the month. There is a 3-day grace period if the 1st of the month falls on a Saturday or Sunday. Children will not be admitted after the grace period.
- Absences: ***Childcare fees are based on enrollment, not attendance.*** Therefore, to maintain your child's spot in the classroom, fees must be paid during the absence of the child due to illness, holidays, vacations, school closings, or for any other reason. Parents should call the center to notify staff of their child (ren)'s absence.
- Parents wishing to remove their child from the program for one entire month or more are required to pay 85% of the monthly tuition to hold their child's spot.
- Your 1st month tuition will be prorated if your child begins school in the middle of the month.
- Accepted payment types: cash, checks, money orders, Brightwheel payments, PayPal, and cashier's checks

Note: There will be NO tuition refunds for a child going home early due to illness or personal matters

Increase of Fees

Parents or guardians will be notified at least one month in advance of any increase in tuition or other fees.

Additional Charges

Additional charges may occur for special events and field trips. You will be notified in advance for these occasions. Payment for all special events will be due one-week prior to the day of the event. If the event entails leaving the school premises and you choose for your child to NOT participate, you will need to make alternate arrangements for your child's care on the day of the event.

Holidays Observed/Closings*

MEMORIAL DAY
 4TH OF JULY
 LABOR DAY
 THANKSGIVING AND THE DAY AFTER
 BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEARS – (dates TBD/year)

***There will not be any credit given for holiday closings or illness.**

Religion/ Culture

As we serve children of many faiths, no religion will be emphasized more than the others. However, at times, religious holidays may be discussed, such as Christmas, Easter, Hanukkah, etc. We want to teach the children that our differences should be celebrated. Children and families are encouraged to bring in books, traditional clothing, musical instruments, etc. to teach the children about their culture.

Vacation Policy

A two-week notice of vacation time must be given to the center. The regular tuition will be charged for vacation time, since your child's place at the center is being reserved.

Health and Illness Policies

All parents want a safe and healthy environment for their children. Therefore, if your child is ill, please do not bring him/her to the center. We care about the protection of each individual child, in addition to the health and welfare of the entire group.

When the child is sick at school, the child will be brought to the front. There, the child will remain with the Director or teacher in isolation from the other children and staff members. The child will be offered a cot and anything else he/she requests or needs until the parent or guardian arrives. Please come get your child as soon as possible.

If your child has a contagious infection or disease, please keep your child at home as recommended. It is important to inform the center so that necessary precautions may be taken and parents can be properly alerted. In the event that we are notified that a child has contracted a contagious infection, a letter will be posted to inform the parents of the symptoms. If you suspect that your child has a contagious infection, call your doctor and inform The Nook Daycare Center. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANY SICK/ILL CHILD TO THE DAY CARE SETTING.**

To avoid the spread of infection and illness, you are required to pick your child up during school if one of the following conditions is present:

- A **fever** of 100 (under arm), 101 (orally) or more within the last 24 hours.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- Excessively red eyes (conjunctivitis or "pink eye").
- Hacking cough.
- Contagious rashes.
- Ringworm, pinworm, or other similar skin problems.
- A cold with coughing, a runny nose, and a **fever**.
- Uncontrollable, discolored runny nose.

- Contagious childhood diseases such as mumps, measles, chicken pox, etc.
- Open mouth sores
- Drainage from the eyes, ears or open sores

Any two or more symptoms from this list requires that your child be picked up from school:

- Cannot participate comfortably in routine activities
- Requires continuous one-on-one care
- Excessively drowsy or appears fatigued
- Having difficulty breathing
- Unexplained loss of appetite
- Flushed or pale appearance
- Complaining of headache, stomachache, dizziness, or pain
- Excessive yellow or green mucus discharge from nose, persistent sneezing

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent will be contacted immediately. The child will be taken to the sick area and remain there until the parent or authorized person picks up the child to take him/her home.

If a teacher feels your child should not remain in childcare due to sickness, then the daycare staff will refer your child to the childcare director for a final decision. The daycare director may require you to take your child home. **If your child returns to school with symptoms, a note from your child's doctor indicating the diagnosis of the illness or symptoms, and clarification that the condition is non-contagious will be required.** If the symptoms persist or become worse, your child may be sent home again. We understand that this policy may be inconvenient, but must be followed in accordance with DCFS licensing regulation, section 407.310 c.2. Any contagious illnesses must be reported to the School immediately.

