



Operational Policies Parent Handbook

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UDSA foods program is an equal opportunity provider

About Lori:

After my son was born in 1996, I began teaching in an early childhood program at Alamance Community College where I also received my Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education. I have worked in large centers for most of my career and have experience teaching and caring for children of all ages as well as administration. In 2005, shortly after my daughter was born, I was promoted to a directing position in a 200-child capacity 5-star daycare center in Durham. During that time, I returned to school and earned my Bachelor's degree in Child Development and Family Relations. I spent nearly 14 years in that administrative role as a classroom/curriculum director and teacher mentor. I absolutely loved being able to share my knowledge of child development and early education with the teachers for all those years. However, I missed being in the classroom myself. The school had become very large and three campuses wide. Although I loved that center, the idea of center-based childcare in general began to feel very institutionalized to me. I really began to reevaluate what quality childcare looked like. In the summer of 2018, I decided that I was going to finally execute my long-awaited plan to open my own small school. I wanted to have a place where I could combine all of what I know about what research says is best practice and implement my own philosophy of early childhood care and education, where relationships with the children and their families are valued the most. My family agreed to share our home, and in April 2019 Country Day Preschool was born! My vision for this place is to be different from a large center by design. It's a place where children can develop at their own pace. A place where the institutionalism of large group care can't reach them just yet. A place where children are permitted to construct their own meaning of the world, and not have it given to them by someone else. A place where unstructured PLAY is valued more than direct instruction. The child-led play-based curriculum I offer consists of a balance of unstructured free play and structured teacher-directed whole group & small group activities. Periods of independent free play and exploration are experienced indoors and outdoors daily. Music, art, math, science, and interactions with nature are explored daily. I promote critical thinking and open discussions of children's questions and observations and encourage awareness of sociological responsibility and caring for our earth. We have 4 rules here: Take care of ourselves, Take care of each other, Take care of our school, Take care of our world. Using dialogue, empathy, and logic to solve problems is taught and encouraged. It is my mission to maintain an environment where each child is allowed the freedom to express themselves and explore and discover their own interests. My job is to provide that environment that allows them to safely and freely, create, wonder, experiment, and imagine. Young children have interests and ideas that need to be expressed in a multitude of ways such as art, building, and story-telling. By allowing such free exploration, observation, and expression, children are developing skills such as critical thinking, emotional intelligence, self-awareness/understanding of others, social responsibility, intrigue, and perseverance that will encourage intrinsic motivation and a lifelong love of learning. I provide a place to do this in a loving and supportive home.

What You should Bring:

YOUR CHILD WILL GET DIRTY! The first thing you need will be rain boots that you will leave here and an extra change of clothes (including socks)! We will be painting, cooking, gardening and stomping in the occasional puddle. We *will* get messy. For young children, learning is always hands-on! The good news is that children are 100% washable! With that in mind, please send your child to school in clothing that is meant for messy play.

You will need:

- *rain boots (to leave here)
- *water bottle (to be taken home daily)
- *extra change of clothing (or two)
- *special stuffed animal, blanket, or lovey, *if needed* (pacifiers are A-OK)
- *diapers and wipes, *if needed*
- *family photograph (to leave here)
- *Prepared infant bottles for the day

We will provide a crib or naptime mat, sheet and blanket, sunscreen, and bug spray. Please do not bring a large bulky blanket or backpack. There should be enough room in their cubby to accommodate a large winter coat.

Ages of Children:

We are licensed for up to 15 children between the ages of 0-12 years. We focus on infants, toddlers, and preschoolers age 0-4.

Days and Hours of Operation:

Monday-Friday

7:15 am-5:30pm

Child Care spaces include full-time slots and a limited number of part time spots totaling no more than 15 children maximum at any given time depending on the ages of children enrolled. Drop-in care is only available as space allows.

We don't have a cut-off time, but do ask that all children arrive by 9:00 daily (8:30 if your child will be wanting breakfast) or call or text to alert me if you will be coming in late. Late drop-offs can be very disruptive if we are engrossed in an activity or if we are waiting for the last child to arrive before beginning an activity.

Late Pick-up Fees

We simply ask that you respect our time as a family outside of scheduled operating hours. However, if there is an emergency or out-of-the-ordinary delay in picking up, please call or text Lori to alert us that you are running late. Late fees will apply if it is deemed to be a reoccurring issue.

Late fees are as follows:

Pick-up past 5:30 will incur a flat fee of \$25 and will be added to the next invoice. Each additional minute will be billed at \$1/per minute.

If you have not picked up your child and have not contacted us (or if we cannot contact you), we will begin to call the emergency contacts on your child's application. If we cannot reach you or anyone from your contact list after one hour, proper authorities will be contacted.

If late pick-ups become commonplace, your contract may be terminated with warning.

Tuition Rates/Payment Policy:

Your tuition at the time of enrollment will be your tuition throughout your time with us regardless of age. Your tuition will never go up. It will not change as your child ages up.

AGE 0-24 months:

\$1400/month (~\$345 x 49 weeks/12 months) 4-5 days/week

AGE 2-5:

\$1225/month (~\$300 x 49 weeks/12 months) 4-5 days/week

\$815/ month (~\$200 x 49 weeks/12 months) 3 days/week. Make-up days on non-contracted days for absences or school closures in the week will not be allowed.

