



CATHEDRAL OAKS
CHILDRENS CENTER

2023-24
Family Handbook

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Our School!

The Cathedral Oaks Children's Center team brings you a warm welcome and is glad that you have chosen our school to meet your child's developing needs. We like to think our preschool is an extended home environment where children are accepted and loved. A place where laughter and play are cherished. A place where children are valued for their wonder and curiosity and given a warm response.

The innovative curriculum used at Cathedral Oaks Children's Center is based on the most current research in child development. We are especially inspired by the programs used in Reggio Emilia, Italy, for over 30 years, which incorporate various philosophies and principles in education to create a rich, meaningful early learning experience.

Theorists Jean Piaget, John Dewey, Maria Montessori, and Loris Malaguzzi shared the ideas that education should be child centered, active and interactive, and must involve the social world of the child and the community.

Children learn best when they are actively exploring questions of their own choosing, especially when this process includes interacting with other people. Some of these questions warrant in-depth investigation and become the focus of longer-term projects.

Projects allow children the opportunity to apply existing skills in meaningful ways, as well as a chance to develop new skills. Children in search of possibilities use all academic disciplines, including reading skills, arts, science, math, language and literacy, social and emotional development, and fosters a child's sense of self-worth.

Cathedral Oaks Children's Center is a special place for our professional staff. Our teachers were selected for their knowledge of child development, diverse experiences, and interpersonal skills. It is our role to facilitate the development of children, parents, and one another. We are pleased to embrace this mission with our whole hearts.

Taundra Pitchford

*Taundra Pitchford,
Director*

MISSION STATEMENT

To maintain a nature-based, high-quality early learning program, utilizing best practices to create an environment where children and teachers are respected, valued and develop a love of learning. We are committed to conserving our resources, reducing our footprint on our planet, and encouraging children and our community to use ecologically sound principles to include both nature and environment in our curriculum.

CORE PURPOSE

Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Philosophy, Cathedral Oaks Children's Center provides an inquiry-based education for young learners.

Our mission is:

To provide a program foundation built upon a strong and uniquely progressive educational philosophy where the image of the child is upheld as a powerful, competent, capable, and integral member of the community.

To foster interpersonal relationships among children and adults in order to provide an educational experience of the highest quality built upon the belief that children have a natural disposition for learning and an innate curiosity that, when intentionally and carefully nurtured, blossoms into a lifelong love of learning.

To promote the potential of all children by providing them with a caring and nurturing environment that is developmentally appropriate and which supports children's emotional, cognitive, and physical development while responding to the needs of families. Cathedral Oaks Children's Center envisions each family as unique and deserving of respect, and the center of the child's life.

To provide an environment that connects children to the natural world — one that provides an outdoor classroom space where children can experience the wonders of nature and experience the joys of discovery on a daily basis. A space that allows plenty of room for physical activity and one that teaches a healthy lifestyle.

To provide a program that is committed to respecting our resources, reducing our footprint on the planet, and encouraging children to use ecologically sound principles both inside and outside the school.

PHILOSOPHY

“THE WIDER THE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES THAT WE OFFER CHILDREN,
THE MORE INTENSE WILL BE THEIR MOTIVATIONS
AND THE RICHER THEIR EXPERIENCES.”

— Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the Reggio approach to education

At the heart of the Reggio Approach is the powerful image of the child.

As educators with a Reggio-inspired philosophy, we do not see children as empty vessels to be filled with facts. Instead, we see children as full of potential, competent, and capable of building their own theories.

Each day and every moment, the staff follows the direction of the children — adapting and always observing, documenting, listening and interpreting their goals, theories, and strategies in order to gain insight to the child’s thinking — always ready to make changes and support the children in their discussions. What possibilities might unfold when children and adults learn together?

At Cathedral Oaks Children's Center (COCC), we are dedicated to creating conditions where creativity, curiosity, and the wonder of learning thrive:

We view each child with respect and as a competent individual able to continuously construct his/her own foundation of knowledge. Teachers listen, observe, interact, and learn from the children.

Ideas for study are captured from the discussions of children, through community or family events, as well as the interests of children. Teachers work together or individually to formulate hypotheses about the possible directions of a project, the materials needed, and possible parent/community support and involvement.

Projects are in-depth studies of concepts, ideas, and interests, which arise within the groups. Considered an adventure, projects may last one week or the whole school year.

- The graphic arts are seen as tools for cognitive, social, and language development.
- Children will be involved in both large and small collaborative group work.

Teachers are researchers and facilitators.

The environment is considered the “third teacher.” The staff gives a great deal of attention to the look and feel of the classrooms, both indoors and outdoors.

Documentation of children’s work in progress is an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. The staff takes pictures of children engaged in experiences and records their words as they discuss what they are doing, feeling, and thinking. The children’s interpretation of experiences through the visual media are displayed as a wonderful presentation of the dynamic learning and as a way for children to revisit their work.

FAMILY POLICIES

SCHOOL HOURS

Our school is open from 7:30am-5:30pm Monday through Friday serving potty-trained young children ages 2 ½ -5 years old. The hours for children who are half-day are 8:30am-12:30pm. Full-day children can attend as early as 7:30am to as late as 5:30pm.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

ARRIVAL

Children should arrive in plenty of time to have a successful transition between family and school.

Please have your children on campus and in their classroom by 8:50am. It is important that your child is greeted, settled in their classroom, and present for the 9:00am morning classroom meeting to plan the day with their teacher and classmates.

The consistency of this schedule is crucial for us to be able to teach preparation and organization skills to all children. This meeting time empowers each child to decide what activities to participate in and with whom to work on their projects.

We encourage children to walk into the school carrying their own belongings, which promotes their self-esteem and independence. Carrying your child in will not help them succeed in this transition.

Doctor's appointments should be made toward the latter part of the afternoon, as children may not return to school after receiving shots on the same day.

If your child is on the half day schedule, please do not arrive before 8:30am. Your child's teacher is not available until 8:30am.

HEALTH SCREENING

Parents will be required to answer a number of health screening questions, including whether your child has a temperature at or above 100.4 degrees. The parent dropping off the child should take their temperature and complete the screening questions through Brightwheel.

If a family cannot answer "no" to all the screening questions, they should not attend school. Please talk with the school staff for direction in that situation.

VISUAL WELLNESS CHECK

In addition to the online Health Screening process, our front porch teachers will also complete a visual wellness check of each child. If there are any concerns about a child's health and ability to participate 100% in school activities, the teacher will initiate a conversation with the parent.

Additionally, if anything new has happened with your child – a new bruise or abrasion, etc. – please point it out to our teacher at drop-off to avoid a possible call or questions from your child's teacher later in the day.

SIGNING IN

Parents are required to “sign in/out” through Brightwheel. Parents can choose to download the Brightwheel app and sign in/out on their phones or they can choose to use the iPad provided for them on the porch. Our morning teachers can assist with this process. Your legal signature is required by our Licensing agency.

The adult accompanying the child to school must sign-in and completely fill in all necessary information asked for, especially a legal signature.

Each child will also have a folder in the file box near the children’s cubbies. Please check this folder each day for notes, handouts and art that need to go home. The files boxes are organized by class.

SIGNING OUT

When picking up your child, please remember to sign them out first. Then check for notes in the file box; look for a jacket, sweatshirt, or sweater; check the outside cubby and art folder. Also remember to have your child take their lunchbox and water bottle.

Once a child has been signed out, the adult who picked up is responsible for the supervision and safety of that child, so please keep the child with you at all times as you exit the school grounds. The school is no longer responsible for your child once they are signed out.