- For head lice, children and staff may return to school after treatment and no nits.
- For scabies, children can return to school after treatment.

Do not bring your child back to the center if they are still ill. Keep your child home for at least 24 hours to give them time to get better.

Peanut Policy

The Nook Daycare is a peanut free facility. This includes all nuts: peanuts, tree nuts, etc. This is to prevent any sort of allergic reactions. Please avoid feeding your child peanut products before entering the facility.

Doctor's Note

If a child is absent for 3 consecutive days due to illness, has undergone surgery, or has been hospitalized, a doctor's statement is required upon return.

Emergency Medical Care

Parents will be contacted immediately. Emergency care will be contacted and the children will be taken to the hospital. Director or Assistant Director will accompany the child to the hospital. Parents will need to go to the hospital immediately to relieve the staff. If a child is exempt from medical care for religious grounds, special arrangements will be made in writing from the parent at the point of enrollment. An individual plan will be written out for each situation. If a child is hurt during the day, first aid procedures will be followed. An accident report will be filled out and the parent will receive a copy of the incident at the time of pick-up. The Nook Daycare Center will always have staff on hand that is certified by the American Red Cross in First Aid, and in infant/child CPR.

Medication

Medication will be administered by assigned staff or the Director and only under the following circumstances:

1. Prescribed medication or non-prescription drugs must be under doctor's orders.
2. A permission slip must be written and signed by the parent.
3. The original container and label must bear the child's name, directions for administering the medication, date, and doctor's name.

Allergies to medication must be kept on file for emergency situations. All allergies must be on a signed statement by the physician or a parent's signed statement.

All administration of prescribed medications and non-prescription medication will be recorded in a medication administration log with the date, time, child's name, name of the medication, and the dosage given and the name and signature of the staff member administering the medication.

The Nook Daycare has the right to refuse to administer medication at the discretion of the Director. It is preferred medication is NOT administered at The Nook if at all possible.

Health and Medical Form

The well being of your child is important to you, to us, and the State of Illinois. Therefore, there are certain laws established by the State for our benefit. Your cooperation is essential as we seek to follow the laws. Please remember that we have a responsibility for the health of **all** the children in the center.

Each child must have a completed medical form signed by his/her doctor prior to attendance at the daycare - should be dated no later than 6 months from the time of enrollment. Public Health mandates that your child must have:

1. An up-to-date medical form, which must be updated every two years.
2. A TB test with results.
3. DPT must have physician's signature and date.
4. Polio, measles, and mumps must be up to date. A second dose of MMR is to be given between the ages of 4 and 6.
5. HIB must be up to date.
6. Lead Screening with results.
7. Physician form must have a physician's signature and dated.
8. Any allergies (food, medication, etc.) must be listed.
9. Medical forms must be filled out completely.

Infant Program

The Nook Daycare Center sets its pace around the needs and unique differences of each child. Our infant program has primary caregivers who center their day on the needs of those whom they provide care. While meeting basic needs of food, diapering, and adequate rest, the teachers go far beyond that. Your caregivers are keen observers who plan and enhance the interaction and activities that your infant's behavior is identifying.

Infants will always be held during feeding and bottles will never be propped. Infants will not be fed any solid foods out of the bottles.

Routines are the curriculum for your infant's day. Every moment of a young child's day offers opportunities for learning. Your caregiver catches these moments and helps each baby establish trust, discover, and feel good about him/herself. In addition, your caregiver helps your child to tackle motor skills, realize the power of language, and begin to understand this new world from many angles. This task is accomplished as your caregiver keys into the verbal and nonverbal messages that your child is sending.

With the education and understanding of early childhood development, The Nook Daycare Center's staff knows that rich verbal interactions with children help them to understand language as a tool for identifying and expressing their needs, ideas, and feelings later in life. Each of our caregivers understands that infants developmentally need to explore the world through touch and feel. This is viewed as a valuable learning experience. Your caregiver is alert to the need for proper sanitation measures and

follows them consistently and conscientiously. As your trained caregiver looks at the environment, she/he views it from the child's perspective and creates an inviting and stimulating place for the child. The caregiver understands that a child's developmental status requires specific learning tools. The tools are put into rotation so that every toy/learning tool is utilized by each baby to enhance the needs of your growing child. The caregiver observes the child to focus on your child's interests or needs.

