



Bright Futures begin at
WIDEWATERS
LEARNING CENTER

Family Handbook 2010-2011

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Hello!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Widewaters Learning Center. Our doors opened May 4th, 2009. Widewaters Learning Center is committed to high standards in Early Childhood Education. We provide low teacher to child ratios, frequent and positive interaction between teachers and children, and developmentally appropriate activities and expectations. It is our goal to provide an environment where children are welcomed, nurtured, and respected. Self-esteem runs high with our children who receive praise for their many academic and personal achievements.

Our professional staff, with their strong interpersonal skills and knowledge in child development, work together to create an atmosphere that is inviting to children and conducive to learning.

As Director, it is my role and privilege to guide and facilitate, to observe and lead, and to maintain the quality of this Early Childhood Program. I invite you to observe and interact, to listen and to talk, and to become an active part of your child's experience here at Widewaters Learning Center.

I welcome you and your family to our Widewaters Learning Center family.

Yours Truly,

Jennifer Cua

COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN

It is to the benefit of our children, families, and staff to collaborate with an extensive network of agencies and individuals.

This center is licensed to operate by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Child Development, and maintains requirements of the North Carolina Health and Sanitation Department. We also hold a business license for the city of Knightdale. Licenses are posted in the lobby. Our compliance with all licensing requirements is monitored regularly. In your enrollment paperwork you will receive a condensed version of the North Carolina Day Care Laws. To receive a comprehensive copy of the current State licensing laws contact the Division of Child Development at (919) 662-4499.

As leaders in Early Childhood Education, we extend to local colleges, universities and high schools a mentoring program for aspiring teachers. You may see these young professionals as they complete their teaching internships in our classrooms. We stay informed of proposed legislature affecting children and childcare laws and support political candidates who value education.

Doctoral, corporate, and/or other research is conducted at this school with parental permission only. On occasion, we have the opportunity to participate in such research studies, and/or consumer research studies. You will be notified if any such participation is occurring.

Prior to each child's first day, two parent/child visits are extended to the family. The purpose of these visits is to provide an opportunity for children to meet their teachers and become familiar with the classroom environment. Parents also get to talk with the teachers and familiarize themselves with the daily routine and expectations of the class. During the second visit, the child spends time in the classroom without the parent. This provides time for the parent/s to meet with Widewaters Learning Center administration to review the Policies and Procedures of this school. Parents are encouraged to visit the school and become involved in each child's learning experience.

MISSION

Widewaters Learning Center is dedicated to guiding children to make good choices, develop high self-esteem, receive and show respect through words, actions and treatment of self, others and the environment, learn tolerance, and make positive contributions to the community. We prize each child as an individual.

Our curriculum focuses on learning through discovery and play. Theme based lessons are hands-on and provide children with the opportunity to make choices. Children are encouraged to participate in all class activities and learning centers. Through play in centers and outdoors, children develop social skills, fine and gross motor skills, and are guided toward appropriate conflict resolution practices. Basic skills are taught on an individual basis, as well as in a group setting. Math, science, social studies, handwriting, and pre-reading skills are integrated into daily lessons and routines. Learning is achieved through developmentally appropriate practices.

We expect children to experience individual successes, as well as to display an awareness of others and a sense of commitment toward the larger community. We expect children to display behaviors appropriate to a group setting. We expect children to develop a love of learning through self-directed and teacher-directed activities. We expect children to have fun, be nurtured, and become comfortable in their environment.

Our school atmosphere is informal, friendly, and fun. We are an extension of the family and strive to present ourselves as nurturers and good role models. Our teachers are educated in child development, are excited about education, and are continually growing and learning. We recognize and encourage their individual teaching styles, as we do each child's individual learning style. Our teachers show children a caring community by working together and respecting one another. They are deserving of respect from parents, children, school administrators, and the community.

Together, we (parents, teachers, and administrators) provide an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and fun. Together, we instill in your child a sense of self-esteem and an excitement toward learning. We look forward to beginning your child's journey...together.

PHILOSOPHY

Widewaters Learning Center believes:

- ◆ that a quality early childhood education creates the foundation for future learning successes.
- ◆ that learning to communicate with peers within a structured environment, and on a social level, is necessary for young children.
- ◆ that respect for self, others, and the environment is something that is taught and earned. Learned at an early age, this provides children with the tools they need to be a contributing member of a larger community.
- ◆ that young children learn through experience and hands-on activities.
- ◆ that teachers at the preschool level should facilitate, not dictate.
- ◆ that children should be guided toward positive decisions and choices, and self-esteem should flourish.
- ◆ that children should be nurtured and made to feel special. They should be recognized as an individual, not only as part of a larger group.
- ◆ that our school is an extension of the home. Parents, teachers, and administrators must work together to create a warm, comfortable, academic environment for all children in attendance.
- ◆ that each lesson each day should benefit the child's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth.
- ◆ that learning should be fun.