Please be prompt. Part-time children must be picked up by 12:30pm. If your child wants play time, please consider our neighboring park, Tucker’s Grove, as an option. Our play equipment is not open during lunch and pick up.

A late fee of \$5 per minute will be charged for children who are not picked up by 12:30pm or 5:30pm. After the first time, an additional automatic fee of \$25 will be incurred on top of the \$5 per minute.

Regular lateness cannot be tolerated and may end in termination of services. If your child has not been picked up at the designated time and we cannot reach you, your emergency contact person will be notified to come and pick up your child.

We cannot allow your child to leave with any adult other than a parent or guardian unless we receive permission from the parent or guardian via your registration forms or an email to our Director. Please make sure the adult who has been given permission to pick up your child brings ID, so we can check their identity.

When it is necessary to bring siblings to school, please be sure they stay with you at all times. Their safety is important to us. Siblings are expected to follow our school guidelines and stay off of the play equipment at this time.

SAYING GOODBYE

Saying goodbye can be hard for children, and it is common for parents to have mixed feelings as well. Whatever the particular situation, it is important that you allow yourself and your child time to adapt to this new experience. You can help your child by saying goodbye and reassuring them that you will return.

It is important not to “sneak away” to avoid the difficulty of separation. More trust will be built between you and your child if you say goodbye and then follow through and leave. Our teachers will assist and support you with your goodbyes each day.

PARKING

All children must be accompanied by a parent while in a vehicle in the parking lot.

Parents must turn their cars off if they are not in them.

Please always hold your child’s hand in the parking lot. Small children can be hard to see!

Please drive slowly in and out of the parking lot. The Cathedral Oaks/Old San Marcos intersection is incredibly dangerous!

Only adults may open and close the gate. The gate doesn’t close by itself; you must manually pull and push the gate each time you enter or leave.

Please remember and follow these two California laws:

- All children under 8 years of age and under 4 feet 9 inches must be in a car/booster seat and must ride in the back of the car. The safest place for a child in a car is the back seat.
- Children younger than 6 years of age may not be left unattended in a car at any time.

Parking is at a premium in the mornings (don’t wait until the last minute!) and is to be used as a drop off space only. No parking is allowed along the white fence next to the lower yard; the driveway is for entering and leaving the school only.

Accidents in COCC parking lots must be reported in the same manner as those occurring on public accesses.

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

It is a school policy that if a parent/designated person arrives to pick up a child and appears to be “under the influence” to the staff in charge, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will encourage the parent/designated pick-up person to find another way of getting home, either by a shared ride service or with a family member or friend.
- If a parent/designated pick-up person chooses to leave the premises with the child, the staff in charge (being a mandated reporter) will call law enforcement. (California Child Abuse reporting law, penal codes sections 11165.5-11174.5 under child neglect.)

CLOTHING & ITEMS FROM HOME

It is recommended that children wear sturdy, washable play clothes to school since many activities involve vigorous play with paints, sand, mud, and water.

A very important part of our school is exploring a variety of materials. We want children to feel free to participate in all activities without having to worry about getting their clothes dirty. We will provide the children with smocks during painting activities (especially acrylic paint).

Our school policy is that children's clothing should be free of super-hero pictures or anything scary (i.e. pirate skulls). We are a peaceful school.

Because we encourage children to manage their bathroom and changing needs independently, we ask that overalls, belts, rompers, and suspenders stay at home.

All children should wear low-cut tennis shoes or closed toe shoes that are comfortable and do not collect wood chips in them. **Cowboy boots with heels or pointy toes, open-toed sandals, or slick-soled dressy shoes do not work. These shoes are not safe or conducive for large muscle activities and limit the participation of your child.**

Please provide a complete change of clothes (including underwear, socks and shoes) for your child to keep in their outside cubbies at all times. It is up to each parent to decide what kind of clothes his/her child will wear to school, but we suggest that children not wear clothes that expose their stomach or short skirts without shorts underneath them.

As a Reggio Emilia-inspired preschool, we ask that the display of commercial characters on clothing, lunch boxes and other items be minimized.

REST-TIME (Full Day Children)

The afternoon routine for resters (all non pre-k children) encompasses a time frame from between 12:45-2:45pm which includes story time, bathroom time, getting comfortable so that children can rest their minds and bodies, putting mats and blankets away, and getting socks and shoes back on. Most children go to sleep during this time. If they do not, then books are provided once the room has settled.

Each napping child will need to bring a fitted crib sheet plus small child size sleeping bag or a blanket and sheet that will remain at school in their sleeping cubby.

Here is an example of what works well:

- Fitted crib sheet to go over their sleeping mat:
https://www.amazon.com/Everyday-Microfiber-Breathable-Hypoallergenic-Standard/dp/B07MVP9L5M/ref=sr_1_7?crid=E9PSX3TRWRDT&keywords=toddler%2Bfitted%2Bsheet&qid=1654044168&srefix=toddler%2Bfitted%2Bsheet%2Caps%2C164&sr=8-7&th=1
- Bedroll or blanket. We recommend something like this:
https://www.amazon.com/JumpOff-Jo-Childrens-Removable-Sleepovers/dp/B07RXD3ZT5/ref=sr_1_3?crid=3FDUG2PNFYL60&keywords=toddler%2Bbed%2Broll&qid=1654043987&srefix=toddler%2Bbed%2Broll%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-3&th=1
- They may also bring a small (the size of your hand) soft, plush comfort toy. They may not bring any hard objects (i.e. Barbie dolls, dolls with hard heads, talking toys, hard animals, etc.). Loveys stay at school during the week.

Please be aware of the images on your child's sleeping bag or blanket. Weapons, scary images, violent pictures or super heroes are not appropriate for school. Bedding will be sent home every week for washing. Please label everything with a permanent marker.

We cannot accommodate pacifiers at school.

Napping at school is very important to younger full-day children being rested and able to participate in the complete array of activities in our program.

The school does have Pre-K children who do not nap (called “non-resters”). These children rest quietly for approximately 20-30 minutes before doing quiet activities in the yard, garden and art studio. This option is open only to Pre-K students. Space is limited in this group and must be requested.

Teachers will apply a high-quality, organic broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher on full-day students right after rest-time on sunny afternoons.

FOOD PRACTICES

Nut Policies: IMPORTANT: Peanut-Free Campus for the 2022-23 School Year.

Each school year is different in regard to our nut policy and we advise parents accordingly. We adjust it to meet our current students’ needs each year.

For the 2022-23 School Year, we are a peanut-free campus. We will have students with us who have serious peanut allergies and are at risk for anaphylactic shock if exposed to peanuts, peanut butter or foods processed in facilities along with peanuts. Please ensure you do not pack lunch or bring birthday celebration foods that could trigger this reaction.

Beyond ensuring that no peanut-based foods are brought on campus, it is imperative that foods processed in facilities with peanuts are also excluded. This is done by reading the labels of foods before packing them for school.

A few of the types of foods that are frequently processed in facilities along with peanuts include granola bars, cereal, trail mix (even those without peanuts in them) and baked goods.

Seed butter and other nuts are safe at school as long as the label does not indicate that it is processed in a facility with peanuts. For example, we will continue to serve Trader Joe’s Sunflower Seed butter because there is no warning on the label that it was processed along with peanuts.

This is a critical responsibility that all of us need to embrace to keep this child safe. Please think about others in your family (grandparents, babysitters, etc.) who may occasionally pack lunch for your child and alert them to this critical issue.

