2016-2017

Ohio Wesleyan University

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

37 Park Ave.
Delaware, OH 43015
(740) 368-3935

https://owu.edu/ecc
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Early Childhood Center. We are glad you have chosen our center for your child’s first school experience. We are proud of our center and believe we provide an optimal environment in which children, teachers, and parents can all grow and learn from each other.

We believe children learn best in an environment that is child-centered and where all children feel valued and accepted. We are fortunate to witness natural curiosity, increasing language acquisitions, struggles and triumphs with peer relationships, creativity and imagination, and many physical milestones. We are excited to share these experiences with you and invite your active participation at the center.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for the entire school year. Our door is always open for your suggestions and concerns. We welcome you to the ECC community and look forward to working with you and your children.

The ECC Teachers, Director, and Student Staff
I. ECC PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS
The Early Childhood Center is a community preschool at the Ohio Wesleyan University. As an integral part of the university, the ECC has a two-fold purpose: to serve as a laboratory for the study of child development and teacher education; to provide optimal early childhood educational experiences for young children and their parents. The curriculum is integrated and addresses the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of the whole child. In a comfortable, stimulating child-centered environment, university students and teachers strive to create a community of learners where children and their ideas are treasured, nurtured, and celebrated throughout the school day.

The OWU-ECC is licensed by the Ohio Department of Human Services. A copy of the rules governing the center is located in the ECC office. All staff has acknowledged in writing that they have read these rules. The toll free number of the Department of Human Services is 1-800-686-1586 and of the National Academy 202-328-2601.

II. HOURS OF OPERATION AND CLASS SIZES
The school year is divided into two 15.5 week terms to accommodate the Ohio Wesleyan student calendar. Classes for ECC children begin at the beginning of fall term and end at the end of spring term. There are no classes for children during OWU breaks. Parent Conferences are held in November and March.

Each class has a baccalaureate or masters degreed head teacher and one or more Ohio Wesleyan student assistants. Classes have ten children with one head teacher and at least one OWU student.

III. ENROLLMENT AND ORIENTATION
Currently enrolled children, siblings of children who have attended the ECC in the past, and children of OWU faculty and staff will be given priority status for enrollment. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, or national origin. Anyone interested in registering a child should contact the director for a tour/pre-admission interview then visit the OWU website at https://owu.edu/ecc for a registration form. A non-refundable registration fee of $60.00 should accompany each child's registration.

After a child has been registered, the parent/guardian will receive a packet of information containing an ECC Handbook, a detailed enrollment form, a medical form, an emergency information form, an observation/permission form and a receipt of information form. These forms must be completed and returned prior to the first day of school.

Each child will also receive an invitation for the Parent/Child Orientation from his/her teacher prior to the beginning of classes. Parents wanting a classroom or school roster can request one from the office after the first week of school.

IV. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN
After your child places his/her personal items into their cubby, please help them wash their hands before entering the classroom. Once in your child’s classroom please sign them into the classroom attendance book and assist them with their nametag. Staff must be made aware of each child’s presence before the parent departs.

You may park in the Beeghly Library parking lot (across Park Avenue) or use the off-
street parking around the building and enter and exit through the front door of the ECC.

Upon departure at the end of the day, parents sign the child out on the same attendance form and make sure that the teacher is aware of the child leaving. For the safety and security of each child, parents, caregivers, or carpool members must sign out the children. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child before signing in and after signing out.

Children will be dismissed only to those authorized to pick them up. Should you have a change in pick up plans, please notify the school in writing of the change. Any person picking up a child who is unfamiliar to the teacher, but on the transportation form must bring a photo id. If you are delayed picking up your child, please call the school to inform the teachers of your delay (740-368-3935).

V. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES
Below is a sample daily schedule for your information. Class schedules may vary on any particular day depending on spontaneous 'happenings' or out-of-the-ordinary events. You will receive a snack calendar indicating your assigned day to bring snack for your child's class. Your child's specific class schedule will be posted and updated as needed.