GOALS

1. To provide children with a safe, stimulating, nurturing environment.
2. To create an environment that encourages independence and good decision-making.
3. To provide children with experiences that promote positive growth and high self-esteem.
4. To provide children with a foundation with which they can build future successes.

5. To successfully blend school, family, and community.
6. To enable children to interact and solve conflicts with peers in a positive way.
7. To instill a love of learning through meaningful and fun lessons.
8. To guide each child to develop a sense of social and personal responsibility.
9. To expose children to and involve them in the arts and multicultural activities.
10. To provide experiences that enhance creativity.
11. To provide a curriculum that is well-defined and caters to individual learning styles.
12. To employ teachers who teach and model respect and positive emotional, social, intellectual, and physical traits.
13. To help each child find happiness and satisfaction in his/her accomplishments.
14. To aid each child in the development of fine and gross motor skills.
15. To respond to the needs of families and provide opportunities for parent education.
16. To respond to the needs of the community and display a commitment to community efforts.
17. To provide children with a sense of belonging and well-being, and a love for learning that will continue throughout their school years.

Operational Policies

Guidelines are essential for the success of any childcare program. We ask that you become familiar with our policies. They are designed for the safety and well being of each child.

Hours of Operation

Widewaters Learning Center is open at 7:00 am and closes at 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. Our school calendar is updated on a yearly basis. It is posted in the lobby and copies are available at the front desk. (Please note that there is no tuition discount for any days that we are closed.)

Age Range and Ratios

Widewaters Learning Center operates for children 6 weeks to 12 years old. We run ratios as recommended by the Division of Child Development for centers choosing to follow the voluntary rated license standard for 5 Star centers. Teacher to child ratios are posted in each classroom. The ratios may temporarily vary as a result of teacher absence, enrollment fluctuations, and varying child arrival and departure patterns. We will never knowingly exceed the state mandated ratios.

Enrollment Procedures

Prior to enrollment, all perspective parents are encouraged to tour our facility. To reserve a space for your child, a deposit is required. If you leave a deposit, and decide not to begin your child on the agreed upon date, you must let the school know as soon as possible. The deposit is non-refundable, and does not hold a space indefinitely. Widewaters Learning Center reserves the right to deny entrance to any child if enrollment is delayed continually. Spaces are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Enrollments are accepted year-round based on availability.

Upon enrollment, a packet of paperwork is provided to you for each child enrolling. This packet consists of an *Application for Enrollment*, the *Children's Medical Report*, a *Summary of NC Childcare Laws*, an *Acknowledgement Form*, the *Parent Handbook*, and the center's *Discipline Policy*. Parents of infants will also be required to fill out an *Infant Feeding Schedule*. Any form requiring information about the child, or requiring a parent's signature, is required to be on file the first day your child attends Widewaters Learning Center. (We can allow a grace period of 30 days for the *Children's Medical Report* form.)

Widewaters Learning Center provides all meals for children who are on table food. Bottles and baby food, rest mat sheets for nap, diapers, diaper creams, diaper wipes, and a full weather appropriate change of clothes need to be provided by the parent/s. Upon enrollment, each family will receive a *Welcome Packet* from the classroom their child will be attending. This packet contains specific information regarding the operation of the room, and any items necessary for the parent to provide. It also provides an introduction of the teachers in the classroom, and any other additional information the teachers wish to communicate.

Fees

A registration fee is due upon enrollment and is non-refundable. (Any earlier deposit may be applied toward the registration fee.) This fee is renewable each year.

Payment is due the first day of the cycle (first of the month, first and fifteenth, or every Monday). All accounts must be paid in full by the 15th of each month. (Weekly pay accounts may have a small balance or small credit on the 15th, which should not exceed the amount of one week's tuition.) Accounts not paid promptly will incur a charge equaling 5% of the existing balance. This charge will be applied to the account on the 17th (or closest business day).

In the case of non-payment, service may be denied until receipt of tuition monies. If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, there will be a \$20.00 returned check service charge. Any person who has two checks returned by the bank for insufficient funds within a six-month period of time will be required to pay by cash or money order.

Tuition is re-evaluated annually and adjustments to rates are made. You will be notified, in writing, at least one month prior to any tuition increase.

WWLC is open from 7am until 6pm. The front door will remain locked until 7am and will be locked at 6pm every evening. If you arrive at WWLC, or exit the building with your child, after 6pm, your time of exit will be recorded in the late pick-up log. This log will be available at the front desk and the **time of exit** will be filled in by a WWLC employee. A rate of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each minute from 6pm until you exit the building. The charge will be made "per family" not "per child".

WWLC offers certain professional courtesies to Wake County Public School teachers in relation to school fees. If this applies to you, please see a school administrator for a copy.

Withdrawal from the School

A two week written notice is required if our services are no longer needed. If notice is not received, you will be responsible for the regular tuition. The annual registration fee will be charged to your account the month of the anniversary of your child's start date. If you choose not to renew your enrollment, written notice must be received prior to your child's anniversary.