NUTRITION PRACTICES

Our school provides a morning and an afternoon snack for children, which are prepared on site. Our food items are primarily organic. Lunches are brought from home.

Eating together at school is a pleasant, leisurely experience that allows for conversation. We request healthy foods at school.

Research has shown that children perform better and have a more successful day when they eat healthy and nutritious meals. Your child’s well-being is important to us!

We discourage any pre-packaged meals, processed foods, non-nutritious chips (i.e. Doritos, Cheetos, potato chips), fast foods, juice, and any item that contains sugar as one of the first three ingredients. Candy, cookies, cake, Jell-O products, pudding cups, granola bars with chocolate, any chocolate products, popcorn, and gum are not acceptable. These foods will be returned to you in the child's lunchbox.

Parents should not put chewable vitamins in their children's lunches; please dispense vitamins at home.

Parents are asked to provide nutritious lunches for their children. We suggest a half sandwich or leftovers from dinner, salads, pasta, sliced vegetables, fresh fruit, string cheese, etc. Please send lunches in a well-marked lunch box, preferably a plain one. We recommend ice packs for lunch boxes to keep food fresh. With 50+ children eating simultaneously, we cannot warm up food.

We also encourage reusable containers rather than disposable wrappers or baggies, since we aim to be a trash free school. We do not accept glass bottles or containers. Please do not send tuna or fruit cups in cans that are not safe for children to open.

If your child consistently brings uneaten food home, it is wise to reduce the amount sent or provide other choices.

Please include a cloth napkin (luncheon size) in your child's lunch box each day. This is used as a placemat and defines the eating space for each child.

Teachers will actively model good eating habits for the children.

SANITATION, HYGIENE AND FOOD HANDLING

Staff takes steps to ensure food safety in its provision of meals and snacks. The program documents compliance and any corrections made according to the recommendations of the program's health consultant that reflect consideration of federal and other applicable food safety standards.

- Staff discards food with expired dates.
- Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach.
- Staff makes sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served.

For children with special needs who have unique feeding needs, program staff will communicate the type and quantity of food a child consumes and provide families with that information.

For children with special health care needs or food allergies or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider gives the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and specialists. If a child has food allergies, the program asks families to give consent for posting information about the child's food allergy and if consent is given, the staff posts that information in the food preparation area and in the areas of the facility the child uses so it is a visual reminder for all those who interact with the child during the program day.

BIRTHDAYS

If your child has a birthday and you would like to bring in a treat for their special day, we ask for your

cooperation in keeping the treat simple and as sugar-free as possible, and at this time, only from a commercial source (i.e. not homemade). Suggestions include muffins, bagels and cream cheese, or strawberries and whipped cream. For the 2022-23 school year, items must be peanut-free and not produced in a factory that also processes peanuts. Please see our section on Peanut Allergy.

PARENTS ACCESS & INVOLVEMENT

Open Door Policy

Parent Involvement and Fundraising practices are vital aspects to our program. We will do our best to find ways for parents to be and feel involved during this time, and ideas are welcome! For now, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are still limiting the number of parents inside the school building.

COCC has an “open door” policy, which means that parents may drop in any time to observe their child’s class or outside activity time. Due to the pandemic, we are limiting indoor visits to 10 minutes and preferably in the late afternoon. Please respect the class dynamics. Check with the classroom teacher before dropping into classes other than your child’s, since it affects children’s attention to have other adults visiting. Visitors should wear masks indoors.

Parent Participation

To help enjoy your child’s excitement and growth in our program, please feel free to get involved. There are many ways you can help, so please fill out the parent survey in Fall or talk to your child’s teacher. We have had parents share everything from yoga, gardening, carpentry, book-making, cooking, to music! What can you share with your child’s community at school? Another option is to help support your child’s class projects with materials as needed or become a Room Parent to plan classroom events and help with communication. Also, participating in our October Parent Work Day and being on the committee for our annual Spring Auction Fundraiser are a fun and meaningful ways to get to know other families and contribute to the school.

Fundraisers

To continue to offer the wide range of educational activities and quality of education that we provide, there may be school fundraisers during the school year that we greatly value parent participation in.

In mid-Fall, Chaucer’s Bookstore generously allows us to benefit from all the sales at the store during a two-hour period on a Sunday night. Our teachers prepare lists of requested books for the school and families are invited to come and support the school’s book inventory by purchasing books for their family, the school or purchasing gift certificates for gifts or future purchases.

Our major fundraiser has been a Spring Auction Fundraiser event held in April for all families. There are many ways to get involved, including being on the auction committee (fun and social!) as well as attending the event (also fun and social!). In summer and early Fall, parents will be asked what elements of the Spring Auction Fundraiser they might want to participate in for the following Spring.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The use or disclosure of any information pertaining to an individual child and his/her family, both in the home and school setting, is restricted to the purposes directly connected with the program planning and

administration of COCC. Disclosure of a child's records/file beyond family members, program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality requires written family consent (except in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect).

COCC's confidentiality policy is based on mandates from the California State Department of Social Services and the California State Department of Education, Child Development Division.

NO BABYSITTING

To maintain the professionalism of relationships between teachers and families, we do not allow teachers to babysit for current Cathedral Oaks Children's Center children. Teachers know this policy and we appreciate your cooperation.

CONCERNS

When a problem arises, please always pursue answers to your concerns or questions.

The teachers and director are here for you and we are all very good listeners. Concern about curriculum and guidance should first be directed to your child's Lead Teacher. Beyond that, a phone call (805-967-8013), email, or an appointment can be made with the Director. If you have questions about policies, tuition, schedule changes, etc., please email our Director.

SCHEDULES, ATTENDANCE & TUITION

TUITION POLICIES

COCC is a year-round (12 month) school. The enrollment commitment includes summer except for Pre-K students who elect in the Fall to depart in early June before our summer program begins.

Each year, we take the annual total expenses for providing school for the year, divide that amount by 12, and then bill tuition in 12 equal payments rather than having differing amounts due each month based on the calendar for that month.

An annual Registration Agreement is created for each student and signed by parents at the start of the year.

Tuition is generally due on the first of the month. Tuition must be paid by the 5th of the month or a late fee of \$40 will be charged to your account. For returned checks, accounts will be charged \$30.

COCC invoices monthly through Brightwheel. Tuition payments can be set-up by parents through the Brightwheel app or personal checks are accepted. Checks should be made out to Cathedral Oaks Children's Center and placed in the office mailbox outside the Director's office. Mailbox to be installed shortly.

Tuition increases occur at the start of each new school year in August.

Note: 2022-23 tuition rates will remain the same as last year's tuition rates.

SCHEDULE/ATTENDANCE/CLASS PLACEMENT

If you'd like to make a change in your child's schedule, please notify the Director by email in advance.

If your child is absent from school, please notify the school by phone (805-967-8013), or through email at taundra@cathedrалоaksc.com, indicate the reason why, and the expected length of absence. You may leave a message if after hours and it will be picked up in the morning as school opens.

In order to maintain an appropriate teacher to student ratios, there is no "trading days" or "make-up" days provided for students who have been absent.

Drop-in days are available for a fee if there is space available; please email the Director for availability.

As a year-round school that generally runs at full enrollment, we need to know what each family's plans are each school year (late August to early August). Each January, we will contact every family to ask for their intentions and desired schedule for the following school year. Please return the form promptly to secure your spot.