Sample Schedule for Preschool/Prekindergarten

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<td>9:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>Guided Exploration: 12:30-1:30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dramatic/block</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>play, art, science, large muscle, writing/reading, math</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 - 10:30</td>
<td>Focus Group Activities 1:30 - 2:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Snack/Outside Play 2:00 - 2:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:20</td>
<td>Story/Dismissal 2:30 - 2:50</td>
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Each child is assigned to a Focus Group and a teacher at the beginning of the school year. Each Focus Group of children has a designated meeting place, group name (i.e. Yellow Group) and identity. Children normally do not move from one Focus Group to another during the school year. Should a transition into another group become advisable during the year, teachers and parents will work together to make this transition a smooth one.

VI. FEES AND PAYMENTS
The amount of tuition varies with the class in which your child is enrolled. Tuition is for an entire school year and may be paid in one payment, two payments, or nine payments. The nine monthly payment plan is for your convenience and does not represent the number of days that your child attends during a given month. There are no refunds for vacations, calamity snow days or days missed due to illness.

All tuition payments should be sent to: Ohio Wesleyan University Accounting Office, University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky Street Delaware, Ohio 43015, or dropped off in the ECC Tuition mailbox at the center. The accounting office will send a statement to you at the ECC each month.

We expect that your child will be enrolled for the entire school year. Please notify us in writing two weeks in advance if your child must withdraw. This enables us to inform the next family on the waiting list and find a replacement. Your financial obligation ends
following this two week notice of withdrawal. The accounting office will inform you of any unpaid fees or refunds due if you opted for the one or two payment plan.

At the end of the first semester, all fees must be current to remain on the active enrollment list for the second semester.

VII. DISCIPLINE POLICY
The word "discipline,” stems from the word "disciple," one who teaches. We view discipline as a way of teaching children to be self-regulated and to act in a socially appropriate manner.

Children develop self-control in environments that are warm, accepting, and predictable. In the ECC, expectations for children’s behavior are developmentally appropriate, positive, clearly stated, and consistent. Children are never spanked or spoken to in a harsh or verbally abusive or humiliating manner. Teachers model respect and consideration for others and help children find words to express their feelings and to solve problems.

At the ECC teachers keep in mind the following guidelines:
1.) Limits need to be geared to the child's developmental (not chronological) age;
2.) Limits need to be specific, consistently maintained, and defined at the time they are necessary, not before;
3.) Positive rather than negative requests are more effective, for example: "Stay on the sidewalk" rather than "Don't run into the street!"
4.) Polite and pleasant requests encourage children to cooperate;
5.) Children need to experience the natural and logical consequences of their behavior to make it meaningful.
6.) Routines need to be kept simple and stable--consistent day to day;
7.) Children can work off hostility in socially acceptable ways (pounding playdough, running outside).

The ECC teachers and students follow the discipline policy as outlined above.

VIII. SAFETY POLICY

SUPERVISION
No child will ever be left alone or unsupervised. All classes have two adults so that if an emergency arises help can be obtained.

TELEPHONES
Telephones are located in the director's office, in the kitchen area, by the playground door, in the lower level classroom, and in the dramatic play room. To reach an outside line, dial 9. Important numbers are posted by the telephones.

FIRE DRILLS AND WEATHER ALERTS
Fire drills are held monthly and records kept. Fire emergency and weather alert plans are posted in each classroom.

In the case of a tornado warning during the time your child is attending school, he/she will remain in the carpeted area of the basement with his/her class until the warning has been lifted and/or he/she is picked up from school.

AEROSOL SPRAYS
No aerosol sprays are used in areas where children are playing.

FIELD TRIP SAFETY
First hand experiences are vital to the preschool curriculum and help deepen the child's understanding. A "walking field trip" permission form for routine walks around campus is included on the enrollment form. Please sign this form to indicate your willingness to let your child participate in walking field trips. Special field trips are announced in the ECC Newsletter and posted on the front and back doors of the building. If you do not want your child to participate in a special field trip, please keep him/her home on the day of the trip.