Infants need to view the world from many angles. This includes crawling, being carried, stroller rides, climbing, and rocking so that various perspectives are gained. Diaper changing, feeding, and other routines are viewed as times for communication, self-discovery, and socializing. They are encouraged to master feeding despite the messiness that accompanies the activity. Parents are the best resource in deciding the child's needs and you will work closely with your primary caregivers to make the best decisions for your child's development.

Note: We kindly ask you to put on provided disposable booties at the door over your shoes. Our infants spend a lot of time on the floor and we need to keep the floor as clean as possible to insure the health and safety of our infants.

Infant Bottle Policy

The Nook Daycare provides a house formula of *Organic Earth's Best Formula: Sensitive*. We will always have this on hand but you are more than welcome to bring your own. Please be sure that formula is brought in a factory sealed container or pre-filled in bottle. The teachers or director will ensure proper mixing according to the manufacturer's label, warning, and storing of bottles in the kitchen. All children's bottles will be labeled with the child's name and date. After each feeding any remaining milk will be discarded. Sanitizing of bottles will strictly be done in the kitchen. We also provide *Avent* bottles, which are optional, as you are allowed to provide your own.

Toddler Program

The Nook Daycare Center's teachers understand that children learn more by doing than by being told. Toddlers discover their world on a physical level. They are expected to walk, climb, carry objects, clean up toys, and dump or drop things rather than just sitting at tables.

In planning for your toddler, our educators are prepared to be flexible and spontaneous. Because they are active explorers, toddlers are eager to try new things and use materials in different ways. Our understanding educators will go with the cues of the child and extend the learning when necessary.

Toddlers are working on becoming autonomous. The teacher respects this and allows opportunities for the child to be responsible and make choices. Expectations for behaviors are developmentally appropriate and allow the child to be challenged yet to feel support from the teacher.

Our educators, with patience, warmth and respect, redirect toddlers to help guide them toward controlling their impulses and behaviors. Constant testing and expression of opposition are viewed as the child's development of a healthy sense of self. The teacher views herself as a model for how she wants the children to develop.

The teacher recognizes that routine times are important moments to help children learn about themselves and others. Our staff views playtime as valuable, and facilitates this so that children stay interested and move from simple to more complex aspects of play. The classroom includes materials for children to engage in imaginative play, appropriate experiences for creative exploration, various manipulatives to develop cognitive and physical skills as well as building blocks, music, and books. The environment allows the children to choose activities and respects their need for ample time to use and reuse learning tools. This fosters competence within the children. The setting is stimulating and inviting. It offers comfortable spaces for privacy and for interacting in small groups. Children are encouraged by an adult to care for the belongings and the environment in ways they can handle. The educator creates and adapts the environment and activities to meet the children's changing needs from day to day.

Baby Sign Language

Sometimes it is hard to understand what babies and toddlers want/need. The Nook will be using baby sign language to help communicate with the babies. Simple signs like "more"; "please", and "all done" will be used most often. These especially help with meal times. Our educators will help the babies sign it but believe it or not, they catch on fast! We usually start it right around the time that infants are starting table food.

Clothing and Personal Items

Please dress your child in comfortable, simple clothing. When dressing your child, remember that your child will be engaged in finger-painting, outdoor play, sand/water play, etc., so dress them accordingly and be aware that **your child may get dirty while playing**. Teachers and smocks will of course help keep them clean but it is never a guarantee. Independence is encouraged when playing and using the restroom so please make sure your child is able to pull down their pants on their own to use the restroom.

Please clearly label all clothing, shoes, scarves, mittens, hats, etc. with your child's name.

Infants: 3 or more bottles labeled with the child's name (on all pieces), 2 pacifiers (if needed) labeled with the child's name, 3 undershirts, shirts, pants, socks, labeled blanket, disposable wipes, and diapers. Anything you would like your child to have while here, please feel free to bring it. Some limitations may apply due to licensing but we will tell you if a concern comes up. Please also feel free to ask questions at any time.

Toddlers: 2 pacifiers (if needed; we will try to limit the pacifiers to just have a nap time unless needed otherwise) labeled with the child's name, 3 undershirts, shirts, pants, socks, labeled blanket, disposable wipes, diapers, or pull-ups (potty training). Anything you would like your child to have for nap time, please feel free to bring it. Some limitations may apply due to licensing but we will tell you if a concern comes up. Please also feel free to ask questions at any time.