Prior to the Pre-K year, students are automatically placed into classrooms based on their birth date so that they are with children of similar age and developmental levels. Once ready for Pre-K, families are asked if they have a class preference for their child and the school does its best to accommodate those Pre-K class requests. All children move up to their next classroom in August; some children move up to their next classroom in June. The school carefully considers fit, maturity, friends, and more when moving children up in June.

ENROLLING SIBLINGS IN COCC – Please Notify Us 18 Months in Advance

We are enthusiastic about welcoming the younger siblings of our students to COCC! We do offer COCC siblings an opportunity to enroll early, but we are not set up to keep waiting lists years into the future.

We open enrollment for COCC siblings in January, prior to the desired summer/fall session year.

We reserve the first two months of each calendar year to receive sibling applications. Then in March each year, we open enrollment to non-COCC families. It is important to let us know about your child in January or February so we can save a space for them.

While the majority of our new students join us in August, we may have a handful of June openings depending on whether some Pre-K students opt to depart in early June versus waiting until the end of summer. If interested in June enrollment, please indicate on your child's application when you turn it in in January.

TERMINATION

Leaving the School The family or the school may choose to terminate services. Parents must give a four-week (30 days) written notice to end care or forfeit full tuition.

Reasons why COCC may terminate a child's services include, but may not be limited to:

- Continuous harmful or disruptive behavior of child
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person
- The school's inability to meet the child's needs without additional assistance

- Failure of the child to adjust after reasonable amount of time
- Child is not potty trained in school environment
- Failure of parent to pay/habitual lateness in payment
- Habitual lateness in picking up a child
- Lack of parent cooperation
- Serious illness of child
- False information given by parent/guardian (verbal or written)
- Any reason that dictates to the Director, that either the child, parent, or school is not satisfied with the arrangements.

THE STAFF

COCC teachers and assistant teachers are qualified, patient and kind. They work with children at the child's pace. They provide numerous modalities for sensory play and discovery. They are often entertained by what the children say and do. Their compassion and ability to comfort and engage children is exceptional. We are beyond lucky to have such dedicated people caring for the children.

RECRUIT QUALIFIED STAFF AND RETAINING NEW AND EXISTING STAFF

COCC strives to provide the highest quality Early Learning and Care Services through the retention and recruitment of highly qualified staff. Specific educational requirements and certifications are required for COCC Lead Teacher and Associate Teacher positions to ensure high quality and care. All early childhood education teachers have the minimum licensing requirements, an Associate Degree, a Bachelor Degree, and/or a Child Development Permit. Associate Teachers have a minimum of a Child Development Associate Degree, ECE equivalent, or are enrolled in an ECE class or college classes for Early Childhood coursework. New and existing staff members are provided opportunities to attend local, regional, and national training as deemed appropriate for their position and are supported in pursuing education goals related to their position.

POLICY FOR SPECIALIZED CONSULTANTS

COCC will work collaboratively with specialized consultants such as: local preschool professionals in Santa Barbara County; Mental Health personnel; Community Agencies and Programs; and Child Care Programs to provide services for children. During Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Meetings, the center staff will collaborate with parents and other involved parties to provide any necessary special education services for students and their families. COCC has additional specialized professionals that provide services to children. These professionals may include speech language pathologists and therapists, early childhood teachers, early childhood special education teachers, physical therapists and physical therapy assistants, occupational therapists, behavioral interventionists, and family service coordinators.

The staff of COCC work collaboratively with the Child Abuse Listening and Mediation (CALM) professionals and Santa Barbara County Education Office to provide services for those children with behavioral concerns. COCC works with other specialized consultants and agencies throughout the County to meet the needs of children.

POLICY FOR MULTI-LINGUAL EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

COCC makes an effort to recruit staff, substitutes, and interpreters who speak the language of the children served. During the interview process for new staff members, inquiry will be made of knowledge of foreign languages including sign language.

POLICY FOR TEACHING STAFF ASSIGNMENT AND STRUCTURE

COCC teaching teams typically consist of a blend of Lead Teachers and Associate Teachers who provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and immediate care as needed to support the children's well-being.

POLICY FOR MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE TEACHING STAFF-CHILD RATIOS

COCC follows Community Care Licensing and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines for teacher-child ratios to facilitate adult-child interaction and intriguing activities indoors and outside. There will be one adult with no more than 8-10 children. Our youngest class will maintain a ratio of 1 to 5.

GUIDANCE AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Based on the nurturing relationship between teachers and children, guidance at COCC is considered an opportunity for growth in the sometimes-complex business of getting along with others.

To minimize conflict, much effort is taken by the staff to provide appropriate activities, create an inviting environment, and meet the individual needs of the children. Still, conflicts are natural occurrences as children try to relate to one another in a group setting.

From a positive perspective, much can be learned from these conflict situations:

1. Seeking comfort and giving comfort
2. Searching for and generating creative solutions
3. Identifying emotions and finding appropriate responses to them
4. Collaborating with peers
5. Developing self-control

All staff members strive to create an environment where children are safe and know that they are being cared for and listened to — not just by teachers, but by their peers as well.

Many techniques are used for assisting children through **conflict resolution**. The style (pace, wordiness, etc.) may differ depending on the age of the children and severity of the situation, but all means seek to develop children as **problem solvers**.

All preschoolers are competent individuals and bring their own feelings, actions, and ideas to conflict resolutions. The staff respect and build on these attributes through their language, interaction, and example. The intent of these guidance techniques is to encourage the growth of moral autonomy.

The ability of an individual to make decisions based on their own knowledge of “right” and “wrong” is derived from an intrinsic motivation to do so rather than from a desire to reap rewards or avoid consequences.

The following are guidance techniques used regularly at COCC:

Consistency – It is important that children know what to expect. From this, they can anticipate, predict, and change their own behaviors accordingly. Limits and expectations are consistent throughout the school.

Limit Setting – In order for children to build trusting relationships and feel confident to explore, they must clearly know what is expected of them. Rules are kept basic, clear, and concise. Boundaries and expectations expand in keeping with the abilities of the children.

Tone – “You are safe,” “The situation is under control,” “We can work it out,” and “Let’s talk about what just happened,” are messages a child must receive from adults intervening. A firm, kind, serious tone with a relaxed demeanor reinforces this message.

Modeling – Our actions speak clearly to the children. It is imperative that adults set an example of compassionate, caring individuals who are able to express their own needs and feelings clearly and calmly, and willing to respond to the needs of others. “I feel angry when you hit me. Let’s sit down so you can tell me, with your own words, what is bothering you.”

Physical Intervention – Children will be physically stopped if hurting others. The focus will then turn to resolving the conflict at hand.

Passive Intervention – Children are given the opportunity to work through their own problems.

Identifying/Interpreting – Clarifying a problem with a simple statement, “You both want the car” can diffuse tension and help the problem solving begin. Children also need help to consider other’s emotions and needs, especially when they are upset themselves. For example, “See his tears? It really hurt him when you said that.”

Validating Feelings – Constructive thinking is virtually impossible when one is overcome with emotion such as anger, sadness, fear, or frustration. Acknowledging the emotion is imperative before any “learning” can occur. “I will not allow you to hit him, but tell me why you are so angry.”

It is essential that all children involved in a conflict be honestly listened to. Children are not told to simply say “I’m sorry,” but rather, to actively comfort or offer help to the child they hurt/upset. The staff may say, “I am sorry you got hurt,” and at some point, children will spontaneously do the same.

Generating Options – “Can you think of a way to use the car together? Is there a road for it to drive on? Everyone wants a turn — how can we make it fair?” From a list of specific choices to general questions such as “Well, what should we do about it?,” children are given tools to settle conflicts (negotiate, collaborate, and make retribution).