Vacation/Absence

There is no credit given for days absent. Please keep in mind that salaries and all on-going expenses must be paid even though absences occur. A vacation credit of one week may be applied to your account on an annual basis. Vacation credit will only be administered upon a two week written notice of said vacation. Should your child become ill and miss one full week or more of attendance, a possible credit may be arranged upon receipt of a doctor's note. All illness credits must be approved by school administrator.

Inclement Weather

A. General Policy

1. WWLC reserves the right to close the facility in the event of severe weather threats, or if conditions are deemed hazardous for driving
2. WWLC **does not** follow Wake County Public School closings
3. on days WCPSS is closed for inclement weather and WWLC is open, we will provide full-day care for school-aged children

B. Notification

1. WWLC lists all delays and closings on WRAL/Fox 50/Mix 101.5/WRAL/Newschannel/WRAL.com, generally listed under “private schools”
2. for inclement weather inquiries, the school’s voice mail system will reflect the most current closing or delay information – the main number is 266-0036

Arrivals and Departures

Our building is equipped with a keypad entry system. The exterior doors to our facility are locked 24 hours a day. Upon enrollment, each family will choose a code to use to gain entrance. This code must be typed into the keypad near the front door to release the lock.

Please bring your child directly to his/her classroom. Children should never be left unaccompanied in the parking lot, foyer or halls. This includes siblings of children who attend Widewaters Learning Center.

Remember to sign your child in on the laptop computer in the lobby (by entering the last 4 digits of your phone number) and notify school staff of any information pertinent to your child’s day. Let the caregiver know you have arrived so s/he can help your child get settled and prepare for you to leave. Be sure to tell your child good-bye! If you have information to relay, and do not have the opportunity to speak directly with your child’s teacher, you may use the notepads provided at the front desk to leave a message in the teacher’s mailbox (also located at the front desk).

Arrivals and departures are transitional times for children. Your child may cling to you or cry upon your departure. Do not view this as a sign of dislike for the school. This is a normal reaction for young children. All efforts will be made to make these difficult times easier for your child and you. Through discussions with your child’s teacher, you should be able to form a morning drop-off routine that works for you and your child.

Please try to have your child to his/her classroom by 8:45am. Most classroom activities are well underway by this point, and children may miss activities if they arrive late. For scheduling purposes, please call if your child will arrive at school after 10:00 a.m., or will be absent.

When picking up your child in the afternoon, please allow time for current activities to be completed. Also, encourage your child to clean any toys/items s/he may currently be using. If you are in a hurry, please call in advance so that we can prepare your child prior to your arrival. We are happy to assist you in gathering your child’s items to go home, and/or helping him/her diaper/potty prior to departure.

Don’t forget to sign your child out on the same laptop you used for morning sign-in, and notify the appropriate caregiver that you are departing with the child. Please check your child’s folder for artwork, memos, or other forms of communication. For your child’s safety, we request that you always enter and exit the building through the front lobby.

If you are unable to pick up your child, please notify us in writing the name of the person authorized to pick him/her up. Said person should be prepared to show identification (driver's license, or other photo ID) before the child is released to him/her. Do not give your door code to anyone. If someone without a code is picking up or dropping off your child, instruct them to ring the doorbell at the school's entrance, and we will open the door for them.

Staff

Widewaters Learning Center strives to hire well-qualified staff members. While not a requirement, many of our teachers hold degrees in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, or a related field. Our teachers are given guidelines for curriculum and scheduling, but work together to develop developmental goals, daily schedules, lesson plans, and classroom policies and procedures that are appropriate for their teaching style, and the many learning styles of the children in their classroom.

We respect our teachers, assistant teachers, and support staff for their individual styles, their input, their teamwork, and their ability to provide nurturing, fun, and academic environments within our school. We are confident that they will earn your respect and admiration. Please address classroom issues to the teachers, as they are your first point of contact at our school, and are the individuals who spend the most time with your child. Also, make your child's teacher aware of issues outside the school which may effect your child's day.

We do not support using our staff for childcare purposes outside of the school day. Any such relationships forged beyond school hours are not related to expectations and performance of teachers while under our supervision.

Parent Grievances

If, at any point, you have an issue in your child's classroom, please contact your child's teacher. Should you feel uncomfortable discussing the issue with the teacher, or should you find the teacher's reply to be unsatisfactory, please contact a school administrator. If you feel a licensing law has been violated and, once notified, the school takes no action to correct the violation, you may contact the Division of Child Development at (919) 662-4499.

Parent Involvement

We encourage parent involvement and participation in our program. Social and educational events are held throughout the year to encourage interactions between staff and families. We offer an "Open Door Policy", which means you are welcome to stop in at any time during the day to visit your child. The following is a list of some ways you can further involve yourself in your child's day:

- Attend a holiday event
- Attend a special event (play, magician, etc.)
- Be a volunteer to read a story or share a special talent with the class
- Organize a holiday party
- Share family traditions
- Any other idea you may have!