Cubbies

Cubbies are provided for each child and are marked with the child's name. It is important that you check each day for artwork, notes from the teacher or director, personal items, etc. Classrooms also have 'Take Home' folders that you will need to check on the regular ☺

Labeling

Please label all clothing that is extra or removable with your child's name. This is very important for the teacher to determine ownership of the item. It is also important in helping your child learn to take care of his/her belongings.

Outside Toys

If your child has an attachment with a certain toy or stuffed animal that he/she may need at rest-time, please inform the director upon enrollment of your child. If the child wishes to play with the toy throughout the day, the child must be willing to share it. If the child refuses to share, then it will go into the child's cubby for the rest of the day.

Transitions

A transition of children to the next, older classroom occurs at different times during the year. Transitions are dependent on the child's readiness (age is only one factor). In addition, the recommendation from the current teacher and proposed classroom teacher, and availability in the next class are considered. *Because of the lack of availability, it is impossible to promise the transition into a particular classroom.* However, the academic needs of the child will always be met. In cases of an approved transition, teachers will begin to talk to the children about the class; visit; then nap in class prior to the actual move into the class. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the child's new room at any time. Transition plans also are provided and approved by parents before the transition begins. If we have more than one child ready to move and both are about the same developmentally, we will be transitioning the oldest child first.

Toileting & Diapering Procedures

We check and evaluate children upon entry for soiled diapers or any type of rash or irregularity in the diapering region. We check and change diapers every two hours or as needed. The diapering activities are recorded on your Daily Report in each room.

After each use the diaper changing area is disinfected. Dirty/soiled diapers are immediately disposed of in the appropriate lined diaper pail. After each diaper change and toileting tasks, hands are washed with antibacterial soap and water. In the event that sinks access is unavailable (picnic, parks etc.) a hand sanitizer is used. All children using the toilet are required to wash their hands with antibacterial soap and water after each use. Stepping stools and assistance is provided if needed. If a child requires a potty seat, it too will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Potty Training

If a parent feels that his/her child is ready to be potty trained, the parent should discuss the matter with your child's teachers. Your child's caregivers and administration will evaluate your child. The evaluation consists of looking for signs of your child's readiness. Examples of readiness include being able to dress and undress self with ease,

balance on a step stool to wash hands, and clean their bottom with tissue without assistance. We will work together to ensure that this process is as easy and successful for your child and your family as possible. It is important for parents to remember that sometimes using the potty at home and using the potty at school is different. It is easy to get frustrated with your child but they will go when they are ready. Potty training should be a natural experience, not a forced experience.

Guidance and Discipline Rules

Discipline in the daycare setting can be defined as helping your child learn to control inappropriate behavior. Discipline is directed towards the child's negative behavior and not toward the child as a person. In disciplinary situations, actions are provided in the **methods** of:

- Getting down to the child's level and making eye contact
- Taking the time to explain the misdeed to the child and helping the child make a better choice in the future by using words to explain his or her needs and frustrations.
- Offering alternatives or other problem-solving approach.
- Removing the child from the situation and giving him/her some quiet time with the book or puzzle
- Teaching the very young children to show the other child a gentle touch to make sure the child is okay.
- In older children, giving them the dialogue of what to say to the child that they hurt or did wrong to by asking the child if they are okay. If the child responses no, then have the child ask what would help them feel better; whether it be a hug, a high-five, or a fist bump, it helps the children begin to understand that they need to fix their mistakes with others and help when needed

Parents will be informed of any consistent inappropriate behavior. Staff will discuss and help develop a plan in an attempt to redirect inappropriate behavior. The **Initial Consultation** would require the parent(s) of any child with chronic behavioral concerns and who attends the center, to talk with the Director or classroom teachers to discuss the problem and together, establish solutions or goals for correcting the behavior. The **Second Consultation** would be established if the initial plan fails. Again, the parent(s) will be required to meet with the Director and/or classroom teachers. The problem will be identified and a new approach will be outlined to approach the problem, and discuss the consequences if progress is not achieved. If together with the parent, attempts are unsuccessful to redirect the child's behavior, suspension or termination may be discussed.

Employees are expected to follow the rule of absolutely no hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, or other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear (will result in immediate termination of an employee); you can not threaten or refuse to provide food, rest, or use of the bathroom; nor, is profane or belittling language allowed.