Redirection – A request to stop a negative behavior is accompanied by a suggestion for an appropriate behavior with which to replace it. “You may not throw the sand; if you want to throw something, here are the bean bags and the basket to throw them into.”

Natural consequences – “You dumped the milk on the floor. Please get the sponge and clean it up.” Children see the results of their own behavior and begin to modify it accordingly.

Corporal punishment is never acceptable, nor is violating personal rights of children.

When More is Needed

If a child's behavior is excessively disruptive or harmful to individual children or teachers, or should the teacher and Director concur that they need additional support and expertise to best meet the child's needs, some of the following steps may be required of the family:

- Additional parent/teacher conferences
- Professional support may be sought out (for example, a Resource Specialist from our local School District or Tri- County Regional Center)
- Schedule Adjustment
- Counseling

The child's enrollment at COCC is contingent upon the family's willingness to cooperate in finding a solution, as well as the child's success in changing the behavior in question. Disenrollment from our program will be implemented only as a last resort as the staff is committed to seeking solutions for difficult situations.

SCREENINGS, EVALUATIONS, AND REFERRALS FOR SUPPORT

COCC believes that an assessment of a child's developmental skills is a key component of a high-quality early childhood educational program. The school provides various methods and opportunities for child assessment which are consistent with the program's philosophy. COCC maintains and promotes high standards in our early childhood program by providing screenings, evaluations, observations, assessments, and documentation for child assessment.

Documentation - Child Portfolio

The portfolio includes:

- Photos of the child interacting and playing
- Language samples (dictated stories, records of conversations)
- Anecdotal notes (written notes highlighting a child's choices and significant events)
- Writing and drawing samples

Portfolios are visual tools that document and show a child's growth over time. They are shared with parents during conferences. Conference notes, health documentation, child experiences, interests, abilities, and challenges are included in the child's portfolio. The combination of these assessment tools is meaningful and more accurate than one measure.

ASQ - The Ages and Stages Questionnaire

COCC offers free developmental screenings through the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to be completed by parents within 60 days of the child's first day of school and follow-up will take place as needed. Parents may opt out if desired. Child and classroom assessments help to improve curriculum and adapt teaching practices and the environment for program improvement.

ASQ is a tool designed for use by early educators and health care professionals. It relies on parents as experts, is easy-to-use, family-friendly and creates the snapshot needed to catch delays and celebrate

milestones. The ASQ screens and assesses the developmental performance of children in the areas of communication, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, problem solving, and personal-social skills. It is used to identify children that would benefit from in-depth evaluation for developmental delays. The screening helps to ensure timely and effective early intervention services.

Vision and Hearing Screenings - New this year!

COCC will offer FREE annual Vision and Hearing Screening through our partners with the Lion's Club. Screeners will screen on campus in early fall.

REFERRAL FOR FURTHER ASSESSMENT

COCC follows the California Department of Education rules and regulations governing services for children with disabilities for two to five-year olds, regarding the identification and evaluation of children with varied needs. On occasion, COCC staff will work with parents to recommend a more in-depth developmental assessment through Santa Barbara County Education Office, Tri-Counties Regional Center, or the local school district.

If parents are concerned with their child's development, please discuss your concerns with your child's teacher. We encourage open communication.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

FOR COVID GUIDANCE, SEE SUPPLEMENTAL COVID PROTOCOLS

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

It is the responsibility of each family to see that your child is in good health before coming to school each day. Please make sure your child has a nutritious breakfast and is alert and ready to go to school.

In addition to taking your child's temperature each morning, be sure your child does not have signs of a cold, cough, excessive nasal drainage, or weepy red eyes before completing our online health screening questions through Brightwheel. The teachers greeting families each morning will do visual health checks on each child as they arrive. Please share any concerns or health updates with your child's lead teacher.

If a child is not well enough to participate 100% in all school activities, they remain at home.

During the day, staff may need to send a child home, so please be very prompt. What feels like a short time for an adult can seem like an eternity to a sick child.

Medication

Our school does not dispense medication. Please do not put any medication, chewable tablets, cough drops, or vitamins in your child's lunch.

Medical Emergency Policy

If your child is hurt at school, a teacher will administer first aid as necessary for minor injuries. For moderate incidents, the teacher will either call the parent or email/leave a note explaining what happened. For any serious injury, the parent and paramedics will be called immediately. Our teacher have been certified in CPR and First Aid and are recertified every two years.

POLICY FOR CHILDREN WITH AN ILLNESS OR CONTAGIOUS CONDITION

COCC aims to prevent the spread of colds, infections, and communicable diseases. Parents are required to evaluate the health of their child prior to attending each day. When a child has any sign or symptom of illness or contagious condition that requires exclusion from the program, the preschool teaching staff or another designated staff member will immediately inform the parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent to inform them of the child's condition and ask for them to be picked up by an authorized adult.

In order to maintain a healthy school environment, any sick child will be temporarily excluded from the program and should stay home for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Parents are expected to evaluate their child's health before sending them to school. A child should be kept at home for 24 hours if they exhibit any of the symptoms below. If these occur at school, we will contact you:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Rash
- Clear nasal discharge (needs an allergy note from the pediatrician)
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Severe coughing
- Rapid or difficult breathing
- Persistent sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Conjunctivitis – inflammation of the eye
- Excessive fatigue or feeling uncomfortable
- Untreated Head Lice or nits
- Untreated Scabies
- Children suspected of being in contagious stages of chickenpox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella or diphtheria or skin rashes lasting more than one day
- Hand, Foot and Mouth (contact pediatrician)

Parents are to notify the school if the child has a contagious disease such as chicken pox, head lice, measles, conjunctivitis, hand, foot and mouth, etc. This is important as other families need to be notified of the spread of contagious disease.

Guidance for Returning to School

If these occur at school, we will contact you:

- Child does not feel well enough to be at school and participate 100%
- Has vomited (stay home for the next 24 hours)
- Has mouth sores with drooling and/or hand sores (HFM – all lesions scabbed over, no new lesions arising, all oral lesions resolved, fever-free for 24 hours)
- Has a rash: needs doctor's note to return
- Has a fever blister (herpes simplex 1) on lips
- Has pink eye (return 24 hours after 1st treatment)
- Has scabies (return 24 hours after 1st treatment)
- Has head lice (may only return to school when child is nit-free)
- Diarrhea (may return 24 hours after last incidence)
- Tuberculosis (TB) (until after treatment has begun, fever is gone, and a health official states that the child is non-infectious)
- Impetigo (until 24 hours after first treatment has begun)
- Strep throat (until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun)

- Chicken pox (until 6 days after onset of rash or sooner if all sores have dried & crusted over)
- Pertussis (whooping cough) (until 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment has begun)
- Mumps (until 9 days after onset of swelling)
- Measles (until 6 days after onset of rash)
- Rubella (until 6 days after onset of rash)
- Shingles (until the sores are crusted over, unless a health care provider determines that the child should otherwise be excluded)
- Hepatitis A (until 1 week after onset of illness and fever is gone, or as directed by local health department after immunoglobulin has been given to appropriate children and staff)
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness may include unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, persistent crying or irritability, or difficulty breathing.

COCC exclusion timelines may exceed a doctor's recommendation. In that event, the COCC exclusion policy supersedes the doctor's direction. Communication will occur through Brightwheel if children have been exposed to a reportable condition or virus.