** We support and encourage formation of a Parent Coalition to work with us to make our school the best it can be!*

Show and Tell

Children are permitted to bring special toys from home on show and tell days only. Show and tell will be scheduled by the classroom teacher. Please label all items brought from home to school. At no time will paraphernalia that promotes or displays acts of violence of any kind be allowed in this facility.

Birthdays

Birthdays can play an important role in the life of a child. We welcome you to celebrate your child's birthday at Widewaters Learning Center. Please speak with your child's teacher to schedule birthday celebrations. School snack will be available in addition to special treats you may bring in for a birthday celebration. No gifts may be exchanged at school. For everyone's safety, state law does not allow us to have latex balloons, or lit candles. Any food provided for the birthday celebration must be purchased from a commercial facility and must include a list of ingredients. Parents may distribute birthday invitations at WWLC if all children in the class are invited to the off-site party. If only select children are invited, invitations may not be distributed at school. You may, however, leave stamped invitations with the children's names on them at the front desk, and we will fill in the correct address and drop them in the mail for you. (We will not provide addresses or phone numbers for enrolled families without written consent from the family.)

Holiday Celebrations

Holiday Celebrations are held during and after the school day throughout the year. Many times, parents and/or families are invited to attend. We try to be sensitive to family traditions and cultural diversities. We announce well in advance when holiday celebrations will occur. If, for any reason, you would not like your child to participate, please communicate with your child's teacher to make alternate arrangements. If you have a family tradition you would like to share with the class, please make arrangements with your child's teacher.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor experiences are an integral part of pre-school years. Because their physical development is occurring so rapidly, young children should go outside daily to practice large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and experience freedom not always possible indoors. Circumstances which might preclude daily outdoor play are:

- ❖ chill factor below freezing (32°F) at the time children are scheduled for outdoor play
- ❖ steady rain or downpour
- ❖ severe weather warnings

On days when circumstances do preclude going outdoors, opportunity for large motor activity and/or walks within the building will be provided. Outdoor time will never be taken away from a child as punishment, nor can a parent request that their child not go outdoors. If a child is not well enough to go outdoors, s/he is probably not well enough to be in school.

Health

Our school operates for well children and staff only. Children who are mildly ill (e.g., minor cold symptoms) may remain at the school only if they are fully able to participate in all activities, including

outdoor play. Parents should provide appropriate changes of clothing so children do not become either chilled or overheated. Light sweaters or jackets should be available for children.

Children with symptoms of communicable disease remain at the school only until the parent or designated guardian arrives for the child. During this time, the ill child is separated from the other children in the class. We make every effort to reach the parents when a child is ill, but if we are unsuccessful after 30 minutes we will contact other persons listed on the enrollment form to whom we can release your child.

We will not care for children with:

- ◆ A fever of 101° F or above
- ◆ A skin rash that has not been identified by a physician who has seen the rash
- ◆ Vomiting or excessive diarrhea
- ◆ Evidence of head lice or other parasites
- ◆ Severe coughing
- ◆ Rapid or difficult breathing
- ◆ Yellowish skin or eyes
- ◆ Conjunctivitis (pink-eye)
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Pain of which the child complains and interferes with normal activity
- ◆ Evidence of infection
- ◆ Excessive fatigue

Children may be readmitted:

◆ With a physician's statement that the child is free from communicable disease, and that returning poses no risk to the child or others.

Or

◆ If visibly free from communicable disease, fever free without benefit of fever reducing medications for 24 hours, and free from vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours while on a normal diet.

If a child needs to leave school due to any of the above conditions, a *Sick Sheet* will accompany the child. This sheet may be used as a physician's statement to return to school, if signed by the physician. The school retains the right to continue to exclude a child despite a physician's statement if that statement contradicts the school's policies. When any youngster in a class has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, all parents in that class are informed in writing within 24 hours. (The child's identity is kept confidential.) It is your obligation as a member of the Widewaters Learning Center family to inform the school of any communicable disease or other health concerns experienced by your child, even if evident on a day that your child is not in attendance.

State health laws require that you help your child wash his/her hands upon entering the classroom. We will assist the children in washing their hands throughout the day, including before and after meals, after toileting, after outdoor play, and before and after water play.

Widewaters Learning Center also utilizes the services of "Swisher", who sprays the center with a germicidal spray on a monthly basis, for the purpose of cutting down on germs and viruses. By helping us observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and the other children in the program.

Services and Referrals

Widewaters Learning Center utilizes the services of several local and state agencies to perform such services as eye screening (Prevent Blindness North Carolina), speech screening (local Speech Pathologist), and dental screening (State Health Department), at no charge to parents. We also have local

and state agencies we utilize for guidance with developmental issues with specific children. Referrals are with parental consent, as required.

Medical Authorization

No drug or other medication will be administered without specific instructions from a physician or the child's parent or guardian. Medicine must be in the original container. Medication will only be administered when absolutely necessary and will be verified by the director or assistant director.