It is important that children understand why certain behaviors are not acceptable. Therefore, The Nook Daycare Center, expects its employees to set limits and explain consequences to children when their behavior is inappropriate. Positive redirection should be used to assist the child with their behavior. Consequences should be age appropriate and related to the unacceptable act. Children should be allowed time to work out their own problems/concerns. Children are not to be disciplined for toilet accidents.

Biting/Physical Injury

There are many different reasons why children bite. The child could be trying to relieve pain from teething, be exploring cause and effect, experience the sensation of biting, satisfy a need of oral-motor stimulation, act in self-defense, or communicate feelings of frustration or anger.

How a biting incident will be handled:

- The teacher will immediately rush over to the incident and get down to the children's level
- A firm "You do not bite your friends!" will be said
- The focus will be on the victim of the bite giving first aid immediately
- The child that bit will be asked to show the other child gentle (if they do not have the language skills to talk it out) Otherwise, they will have to ask the victim if they are okay. If the child responses no, they need to ask what will make the child feel better (whether it be a hug, a high five or fist bump: just something to show that the child is sorry rather than just forcing the child to say sorry)
- The teacher will defuse the situation and remove the child who distributed the bite and redirect him/her to a different activity
- A cold chewie may be offered or the child may be asked to take a break from the area and read and book or do a puzzle instead

Biting and other physical injuries caused by one child to another or by a child to a teacher or director are causes for concern and must be documented. When your child causes an injury to another student or teacher, an incident report will be completed detailing the injury. The incident report becomes a part of the school's permanent record and a copy will be put in your child's file. If biting becomes a persistent problem, your child will be shadowed. What this means is that we will have a staff member be at the child's side or even hold their hand throughout the entire day. That way, if the child even comes close to biting another child, it will be stopped immediately.

If your child receives a total of five incident reports because they have been involved in an incident, which caused injury to another child or teacher, a mandatory meeting will be required with the Parents, Teachers and Directors. At this meeting a plan of action

will be discussed so that both the parents and the teachers can seek a consistent way to handle the situation and hopefully remedy the behavior.

If after the meeting nothing changes and another five incident reports are completed (totaling ten incident reports relating to a biting or injury), the family will be given a two-week notice and the family will be asked to make other arrangements for the child. *Please note this will be handled on a case by case. The Center Director will determine severity.*

The Nook reserves the sole right to ask your child to leave the school immediately and permanently at any given time without two weeks notice if the injury that is caused to another child, teacher or director is deemed extremely severe by the school Directors. In this case, the normal ten incident reports and the preceding protocol will not be possible and immediate dismissal from the program will occur.

Feedings

The Nook provides all home cooked meals meaning, everything is cooked on site—baby food included! At meal times, children are expected to try all of their food on their plate before they request more of something. It is ok if they do not like a certain food, but they still are required to try it. Milk will be served at breakfast and lunch, while water will be served for snack. The children can always have water after their first glass of milk or more milk if they would like. If your child does not drink milk, they may have water or other milk alternative provided by the parents. When the child is done with their meal, they need to ask to be excused from the table or tell the teacher that they are all done. This helps the teachers keep track of how the child ate that day and aids in classroom management to give the teachers time for their next transition into nap or next activity. Water will be offered several times a day and whenever the child requests it.

Naps

Infants will sleep whenever they need to throughout the day and will remain on their own schedule. Young toddlers will nap on a schedule everyday following lunch. For older toddlers, a nap or quiet time is scheduled after lunch. The teachers are available to rub backs and generally maintain the restful atmosphere. Children, who do not sleep after 1 hour and those who are up before naptime is over, are permitted to quietly look at books or engage in quiet projects while the other children sleep.

Outdoor Play

All children play outdoors at their scheduled time each day, weather permitting. A parent's request to keep their child inside is difficult, if not impossible, to accommodate because staff are not always available to provide supervision to an individual child. In this case, the parent may choose to keep the child home.

We WILL go outside unless it is colder than 30 degrees F, wind chill considered, or hotter than 100 degrees F, so please be sure your child is dressed for the weather. Do not worry about your child being outside for very long, because teachers get cold/hot long before the children do!

Visits/Trips/Excursions

Your child may participate in walking field trips when planned by the staff as a regular part of the children's program/curriculum.