When walking to and from the center on routine field trips, the following procedures will apply:
- The portable first aid box will accompany the group;
- A person trained in first aid will be included in all trips.
- The Emergency Transportation Authorization form for each child and notification of any allergic reactions will accompany the group.

EMERGENCY TREATMENT
If a child is hurt at school and requires first aid or any emergency treatment, the teacher will complete the report of Administration of Emergency Treatment and/or Transportation within 24 hours. One copy will be given to the parent; another copy will be kept on file in the office.

SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT
The director and each head teacher are required by law to notify the local public children's services agency when they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCIES AND ACCIDENTS
In case of a general emergency or a serious incident, children and staff will be evacuated to the nearest safe university building e.g., Beeghley Library, Chappelear Drama Center, Hamilton Williams Campus Center, Korns Hall. Children will be dismissed to the parent, guardian or authorized designee from the safe facility. Staff will remain with children at the safe facility until all children have been picked up.

ACCESS TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
The doors of the ECC will be locked fifteen minutes after the beginning of each session (9:15, 12:45).

IX. POLICY OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE MANAGEMENT
Each child is observed daily by the head teachers as he/she enters the school to determine the health of the child. The ECC staff is trained in hand-washing and disinfecting procedures and in recognizing signs and symptoms of communicable diseases.

If a child exhibits one of the signs of illness listed below, the parents will be informed and the child will be isolated in the Student Staff room with an assistant teacher until the parent can pick up the child.

Symptoms for which a child will be discharged from the center:
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period).
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or make...
a whooping sound.
3. Difficult or rapid breathing.
4. Yellowish skin or eyes.
5. Conjunctivitis.
6. Temperature of 100 degrees F in combination with any other sign of illness.
7. Untreated, infected skin patch(es).
8. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
10. Sore throat, difficulty swallowing.
11. Vomiting.
12. Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation.

Children may be readmitted to school 24 hours after the child no longer exhibits the above symptoms or with written recommendation from the child's physician.

Parents of a mildly ill child who does not feel well enough to participate in regular school activities will be asked to take their child home. Staff cannot keep mildly ill children inside during outside play.

If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be placed next to the parent sign in book and a notice will be emailed to you. Symptoms and incubation period will be given.

If your child has a communicable disease please let us know so that we can post a notice. While it might seem embarrassing for your child to have head lice, etc., we can prevent a widespread problem if we are quickly informed.

**POLICY FOR MEDICATION**

It is ECC policy not to administer medication unless it is for a life-threatening allergy. If your child needs medication, we ask that you discuss this policy with your physician to see about the possibilities of adjusting dosages so they are not needed during the school day. If this is not possible, you are welcome to come to school to administer it yourself. If this is not an option, please keep your child at home until the medication is no longer necessary.

In case of staff illness, a qualified substitute teacher will be called to take his/her place.

If your child will be absent for more than a day or two, or if he/she has a contagious disease please let us know. A list of contagious diseases is posted in the office.

**X. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

The ECC will close when Delaware City Schools are closed. Please check the center phone line (368-3935) as the message will indicate a closure. Please use your own judgment of conditions in your area when deciding whether to transport your child to the ECC. If Delaware City Schools are on a two hour delay, we still hold our morning classes.

**XI. PARENT PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Parent interest and involvement is important to a child's growth and development in school. Therefore, we encourage you to be involved in your child's preschool experience in any of the following ways:

1. We encourage you to drop in and observe in the Observation Rooms. Please remember, however, that these rooms are not sound proof. We prefer that you
wait until class has been dismissed if you have questions or concerns about something you have observed

2. Please check the calendar for special activities and snack days.

3. Important announcements are posted on the parent board in the lobby. Please check it frequently. If you are in a carpool, please communicate any timely information to the other parents.