A medical authorization form must be completed and dated for each day the medicine is to be dispensed. Information on the form must include: the child's name, the name of the medication, the amount to be given, and the time to be given. The parent must sign and date the form. These forms are available at the front desk. Please request that your doctor prescribe medication that can be given twice a day – once before school and once after school, whenever possible.

It is our first choice not to administer over-the-counter medications to children in our care. In instances when it is in the best interest of the child to have this medication available, the following guidelines must be met. Patent medications, such as cough syrup, acetaminophen, or medication for intestinal disorders, shall be administered as authorized in writing by the child's parent, not to exceed the amounts and frequency of dosage specified in the printed instructions on the label. If the dosage is higher than the recommended dosage, or if weight or age requirements are not specific for your child, a doctor's note stating proper dosage must accompany the medication.

Please note that all medications must be locked away from the children. Topical ointments and lotions, powders, and chapsticks labeled "*keep out of reach of children*" must be in a locked area and must be accompanied by a medical authorization form. Please do not leave any medication in your child's pockets, book bags, or diaper bags.

State regulations prohibit the dispensing of any medication on an *as needed* basis. All medications must have identified specific times and dates for administration. Allergy medications may state "to administer if allergen is consumed", or "to administer in the event of bee sting", etc. Specific forms are available for administration of medication for asthma or allergies. These forms may be on file for up to six months at a time, as long as the type of medication does not change. Medical authorization forms for medications such as Benadryl and/or an Epi-pen can be on file for six months at a time. We provide a *Medical Alert Form* to document the need for the use of medications for severe allergic reactions. This form must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

Diaper cream forms may be on file in your child's classroom for a period of one year. You may request to have diaper cream applied when skin in diaper area is red, when rash is present on skin in diaper area, after each bowel movement, or at every diaper change. Diaper forms must be completed each time a new brand of medication is brought into the center. Any cream that is not labeled specifically for use as a diaper cream, such as cream for yeast infections, requires a doctor's authorization in addition to the medical authorization form.

We request that you update your child's immunization record on file at school each time the child receives an immunization.

It is a recommendation by state licensing, and a Widewaters Learning Center policy that we do not apply insect repellent to children. If needed, please apply any such ointments before your child arrives at school. Sunscreen will be applied once daily, upon request. Sunscreen forms are available in your

child's classroom and must be signed monthly, or as type or brand of sunscreen changes. Sunscreen will be applied to your child prior to afternoon outdoor play. Morning sunscreen must be applied to child prior to arrival at school.

Nutrition

Widewaters Learning Center provides nutritionally balanced snacks and lunch. We utilize a four-week rotating menu. Please see the menu posted by the kitchen to indicate which week's meals and snacks we are currently serving. If you have not been provided with a menu, please request a copy at the front desk. We encourage the children to have a 'hello' bite, that is – to try a taste of everything. Children are never forced to eat, or excluded from a meal or snack do to discipline issues. Food is also not used as a reward. Through snacks and lunch, we provide approximately two-thirds of the child's daily nutritional needs. Seconds are offered to the children as they are available. Staff members are encouraged to eat seated with the children, (except the infant staff), to converse with the children, and model good mealtime behaviors. Mealtimes are relaxed times, rich with conversation and fellowship.

If a child's diet must be modified for health reasons, a physician's written explanation is required. If a child's diet is modified for cultural, personal, or religious reasons, the parent is asked to put the request in writing, and will be expected to provide supplemental foods. Any supplements must be of equivalent nutritional value (i.e. protein substitute for meat products).

Parents are asked not to bring in food items from outside the school, unless for a special occasion, pre-approved by school staff.

Safety

- ◆ We ask that parents closely supervise children in the parking lot, lobby, and elsewhere in the school. It is recommended that children be offered a hand to hold, especially in the parking lot. When departing from the center, please resist having the children run to the car. Siblings are not permitted to stay in the lobby, hallways, or classrooms unattended.
- ◆ Restroom facilities are available off the front lobby.
- ◆ Children are released only to persons for whom the staff has written permission from the parents. If the administrators or teachers do not recognize the person picking up, we will ask to see photo identification.
- ◆ Admittance to the building is via a keypad entry system. All families select a code to be programmed for their personal use. Those without a code may not enter. Please refrain from sharing your access code with others, or from allowing people unknown to you to enter the front door without a staff member present to greet them.
- ◆ All exterior doors are locked around the clock. Any visitors without a keypad code may ring the doorbell next to the keypad to gain entrance.
- ◆ The front entry and lobby are monitored 24 hours a day via security camera. All who enter and exit are recorded for later review, if necessary.
- ◆ Widewaters Learning Center requires all staff to complete CPR and First Aid training within six months of their hire date.