Parents will be informed, in advance, of any field trips that The Nook Daycare Center will take. Parents are responsible for signing permissions slips and returning them before the day of the field trip. In some cases where there is a safety concern, parents may be asked to either accompany their child on the trip, or keep the child at home. Field trips will require more adult supervision, and parents are encouraged to volunteer. Parents are always welcome to join the fun! The Nook Daycare Center will use a licensed transportation service for all group driving field trips. No trip will take place unless a safe ratio of adults to children.

Local Parks

When the weather permits, we have the opportunity to go on walks throughout the neighborhoods or trips to local parks.

Transportation

Until further notice, The Nook Daycare does not offer transportation.

The only transportation that the center will provide is to and from field trips through a licensed bus transportation company which you will be notified in advance of the up and coming trips.

Birthdays

We're thrilled to celebrate your child's birthday at the center. If you would like us to celebrate the day, we request that you speak to your child's teacher first in order to coordinate a healthy, non-allergenic snack. **PLEASE CHECK ALL INGREDIENTS LIST FOR PEANUTS AND TREE NUTS. THIS INCLUDES THE FACILITY WHERE THEY WERE PROCESSED.** Store bought treats are preferred but homemade goodies are allowed too, among the Director's approval.

Your child's caregiver may add special songs, games, and stories to make it an extra special day for your child.

Communication

We welcome your comments and suggestions. If you have any questions about your child's progress, we will be happy to do an evaluation. Parent/teacher conferences are encouraged and can be arranged based upon the parent's convenience during the center's operating hours. Working together, we can enhance your child's experience. **PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL ANYTIME.**

All information about the school and classroom news will be distributed to the parents via emails and handouts and/or posted on our website and bulletin boards in each classroom.

The child's teacher will distribute daily sheets via an app. These notes will include mealtime details, any activities or events the child enjoyed that day, nap schedule, diaper-changing log and potty times. These logs are distributed via email or through a Parent App (optional download). Please keep your child's teachers and the director aware of any changes at home. It can really affect a young child; therefore, using the staff as a resource can help the child and the family get through any situation at home.

Parents may schedule appointments with a teacher or the Director if any concerns relating to a child's development or behavior shall arise. This way the teachers may devote their full attention to the problems and solutions.

Staff

Our educators are chosen by their educational background, experience with children, and their love for children. Our center follows state regulations in hiring new staff. Each staff has passed a background check done by the State of Illinois. Each staff member is approved by DCFS. The staff is warm and loving, open to children's needs, and flexible in their actions.

Each staff member has also signed a confidentiality agreement. Our staff is forbidden by law and by administration to talk about any of their students or families outside of work. This ensures that the business of The Nook families stays at The Nook. They are prohibited to post pictures and names of any children in the center on the Internet, including all forms of social media.

Rules and Responsibilities

BASIC RULES: In order to maintain a safe environment for your child and reduce conflict amongst the children, the following rules are strictly enforced:

- No chewing gum or hard candy
- No cough drops
- No jewelry that would encourage young children to put in their mouths
- No money (child could put in mouth and choke)

Discipline Rules/Guidelines for Staff

All staff members must abide by the discipline policies and those in accordance with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Discipline Rules for Parents

Parents must abide by the discipline policy and also be subject to the rules and regulations set forth by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services while at The Nook Daycare Center.

Change of Name or Address

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Director in writing of any change of address, home or phone numbers, work schedules, and authorized pick up names and numbers.

Child Custody

Legal decisions regarding issues of child custody will be respected. In fairness to parents and children, a copy of any court documentation should be provided for the file.

Insurance

The center carries liability insurance as required by the state. The insurance will not include medical coverage for illness.

Responsible Parties

The Director is responsible for the day-to-day operations of The Nook Daycare.

Parent Visitation Policy

At The Nook, we have an open door policy. Parents are encouraged to visit the day care center and participate in their children's experiences. Parents are allowed to visit the center without an appointment any time during normal hours of operation.

Risk Management

Every effort is made to provide a safe environment for children. The center entrance will always be locked to prevent unauthorized entrance. We are equipped with a fire alarm system. Evacuation routes are posted throughout the center. Emergency exits are clearly marked. Staff is trained in CPR and First Aid. We will conduct fire drills once a month and tornado drills every six months. Ask to see our complete risk management plan for further details.

Cooperating with Regulatory Agencies

The Nook Day Care Center meets or exceeds state standards for licensure. The license is displayed in the Director's office. The staff is mandated to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to DCFS.