If a child displays one or more of the above health conditions and/or COCC personnel observe health concerns or behaviors affecting a child's well-being, COCC reserves the right to request parents or guardians to pick up their child from the Center. If a child does suffer an injury requiring greater medical care than minor first aid, or should they suffer a seizure, become unconscious, choke, have an allergic reaction, or require cardiopulmonary resuscitation, staff will remain with the child and 911 will be called for medical assistance. At the same time, the child's parents or emergency contact will be notified of the situation. Under no circumstances will a staff member attempt to transport a child in need of medical attention.

When an illness prevents a child from participating comfortably in activities or creates a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children, or if a child's condition is suspected to be contagious and requires exclusion as identified by public health authorities, then the child is made comfortable in a location where unexposed individuals will not be exposed and where they can be supervised by a familiar caregiver until they can be picked up by an authorized adult.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

This policy is designed to deal with the problems presented by children who attend COCC and have communicable diseases and who could potentially transmit the disease to other children.

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A decision will be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether the condition of a child should result in exclusion from COCC and or related activities.

This determination will be made by a team composed of: the County Health Officer or their designee, the child's physician, the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), and two or more COCC personnel as designated by the director. Other members may be appointed to the team, depending on circumstances as designated by the director.

In making this decision, the team shall use the criteria established by the Centers of Disease Control as the basis for decision.

The team shall also consider:

1. The behavior, neurological development, and physical condition of the child
2. The expected type of interaction with others in the preschool setting
3. The impact on the child who has the clinical disease and others in that setting
4. Risk, if any, to clientele and personnel at COCC
5. COCC does not screen for communicable diseases, however, if the Director has reasonable cause, as agreed on in conference with public health officials, to believe a child has a communicable disease, COCC may require the child to submit to an appropriate medical evaluation.
6. The sexual orientation of a child shall not constitute reasonable cause to request a medical evaluation. No child shall be required to provide information as to his/her sexual orientation.
7. Children who must remain away from school because they have a communicable disease or whose regular services are provided through outreach in another environment will continue to receive an alternative homebound or outreach educational program utilizing qualified staff.
8. The teaching staff will provide information to families verbally and/or in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented within the program and measures that families should implement at home. COCC collaborates with the Public Health Department to provide documentation to families that gives advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur in the community.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

To protect the health and safety of each child who attends COCC, the program requires that a record of immunization must be included in each child's file prior to the child's start date for preschool. Any immunizations that a child has not received may be obtained at the Public Health Department or at the child's physician's office. This record must be kept current and up to date. Failure to do this will result in termination of preschool services in accordance with the Community Care Licensing requirements. (Exceptions to this policy include: a signed Religious and/or Medical Exemption.)

California State law requires all children to be immunized and records to be on file before attending school. **If a child needs additional immunizations, please make your appointments toward the end of the school day.** There is a chance that your child will run a fever or have a reaction to immunizations. **Children may not return to school on the same day they receive shots.** Vaccines received later in the day give the child's body time to adjust before returning to school the next day.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Each child will have a completed student health information form on file which lists physician's names, dentist's names, and emergency contact information. In the event of an emergency, staff members will call 911 along with contacting the parent/guardian. In the event of individual children with known medical or developmental problems, individual care plans will be created and implemented with parents and staff.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN

COCC's medication policy requires that a Medical Release Form or Seizure Plan (with parent signatures for release) is completed for every child who has or may have a need for medication to be administered during the time the child is at COCC. The appropriate training must be maintained and prescription on-hand for a staff member to administer EpiPen or inhaler.

All medication is required to be "checked in" with the director and properly stored in the director's office. Any medication required during field trips or outings will be transported and stored in an emergency backpack. The medicine(s) will be kept with a trained teacher or the director during outings. Any medication remaining at the end of the medication cycle will be disposed of properly.

Medication will be administered ONLY by staff members who have had specific training regarding medication administration and have an annual written performance evaluation by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration which include:

1. Verifying that the right child receives
2. The right medication
3. In the right dose
4. At the right time
5. By the right method with documentation of each "right" every time the medication is given.

The staff member administering the medication will sign or initial after each specific administration of medication.

The following requirements must be met for a trained staff member to administer medication to a child:

1. All medications (prescription and "over the counter" medications) must be prescribed by a licensed health professional and must be accompanied by a Medication Release Form that is signed by the parent or legal guardian and a Physician Permission for Medication Form that is signed by the physician or a prescriptive authority.
2. All medications must have the original label and stored in the original container.
3. Medications must be labeled with the following information:
 - a. First and last name of the child
 - b. The date that either the prescription was filled, or the recommendation was obtained from the child's licensed health care provider.
 - c. The name of the licensed health care provider.
 - d. The expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication.
 - e. The name and phone number of the pharmacy.
 - f. All medications must be accompanied by the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength and dosage of the medication and instructions on administration and storage.
4. All medications are kept in the kitchen. During evacuation of the building, Director is responsible for making sure medications are transported safely to the correct destination.

FIRST AID KITS & MAINTENANCE

First-aid kits are in the following areas: in classrooms, on playground entrances, the school office, and in

the designated field trip backpack. Classroom staff takes at least one portable first aid kit to the playground/big room area with the class and makes sure that first aid kits are with them when they are on field trips or outings.

First-aid kits that are located in classrooms are maintained by teaching staff on a continual basis. All of the other First Aid Kits are checked for contents by the maintenance staff throughout the year. All staff re-stocks first aid kits as items are depleted.

ALLERGIES OR OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS

Staff will maintain areas used by staff members or children who have allergies or any other special environmental health needs according to the recommendations of the health professionals.

An updated allergy and cautionary list is posted in the snack prep area as well as in each classroom.

PROCEDURES FOR UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS AND INFECTION CONTROL

Due to the increase in Hepatitis B and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections, the Centers for Disease Control have recommended “Universal Blood and Body-Fluid Precautions.” These measures are intended to prevent transmission of Hepatitis B, HIV, and other infections, as well as to decrease the risk of exposure for care-providers and students. As it is not possible to identify all infected individuals, these precautions must be used with every student regardless of their medical diagnosis.

The Centers for Disease Control identified the following as potentially infectious materials including:

1. The following human body fluids: human blood, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid visibly contaminated with blood, and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids
2. Any unfixed tissue or organ (other than intact skin) from a human (living or dead)
3. HIV-containing cell or tissue cultures, organ cultures, and HIV-or HBV- containing culture medium or other solutions; and blood, organs, or other tissues from experimental animals infected with HIV or HBV.

The single most important step related to decreasing the risk of exposure and transmission of any infection is anticipating potential contact with infectious materials in routine as well as emergency situations. Based on the type of possible contact, the caregiver should be prepared to use the appropriate precautions and techniques prior to providing care. Diligent and proper hand washing, the use of barriers, appropriate disposal of waste products and needles, proper decontamination of spills are essential techniques of infection control.