- ◆ No child is ever knowingly left alone or unsupervised while in our care.
- ◆ Parents are permitted access to all parts of the school at any time.
- ◆ Widewaters Learning Center follows ozone warnings and limits outdoor play during yellow, orange, purple, and red ozone warning days.
- ◆ There is always immediate access to a phone at the school. Telephones are located in the lobby, back hallway (near exit door), office, front desk, kitchen, and staff lounge. The telephone system is set up to ring inside and outside the building. Four lines are available. Parents may request to use the phone at any time.
- ◆ The school utilizes a fire and security system that is monitored by an outside agency. Any fire and/or burglar alarms ring to the monitoring center, and directly to the necessary emergency facility.
- ◆ Aerosol sprays are not used when children are present.
- ◆ Vacuum cleaners are not run while children are present in the classroom.
- ◆ Electrical outlets are child-safe. Power strips have outlet covers on unused receptacles.
- ◆ Smoking is not permitted in the building or elsewhere on school property. We request that cigarettes not be butted out at or near the front door.
- ◆ Vans used in the transportation of children are maintained in accordance with recommended guidelines.
- ◆ Car seats are utilized on school vans in accordance with state law.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff will comply with the provisions of the *Child Abuse Reporting Act* by bringing suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the attention of the School Administrator. A report will be filed with the Department of Human Services Division of Abuse and Neglect.

Emergencies/Accidents and Injuries

A. Minor Accidents/Injuries

1. Staff member will treat child either in the classroom or will bring the child to the office.
2. First aid will be administered (clean area, apply band-aid, etc.)
3. An accident/incident report will be prepared.
4. If the child has a facial injury, or something that will be noticed immediately by parent (such as a bite), a staff member will contact the parent by phone prior to pick-up.
5. If a bite occurs, parents of both children involved will receive an accident/injury report.

B. Serious Accidents

1. Staff member will bring child (if appropriate to move) to the office.
2. Initial first aid may be administered

3. If non-life threatening, the parent will be contacted and requested to take child to physician, or to meet member of administration at the hospital. If life-threatening, 911 will be called, and then parent will be notified.
4. The Rescue Squad will take the child to the nearest appropriate medical facility.
Wake Medical Center Emergency Department
3000 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh
350-8000
5. A member of administration will accompany the child to the hospital, or follow if not permitted in rescue vehicle. The child's medical form on file at school will be brought by the administrator. Whenever possible, the child's classroom teacher (or someone the child is very comfortable with) will also accompany the child.
6. An accident report will be prepared in triplicate. One copy will go into the child's file, one copy will be given to the parent, and one copy will be sent to the Division of Child Development.

****Note – Any parent not willing to authorize emergency transportation for his/her child will be refused admittance to our program.***

C. Evacuation of Building

1. In the event of an emergency that requires us to evacuate the building, we will take the children to the leasing office's main lobby of the Greystone at Widewaters Apartments.
2. In case of an emergency that requires us to evacuate the building for the remainder of the day, the children will be transported to Buffalo Wild Wings on New Bern Avenue, forms will be taken, and all parents will be contacted.

D. Natural Disasters and Fire

1. Widewaters Learning Center has tornado procedures posted in each classroom.
2. Evacuation maps are posted in each classroom to indicate primary and secondary routes for teachers to follow in the event of a fire
3. Fire drills are practiced monthly and the alarm is sounded – this allows for children and teachers to be familiar with the sound and procedure, so as to diminish the likelihood of panic in the event of an actual fire
4. A Burglar/Fire alarm system is linked directly with the local fire and dispatch office in the event of a break-in or fire
5. Firefighters are invited to the center several times a year to instruct the children on safe fire procedures and so children can see the firefighters in full fire/rescue gear

E. Center Emergency Handbook

*Widewaters Learning Center has a Center Emergency Handbook located at the front desk. This guide addresses emergency situations including; emergency evacuation plan, fire, inclement weather, illness or injury, bomb threats, and utilities and maintenance emergencies. It is available for your review.

Fundraisers/Grants

On occasion, Widewaters Learning Center will conduct fundraisers. Fundraisers will be scheduled with specific goals in mind. Book fairs help us to continuously add new books to our classroom inventory; other fundraisers will help us to purchase high ticket items to be used by the children, or the staff. As a community service, other charitable organizations will benefit from efforts to collect toys and gifts, offer volunteers, and help raise funds. WWLC offers school pictures at least 2 times per year.

On a regular basis, WWLC applies for grants offered to Early Childhood Programs. These funds are generally utilized for building and playground improvement, space enhancement, and/or staff education, training, and development.