4. We welcome your special talents in art, music, carpentry, sewing, gardening, farming, etc. If you would enjoy sharing these talents, or providing the center with any valuable assistance, please volunteer. Your child will enjoy it too!

5. We have an active Parent Organization which organizes fund raisers, picnics, potlucks and other special events for ECC families. We hope that every family will become involved in the ECC community by participating in the Parent Organization.

6. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year in November and March. No classes are in session on conference days. A sign-up sheet will be posted prior to conference days, for your convenience. The teachers look forward to talking with you and welcome your feedback and ideas.

7. At the beginning of the school year you may request an ECC Roster listing the parents name and phone number of classmates. Any parent who wants the above information omitted from the ECC Roster should state on the ECC Enrollment form.

8. Any custodial parent or guardian is permitted unlimited access to the center during hours of operation for the purposes of contacting their child(ren) or evaluating the care of the premises. A parent who is not the child's residential parent is permitted unlimited access to the center and is afforded the same rights as the residential parent unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent. Upon entering the center, the parent or guardian shall notify the administrator of designee of their presence.

XII. SNACKS AND MEALS

Parents provide snacks for their child's class (ten children, two teachers) several times during the year. You will receive a snack calendar at the beginning of each term. If your scheduled day is inconvenient, please switch days with another parent from your child's Focus Group. The school has extra snack items if you should forget. If we provide snack on "your day" please supply a non-perishable replacement that we may use for the next time that someone forgets. Because some children have life-threatening reactions to peanuts or peanut products, please do not send peanuts or peanut products for snack. Healthy suggestions for snacks are as follows:

1. Bite-size fresh fruit or vegetables
2. Nutritious cookies or granola bars
3. Cheese and whole grain crackers
4. Dried fruit bars
5. Whole grain pretzel sticks
6. Banana bread/muffins
7. Chex raisin/cereal mix
8. Any other whole grain crackers
9. Hard boiled eggs
10. Pickles/olives with whole grain crackers

Snacks we want to avoid:
1. Anything with nuts  
2. Fruit snacks  
3. Chips  
4. Cupcakes/candies  
5. Jell-O/marshmallows  

For the three year old classes, please do not bring whole grapes (cut in half is fine) popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels or chunks of raw carrots. These foods may pose a choking hazard.

We do not serve juice or milk drinks and help children learn to pour their own water. Written requests are honored from parents/guardians for special diets due to cultural, religious, or health reasons.

Birthdays are important to all of us. We are delighted to celebrate your child's birthday during our regular snack time. We suggest fruit, muffins, or birthday napkins for this special celebration. **Please do not send cupcakes, ice cream, candy, or candles.** We try to plan your snack day as close as possible to your child's birthday.

**XIII. THINGS TO BRING**

Your tuition includes most school supplies, but we ask that all children bring one center supply as asked by the director per semester. We prefer that children not bring toys or other trinkets to school as they are often misplaced or broken in the excitement of learning to share.

Please mark your child's name on any articles of clothing that maybe taken off at school (coats, hats, mittens, sweaters, boots, etc.)

**The children play outside every day that the weather is above 20 degrees and it is not pouring.** Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play. Buy boots that children can put on themselves and make sure zippers, snaps, buttons are in good repair and easily maneuvered by young fingers. **Everyday play clothes and shoes with non-slippery soles allow your child to participate fully in every part of the preschool program.** The school provides smocks for painting and water play. We add soap to the paint used at school so that spills and unavoidable streaks will wash out with presoaking and other pretreatment.

A general newsletter of ECC happenings, up-coming events, and reflections is published every other month and will be emailed or sent home with each child. Please check the newsletter for important announcements and changes of plans. You will receive a monthly newsletter from your child’s focus group teacher.

Our door is always open for your suggestions and concerns. We welcome you to the ECC community and look forward to working with you and your children.

The ECC Teachers and Student Staff