Using common sense in the application of these measures will enhance protection of both the caregiver and the student. Information related to proper cautions and techniques includes the following descriptions:

1. Proper hand washing is crucial to preventing the spread of infection. Proper hand washing procedures include using liquid soap and running water, rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20

seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails, rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, a single-use towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g. by using a paper towel to turn off water)

2. Barriers are crucial when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (wearing gloves is required). Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
3. Staff does not use hand washing sinks for bathing children or removing fecal material. When sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff
4. Must clean and sanitize the sink before using it to prepare food. Note: If alcohol-based hand rubs are used in lieu of hand washing as a temporary measure enough must be used to keep the hands wet for 15 seconds. These hand rubs must be used and stored according to the manufacturer's specifications.
5. Appropriate disposal of waste products and needles is an essential technique of infection control. After appropriately cleaning the contaminated area the waste products will be disposed of in an enclosed container away from the children and adults outside the classroom/ school area.
6. Proper decontamination of spills is an essential technique of infection control. Wash the contaminated area immediately with soap and water and dispose of the waste products appropriately. After cleaning, staff will sanitize nonporous surfaces immediately.
7. Rugs and carpet will be cleaned by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam cleaning.
8. Staff is required to dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie that is placed in a closed container.
9. Any toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion is to either be:
 - a) washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, sanitized, and air dried, or
 - b) washed and dried in a mechanical dishwasher before it can be used by another child.

Pregnant women are at no higher risk of infection than other care-providers, if appropriate precautions are followed. However, due to the possibility of in utero transmission of viral infections such as cytomegalovirus (CMV) or (HIV), as well as the potential for adverse outcomes with these congenitally acquired infections, pregnant women should be especially careful to follow the universal precautions.

PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS

The following policies and procedures are implemented to minimize occupational hazards:

1. COCC pays for Hepatitis B vaccines for staff members.
2. Staff members and children follow hand washing policies.
3. Teachers provide informational flyers to families about outbreaks of infectious diseases.
4. Staff members educate other staff on how to lift and help children safely (to help in preventing strains and injuries).
5. Staff members follow the "Policy for Outdoor Environment" to ensure both children and staff's safety.
6. Staff members follow the "Building Maintenance Policies" to ensure children and staff's safety.

7. Teaching staff are provided planning time away from the children and breaks after a four-hour time period.
8. Staff participates in blood borne pathogens training to respond to any first aid or clean up situation safely.
9. Staff members follow the “Medication Policy”
10. Staff follows the policies for supervising children
11. Space is provided away from other children for children to rest comfortably while waiting to be picked up due to illness.
12. Children and staff are provided with nutritious snacks according to program policy.
13. Appropriate sanitation, hygiene, and safe food practices are carried out according to program policy.
14. Maintenance of COCC’s building and playground is provided by the maintenance staff on a monthly basis or as needed.
15. Smoking and Firearm Policies provide protection from these hazards for children and staff.
16. Staff members provide information to COCC families regarding local and community resources to promote child, family, and staff wellness.
17. COCC offers an Employee Assistance Plan that promotes wellness through counseling services for staff members and their immediate family members. These counseling services provide support for prevention and treatment of depression, stress management and other concerns.

AIR POLLUTION

In the situation of an air quality alert, the teaching staff will bring children in from the playground and follow local authority’s recommendations.

In the situation of any environmental hazard or threat in the area, the teaching staff will bring children in from the playground and follow local authority’s recommendations.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED FOR CLEANING TOYS WITHIN THE CLASSROOM

Toys are cleaned on a regular basis as needed. Any toys contaminated by body secretions will be removed from the child play area and will be sanitized by either using a water and detergent or bleach solution at the classroom sink area or washed in a mechanical dishwasher and air dried. Staff will follow standard blood borne precautions when cleaning toys or items. Toys are sanitized before they are again offered to children for play.

Any toy, classroom furnishings, items, etc. that cannot be easily cleaned by classroom staff will be removed from the child play area until it can be cleaned. Custodial assistance will be requested for special cleaning needs.

COMMUNAL WATER PLAY

During communal water play, precautions are taken so that no child drinks the water. During communal water play, children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in the communal water play. Fresh potable water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity. When the activity period is completed with each group of children,

the water is drained. Children will wash hands when finished playing before moving on to the next activity.

SAFETY AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN IN OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT

Children will have daily opportunities for outdoor play (when weather does not pose a health risk). Weather that poses a significant health risk includes wind chill at or below 15 degrees and heat index at or above 90 degrees. Children should be dressed each day for the appropriate weather. It is recommended that children dress “in layers” during the cold weather season so that children can be comfortable during both inside and outside play. Children are requested to wear their shoes while riding a bike or working in the garden and during cold weather.

During the sunny months of weather, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to apply sunscreen at home before bringing their child to preschool. It is the policy of COCC that staff do not apply sunscreen because of the possibility of allergic reactions unless a signed authorization is on file. COCC staff members will then apply broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher as needed throughout the day to prevent sunburn.

If it is appropriate for a child to wear insect repellent, it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to apply the insect repellent at home before bringing their child to preschool. It is the policy of COCC not to apply insect repellent to children because of the possibility of allergic reactions.

COCC will notify parents when Public Health Authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to high risk of insect borne diseases. Staff will monitor the playground area for any insect infestations and report any concerns to an administrator. COCC staff perform monthly safety checks of the playground. Any required corrections are done in a timely manner.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Safety is the highest priority at COCC, and as such, helps to maintain the sustainable development of our preschool. It is essential that the following priorities have the highest priority.

ACCESS TO COCC FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND AUTHORIZED ADULTS

Family members are welcome to visit COCC’s facility anytime during hours of operation (7:45 a.m.-5:15 p.m.). All family members and authorized adults for preschool children visiting the facility are required to check in with the office staff. The family member or authorized adult is responsible for signing the child “in or out” in the classroom. Any adult (other than the child’s parents) who is responsible for signing the child in or out of the preschool, must be 18 years or older. Family members/authorized adults may be asked to show proof of identification when picking up a child.

If a parent or family member is not allowed to visit their child due to court ordered or legal documents that are in place, the office staff will address this issue with the individual if he/she should attempt visitation while the child is at preschool.

If needed, a member from the administrative team will help to address the issue with the unauthorized adult and/or if needed, law enforcement will be called to enforce the court documents. Only authorized individuals as designated by the child's parents/guardians will be allowed to pick the child up from preschool.

All visitors and family members/authorized adults will be required to follow safety procedures with staff and children. (For example: fire drills, lock down situations)

VISITOR ACCESS TO THE PRESCHOOL

Visitors are only allowed on property with prior approval from the Director. Visitors are always required to be accompanied by an employee. Visitors must abide by the COCC safety policies.

SMOKING, VAPING AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

In the interest of public health, COCC prohibits the use of products containing tobacco or nicotine, including, but not limited to, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew, and clove cigarettes, on COCC property, and in school vehicles always. This prohibition also applies to electronic nicotine delivery systems, such as electronic cigarettes, electronic hookahs, and other vapor emitting devices, with or without nicotine content, that mimic the use of tobacco products any time. This policy applies to all students, employees, and visitors. This section does not prohibit the use or possession of prescription products, or other FDA-approved cessation aids such as nicotine patches or nicotine gum. Student use or possession of such products must conform to laws governing student use and possession of medications on school property.

Smoking or use of any tobacco-related products and disposal of any tobacco-related waste are prohibited on our property, except on a public sidewalk located within 25 feet from the playground.

PROHIBITION OF FIREARMS, WEAPONS, AND OTHER HAZARDOUS RISKS

Firearms, weapons, and any other hazardous risks to children or adults are prohibited in any building or on the grounds of the campus. The only exception is for law enforcement personnel who are required to carry firearms.

Possession or use of dangerous or deadly weapons in the buildings or on the preschool grounds, or at any preschool sponsored activity is prohibited. No person shall possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object that could be used as a weapon, disrupt the educational process, or cause harm to another person. This weapon definition is not limited to the obvious, but includes any item that can be construed as a weapon, such as guns of any type and toy guns that resemble guns, Ninja stars, screw drivers, ball bats, slingshots, bludgeons, knives, or any pocketknife where the blade is carried in an opened position.