Cleaning and Maintenance

Widewaters Learning Center utilizes the services of a professional cleaning company to thoroughly clean the building Monday through Friday. They are responsible for trash removal, cleaning of all bathrooms, all floor cleaning and maintenance, carpet cleaning, etc. Teachers are responsible for keeping the classroom clean throughout the day and keeping toys and toy cubbies, shelves, counters, cupboards, and children's personal belongings clean and organized. Tables and diaper areas are cleaned and sanitized several times throughout the day. All spot cleaning in the classroom and class bathroom is to be completed by the teachers throughout the day, as needed. Weekly cleaning includes cleaning and sanitizing chairs, wiping down trash can and walls, wiping down door and window frames, removing excess tape from all surfaces, and emptying and wiping out the sensory table. The teachers are responsible for the overall appearance of their classroom. All soft toys and dress-up items are laundered and/or sanitized weekly, or as soiled. The building is sanitized monthly with a germicidal agent. All rugs are professionally cleaned on a quarterly basis, with infant and toddler carpets being steam cleaned as needed, between professional cleanings. All HVAC air filters are changed monthly and vents are dusted weekly. Air purifiers exist in infant classrooms and are maintained monthly.

Fieldtrip Policies and Procedures

Many classrooms at WWLC offer fieldtrips as an extension of classroom learning. The following guidelines are in place for fieldtrips:

A. Attendance and Permission

1. Fieldtrips will be announced at least 2 weeks prior to the event
2. Parents are invited to chaperone fieldtrips, as needed
3. Permission slips must be signed by a parent to allow child's attendance on fieldtrip
4. If you prefer for your child not to attend, WWLC will arrange for your child to visit in another class during the time of the fieldtrip
5. Siblings are not permitted to attend WWLC fieldtrips unless approved by school administration

B. Payment

1. fieldtrip charges are based on the cost of admittance, food, gas, and chaperone expenses
2. payment may be made by cash or check to the front desk – if payment is made on the same check as a tuition payment, please make a note in the memo section
3. in most cases, parents are responsible for any cost incurred if they choose to attend a fieldtrip
4. cash should not be paid to classroom teachers

C. Transportation

1. 15 passenger vans will be used for transportation to and from fieldtrips
2. any parent wishing to transport his/her own child to and/or from a fieldtrip must make prior arrangements with the teacher
3. siblings (not enrolled in WWLC) may not ride school vans
4. car seat laws will be followed for class fieldtrips – if your child legally requires a five-point harness seatbelt, you must provide the car seat –WWLC will provide booster seats for those children who require one
5. all van drivers must be at least 21 years of age and be pre-approved using current driving records through our insurance carrier

D. Etiquette

1. parents and teachers attending fieldtrips are expected to present themselves in a professional manner and make the needs and safety of the entire group of children their priority
2. parents will not be permitted to purchase additional items or services for their child, or the small group of children under their supervision – WWLC policy is that all children will receive equal treatment and opportunities
3. if a child cannot maintain self-control with his/her parent present on the fieldtrip, it is the teacher's prerogative to deny that parent future fieldtrip attendance

Disenrollment Policy

The administration at Widewaters Learning Center reserves the right to terminate childcare at any given time for a multitude of reasons. This means that your childcare may be terminated at any time, with or without notice, for any reason, with or without cause.

Closing Statement

All of us at Widewaters Learning Center are honored that you have chosen us to play such an important role in your child's first years. We recognize and respect parents as the most significant providers of care and nurturance, and are pleased to provide your child with a loving, safe, academic and social environment. We encourage communication and rely on parents' comments and suggestions to promote positive change.

Together, we can make your child's first years the best!

Widewaters Learning Center Comprehensive Discipline Policy

The components of the Comprehensive Discipline Policy are as follows:

- Utilizes a positive discipline system including reasonable outcomes for developmental and chronic misbehaviors, and the Behavior Guidance procedures for chronic misbehaviors
- Is based on a clear value system
- Utilizes shared goals and beliefs

- Uses positives (e.g., “start” not “stop” directions) and Think Time (not “time out”)
- Applies reasonable outcomes established in all classrooms; “Good Habits” are clearly stated in a positive way in each class, with pictures labeling the “Good Habits”. Empowering children and parents is the goal.
- The school is a community of caring people, working together, with parents, as a team!
- The outcome is acceptance of personal responsibility and self-regulation along with self and school pride.

The discipline policy at Widewaters Learning Center adheres to the overall school philosophy that acceptance of personal responsibility and self-regulation are achieved through positive discipline practices. In addition, the policies are as follows:

1. Individual class rules are established by the teacher and are called “Good Habits”. They are stated in positive terms to the children, “what to do” not “what not to do”, and a poster of the rules is developed with picture illustrations.
2. Reasonable outcomes for behaviors are established and discussed for both appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. When concrete reinforcers are used, they consist of stickers, stamps, books, and school-related materials. A hug, a handshake, or a “helper’s privilege” are utilized as well.
3. When concrete reinforcers are used, they are always paired with praise or recognition. The goal in providing concrete reinforcers is to establish behaviors; maintaining behaviors is accomplished through developing intrinsic, “good” feelings for appropriate behaviors. **POSITIVE TEACHER COMMENTS ARE MUCH MORE POWERFUL IN AFFECTING BEHAVIORS THAN NEGATIVE, PUNITIVE COMMENTS.**
4. Appropriate behaviors should be the focus of attention rather than inappropriate behaviors. That means, whenever possible, inappropriate behaviors are attended to by ignoring them, while immediately reinforcing someone who is behaving appropriately. This strategy is developed as a “watch-me, show-me” approach with the goal of replacing unacceptable behaviors with acceptable behaviors. **IF THE CHILD IS ENDANGERING HIM/HERSELF OR OTHERS, THE BEHAVIOR IS STOPPED IMMEDIATELY.** Overall, the goal is to focus on what you want, not what you don’t want.
5. When dealing with chronic, inappropriate behaviors, the goal should be to replace that behavior rather than eliminate it. A desirable replacement should be identified and then efforts should focus on developing the desired behavior rather than just “getting rid of” the inappropriate behavior. Punishment will not change behaviors. The “watch-me, show-me” strategy is used.
6. Procedures for handling classroom misbehaviors are as follows:
 - a. First, attention is given to those displaying appropriate behaviors.
 - b. If an inappropriate behavior persists, the parents are informed and a behavior log may be kept. The focus is on replacing behaviors.
 - c. If the misbehavior continues, an in-class “think time” may be used. Time out is not used at Widewaters Learning Center. Think time can be a reasonable outcome.

- d. The area where the disruptive child is placed should be a comfortable, nonpunitive place staffed by a person who conveys the following message: “We want you back with your class, but we expect you to follow good habits. As soon as you can show me your good habits, you may go back with your class.” The child is helped to understand that there are only two alternatives; return to class and use good habits, or continue to be excluded from the current activity. (We will never exclude a child from a snack or meal, or time outdoors. Part of outdoor time may be spent as think time.) Parents will be communicated with if a child is excluded from activities as a result of chronic misbehaviors.
- e. In the case of repeated chronic or serious misbehaviors, especially those which endanger the child or others, a child may be removed from the school for the remainder of the day, or a time period determined by school administrators. The decision to remove a child from the school must always be made by a school administrator. The parents are told, “We would like your child to return and stay in school as long as his/her behavior is reasonable. When it goes beyond reasonableness, s/he may again be sent home.”
- f. The Widewaters Learning Center Comprehensive Discipline Policy utilizes a positive focus including reasonable outcomes for developmental and chronic misbehaviors, and the Behavior Guidance procedures for chronic misbehaviors. When difficult behaviors occur, the Procedure for Difficult Behaviors utilized is as follows:
 - (1) The behavior of concern should be clearly identified. Difficult behaviors are considered to be those which are disruptive or cause physical or verbal harm to other children or staff; e.g., fighting, hitting, kicking, biting, disrupting class activities.
 - (2) In some instances of difficult behavior, the frequency of the behavior should be considered. This could include identifying whether it occurs daily, several times a day, relative to some school period or activity, or may be part of a pattern of behavior. The behavior should be documented through the use of a Behavior Log, or Incident/Accident Report. Parents are always informed, or given copies of, Incident/Accident Reports. The occurrence of serious or undesirable behavior is reason for consideration of suspension or expulsion. The School Administrator must approve such actions.
 - (3) In cases of physical harm occurring to another child as a result of a child’s behavior, the procedure is as follows:
 - (a) The child who caused the harm is removed from the situation. In most cases, the goal of physical removal is to allow “think time”. Separation of a child in the infant/toddler programs should be brief and should not include confinement in a playpen, crib, high chair, or the like.
 - (b) Attention is paid to the “victim”. The goal here is to portray to the aggressor that his/her negative behavior will not gain attention from the teacher. Any words issued by the staff member to the aggressor should be short and direct, without being punitive or belittling the child.
 - (c) An Incident/Accident Report is written to the parents of the child who is hurt.
 - (d) The School Administrator determines whether the nature of the injury necessitates an immediate notification of the parents of the injured child. An Incident/Injury Report may be completed and given to the parents of the child who caused the harm, as determined by the School Administrator. All reports are filed in the child’s record, and parents are supplied with a copy.
 - (4) A meeting is held with the School Administrator and personnel who interact with the child, to develop a plan to follow regarding the child’s behavior. The plan includes established actions relative to the difficult behavior and a timeline for its resolution. This meeting is followed by a conference with the parents at which time an agreement is reached about collaboration between home and school in following similar

procedures in working with the behavior. A daily communication system (either written or verbal) is established at this meeting. An ongoing record of the communication conducted is maintained. Parents are informed of the established timeline relative to required resolution of the behavior.

- (5) If the plan is not successful within the agreed-upon timeframe, a second meeting will be held with the parents, teacher, and School Administrator. At this meeting, a two-week probationary period may be established for the resolution of the difficult behavior. At this point, a third person will be called in to observe the child in the classroom. It is also possible that an outside agency, such as Project Enlightenment, may be called (with permission of the parents) to provide guidance to the school and the parents. If the behavior continues throughout this process, the child may be expelled from Widewaters Learning Center. If at any time during this process there is a serious behavior-related incident, especially one causing harm to the child or another child, expulsion may be immediate.