Release of Information

No records will be released without written consent of the parent or guardians. Except in the event of extreme emergency, when there is evidence of child abuse or neglect, information will be given to authorized individuals at the Department of Children and Family Services.

Universal Precautions Policy

The following preventative measures are to be used to reduce the spread of all infectious and contagious diseases.

Wash hands regularly. Hand washing is the best way to protect both child and caregiver. Use the recommended hand washing technique:

- Use antibacterial liquid soap and scrub hands for 1 minute
- Scrub top of hands, palms, between fingers, and under nails
- Rinse under warm water with hands pointing down
- Dry hands with paper towels.
- Turn off the water faucet with a towel before disposing of it
- Wear disposable gloves while cleaning up blood, bloody saliva, urine, feces, or vomit, especially if there is a skin rash or open cut on your hands. If skin contact is made with these substances, wash the affected areas with soap under running water.
- Wear disposable gloves when changing a child's diaper.
- Change gloves after contact with each child. Throw away disposable gloves after each use. Wash hands after wearing gloves.
- Place disposable diapers in a plastic bag. Tie the bag securely.
- Supervise toilet-trained children to ensure that they wash their hands well after using the restroom.
- Clean up blood and bloody fluids on surfaces with 1 part ordinary household bleach diluted in 10 parts water. The bleach solution should be fresh and used the day it is made. Isopropyl alcohol, Lysol disinfectant, and hydrogen peroxide can also be used.

Health and Cleanliness Policy

We take the well being of your child very seriously and work hard to provide an environment that is as healthy as possible. We are committed to keeping our center and the children in it as clean as possible, in order to help minimize and/or prevent the spread of germs. Our center is kept clean and disinfected at all times. We thoroughly clean surfaces that children come in close contact with. The high chairs are cleaned between each use, and the diaper changing tables are cleaned and disinfected between each diaper change. Toys are cleaned and disinfected daily, and water-play tables are cleaned and disinfected before being filled with water and carefully supervised when in use. Linens are washed once a week using unscented laundry detergent.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is the single most effective practice in preventing the spread of germs. We wash our hands many times throughout the day, as well as the children's hands before and/or after engaging in a thorough list of activities.

Employees wash their hands:

- Before beginning work
- Immediately before handling food or feeding children
- After using the toilet, helping a child use the toilet, or after changing soiled clothing or diapers
- After coming into contact with any bodily fluid, such as a wet or soiled diaper, runny nose, spit or vomit
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- After cleaning a child, the room, toys, or bathroom
- Before giving medication or applying ointment
- After work

Children wash their hands:

- When they first enter the center
- Immediately before and after eating
- After using the toilet or having soiled clothing or diaper changed
- Before and after using water tables
- After using play-dough or other substances
- After playing on the playground
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Before going home

Pets and Animals

At this time no pets or animals will be allowed into the center.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

The Nook Daycare staff members are mandated child abuse and neglect reporters as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the parents will be notified of our intent to file a report with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. We will always make a report when it is warranted.

The State of Illinois defines abuse as: sexual abuse which includes touching; physical abuse injuries, including welts, burns, cuts, etc.; and verbal/emotional abuse including constant belittling or cursing at a child.

Neglect is defined as: failure to provide food; failures to provide nurturance; or disregard towards medical problems.

These reports are being made to protect the child, the parent, and The Nook Daycare Center.

Grievances

All grievances concerning staff members, policies, or procedures should be made to the Director of the program so that action may be taken to address the grievance. Parents may request a conference with the Director or Owner and any party with whom they have a complaint.

Parent Notification Policy

For unplanned or non-routine activities such as closures, etc... We will notify parents by putting a flyer on your child's classroom door and throughout the center. We will also send emails and post general announcements on our website

Emergency Closings

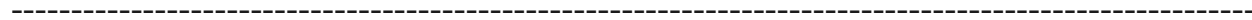
We will be using Chicago Public Schools as only a guide for emergency closings. Closings will also be posted on our website as soon as possible to announce any closings or emergencies at the center. Emails will also be sent out.

Emergency Plan

We will be practicing fire drills every month and tornado drills every 6 months. In case of evacuation, The Nook and Nook 2 will be relocating to each others facilities.

Video Surveillance

The Nook, 2151 W Armitage, has a video surveillance system in operation during program operating hours. The cameras are placed to allow constant surveillance of the classrooms.



I have read and understand the parent handbook.

Parent Signature

Date

Director Signature

Date