The possession or use of any weapon will result in suspension with possibility of expulsion of the child involved. Any adult violating this policy may be banned from access to the building. Any exception to this regulation requires the approval of the Director, or an appointed designee.

HARASSMENT

COCC has a strict policy that prohibits harassment or "abusive conduct" in any form. Conduct that

produces a discriminatory, intimidating, or offensive school environment will not be tolerated. To report or resolve such problems please contact the director or a member of PAC. The director will immediately conduct a confidential investigation of the complaint. A report of findings and recommendations will be discussed for resolution and action if necessary.

Definition - Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

Verbal Harassment – For example, epithets, derogatory comments, or slurs based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, or age.

Physical Harassment – For example, assault, impeding or blocking movement, or any physical interference with normal work or movement when directed at an individual based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, or age.

Visual Forms of Harassment – For example, derogatory posters, notices, bulletins, cartoons, or drawings based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, disability, medical conditions, marital status, sex, or age.

Sexual Harassment – Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or education setting.

If you believe that you have been the victim of harassment or if you have witnessed harassment, please contact the Director, and fill out a report.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IS A MANDATED STAFF RESPONSIBILITY

Under the law, staff and parents have an obligation to report known and suspected incidents of child abuse and are a mandated reporter.

Section 11166 of the Penal Code requires any child care custodian, medical practitioner, non-medical practitioner, or employee of a child protective agency who has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of a child abuse to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately or as soon as possible by telephone and to prepare and send a written report thereof within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.

Your duty to report is individual, and no administrator or supervisor may impede or inhibit your duty to report, although you may also report to your administrator, supervisor, or the school nurse. Failure to report may risk loss of license or credential.

Common practice is for you to refer any known or suspected incidents of child abuse to the school principal so that these individuals, who are familiar with the procedures, can assist you. You must make the appropriate report to a child protective agency yourself, however. You can report by calling: 1 (800) 367-0166

STAFF MEMBER ACCUSED OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT If a COCC

If staff member is accused of abuse or neglect of a child in the program, the aforementioned staff member will be subject to the policies and procedures according to the Department of Family Services or local law enforcement agencies. The staff member may be subject to administrative leave with or without pay, based on the discretion of COCC management, and in compliance with any requirements of DFS or law enforcement authorities.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

No one knows when there will be a major disaster in our community so it is important that we are all prepared. The safety and welfare of your children are our primary concern. COCC personnel will follow Santa Barbara County's Emergency Procedures Plan in the event of an emergency or crisis. This plan provides for regular evacuation procedures practice and the practice of other emergency procedures.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Staff members are CPR & First Aid trained.
2. Our staff has been trained in emergency procedures.
3. Emergency food, water and medical supplies are stored on the school property. These are purchased annually using our annual materials fee. We store these items on campus in air tight containers and they are used for emergencies only.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

If it becomes necessary to evacuate staff and children from the center, the following evacuation site has been secured:

1. Should we need to relocate, we will walk to **Foothill Elementary School at 711 Ribera Drive, 805-681-1268**
2. Should we need a higher elevation, we will walk to **Congregation B'nai B'rith at 1000 San Antonio Creek Road, 805-964-7869**
3. For major disasters when in-state communication is unavailable, we will record a message for you on **208-660-7950** as soon as we can.
4. Parents and Guardians will be notified of the evacuation and children will be released to an authorized escort at the evacuation site.

PARENT REESPONSIBILITIES

Please make sure that your child's cubby always has two clean face masks plus a full set of clothing, including shoes and a sweatshirt or sweater. Remember to label all items.

In an emergency, children will be kept in a safe and supervised environment and released only to parents or individuals identified in the emergency forms you completed at admission. We hope these steps will give you peace of mind as well as help us take care of your children to the best of our abilities.

WEATHER CLOSURE

COCC will follow the school closure policy of the Santa Barbara and Goleta School Districts. When primary schools are closed due to weather, COCC will likely also be closed. If the local schools have a late start time due to weather, COCC will more than likely have a late start time for the day. Parents are encouraged to check the radio and television stations for confirmation or call COCC- after 6:45 AM - to see if the phone message indicates an updated status regarding preschool classes.

EMERGENCIES

COCC facility has plans covering possible emergencies including communications, evacuation routes, safe areas, and other considerations as appropriate. Parents may request to see these plans. Each employee should check with the Director for the directions and specifics of these plans for their individual work areas.

CLOSURE DUE TO EMERGENCIES

In the event of a school closure that is announced and is implemented prior to the beginning of the school day, you are not expected to report to your school site. School closure would be announced on local radio and television stations, and occasionally by means of Brightwheel, a phone call, text message or email from the Director. If a school closure is announced or implemented following the opening of the school day, or that a disaster or emergency occurs during the school day, children are expected to remain at the school site until children are released to parents. Parents should not come to COCC to pick up their child until they have been told that they may do so. Parents may be requested to pick up their child at the evacuation site.

LOCKDOWN POLICY

Lockdowns are a response to any external incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of children and adults in the setting. A lockdown may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

1. A reported incident or disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to children and adults in the setting)
2. An intruder onsite (with the potential to pose a risk to children and adults in the setting)
3. A warning being received regarding an environmental risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud, etc.)
4. A major fire in the vicinity of the Center
5. The close proximity of a dangerous animal

When there is a lockdown, parents:

1. Should not contact the school during lockdown as this could block telephone lines needed for contacting emergency services. Communicate instead through Brightwheel.
2. Should not come to the school during a lockdown as this may place you and the staff and children in danger

BUILDING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Walls, floors, furnishings, the outdoor play area, and equipment are kept in good repair and are safe with no sharp edges, splinters, protruding or rusty nails, or missing parts.

All areas, both indoors and outdoors, are free from glass, trash, sharp or hazardous items, and visible soil, and are in a clean condition.

Staff observes all areas of the facility, both indoors and outdoors, and takes steps to correct or avoid unsafe conditions.

Program staff will protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock by having child safe covers on all outlets.

Children are protected from burns and scalding liquids by staff following the policy of children having no access to liquids or foods of temperature higher than 110 degrees.

Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping or slipping.

Fully equipped first-aid kits are readily available and maintained for each group of children. Staff takes at least one kit to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fully working fire extinguishers and fire alarms are installed in each school site and are tagged and serviced annually. Fire alarms are tested yearly, and a written log of testing dates is maintained and available.

If the building has areas that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled, or otherwise renovated, those areas are ventilated before they are used by children.

In turn, the COCC teacher or staff member must wait with the child until the parent or guardian “signs out” the child for the day. This procedure provides for adult guidance at all times and the safety of COCC on our campus.

LICENSING INFORMATION

COCC is licensed through the Community Care Licensing. Our facility number is #426216210. The guidelines for the state’s licensing requirements can be found on the following website: <http://ccl.d.ca.gov> Our local Community Care Licensing office is located at 6500 Hollister Ave #200, Goleta, CA 93117, phone (805) 562-0400.

PLEASE SIGN ‘ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT & COMPLIANCE OF PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES’ FORM AND RETURN WITH ENROLLMENT PACKET THANK YOU!

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICIES

We, the parents/family of _____, have read the Cathedral Oaks Children's Center Family Handbook. We understand, support and agree to follow the school's philosophy and its policies.

Parent #1 _____
Signature Date

Parent #2 _____
Signature Date

**Please return this form to school by
Thursday, August 15, 2022.
Thank you!**