\$695/ month (~\$170 x 49 weeks/12 months) 1-2 days/week. Make-up days on non-contracted days for absences or school closures in the week will not be allowed.

Monthly Payment is due on the 1st of each month. If the 1st falls on a weekend or holiday, payment will be due the school day prior to the weekend or holiday. Alternatively, you may pay through KidKare or Parachute by the 22nd day of the prior month.

***Tuition is paid to occupy one of the available childcare slots, not for how many days your child is in attendance. Monthly tuition is due *regardless* of absences or school closures. ***

Late Payment and NSF Fees

A \$35 late payment fee will apply at 5:01pm if payment has not been made on the due date as agreed and will be added to your invoice. Your child will not be able to return until payment (including late fees) has been made. After 7 days of non-payment, care may be terminated if arrangements have not been made. NSF fees of \$35 will be charged for returned payments. Three returned payments will result in cash only payments moving forward.

Enrollment Procedures:

The first step is an interview with Lori. It will be a casual visit in the classroom while your child plays. We will go over the handbook and our typical day as well as answer each other's questions. This meeting is to get a feel for each other and to determine if this is a good fit for everyone involved. This meeting will take place on the weekend as we would like to give you and your family my undivided attention. If space is available and you decide to enroll, you will complete the forms given to you at the interview and return them along with a **\$75 enrollment fee per child**. Once that enrollment fee is paid, your child will be officially enrolled. Spaces will not be held without the enrollment fee payment. Enrollment fees are non-refundable. Temporary or Drop-in care does not require an enrollment fee.

Disenrollment

We require a 30-day written notice of intent to withdrawal. Tuition payment is expected during and through the 30-day notice period even if you don't attend. The following exceptions apply:

You are given a two-week trial period upon enrollment. If you decide that this is not a good fit within those first two weeks, you may disenroll without notice. Refunds will not be given. After two weeks have passed, the 30-day notice policy will be implemented. No refunds will be given in any withdrawal situation.

If we decide to terminate care for any reason including, but not limited to; not being able to meet your child's individual needs, failure to make timely payments or pick-ups, being disrespectful to our staff, property, privacy, or any family here; you will not be required to.

Severe Weather Policy:

We do not follow the public-school closing schedule. Weather-related closures and delays will be determined as they occur and will be posted to the Facebook page and/or alerts will be texted to you. We use WhatsApp as a group chat. Tuition is due regardless of weather-related closings. We will always try to open if it is safe to do so.

Closing Dates:

Country Day Preschool will be closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	July 4 th (2 days)
MLK day	Aug Summer Break (M-F)
Feb Teacher Workday	Labor Day
Spring Break (M-F aligns with CCS)	Oct Teacher Workday
Good Friday or Easter Monday	Thanksgiving (Wed, Thu, Fri)
Memorial Day	Christmas (M-F)
June Teacher Workday	

Family Child Care is unique in that you are sharing your child with a family. Family emergencies and events do occur and there is a possibility of needing to close for one reason or another on days that aren't listed above. *Please be sure to plan for backup childcare occasionally.*** We can't stress this enough.

Tuition is due regardless of closed days.

Substitute Arrangement:

Substitutes are only used in the event of an emergency or if it's a last option. Substitutes will be well-vetted and have proper background checks and paperwork submitted prior to subbing. Parents are always notified if a substitute will be used, and I will do my best to allow you to meet the sub prior to hiring them. You can volunteer to sub if you have the proper paperwork in.

It is always a good idea to have a plan B, and we encourage you to have back-up childcare if a sub cannot be obtained. This is the downside of Family Child Care.

Medications:

We will not administer over-the-counter or prescription oral medications, ear, or eye drops.

We will apply diaper cream, bug spray, sunscreen, lotions/ointments, and lip balms with written authorization. I will provide sunscreen and bug spray, if needed.

We will administer emergency medications such as epi pen, albuterol inhaler, Benadryl (for severe allergic reactions only), and nebulizer treatments with written medical personnel authorization. As well as any other emergency medications required on a child's medical action plan. Any prescriptions must have the original prescription label attached.

*If you have given your child any medication prior to dropping the child off, **we need to know** that information in case there are any adverse reactions. **Please do not “dose and drop” without letting me know what they have taken and why.** If your child receives vaccinations, please keep them home for that day and the day after to monitor for adverse reactions.

Emergencies:

All staff are First Aid, CPR and SIDS certified. This is a state requirement. Fire Drills are conducted monthly and emergency drills such as shelter in place and lockdown drills are conducted quarterly. This is a requirement of the state.

In the event of an emergency, I will implement and follow my Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan that is filed with the county and state. Parents will be notified of any emergencies that may occur via text message, WhatsApp chat, or phone call **once it is safe to do so.** It is important that you or your emergency contact can always be reached.

Transportation:

We do not transport children (except in the event of a true emergency and must implement the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for immediate evacuation).

Reporting Abuse and Neglect:

We are mandated reporters. If child abuse or neglect is suspected, we are legally required to contact Chatham County Department of Social Services to report it. We may or may not discuss this with you beforehand.

Breastfeeding Policy:

We fully support breastfeeding mothers and have a private room with an electric outlet for your use, if requested. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to support you.

Procedures for reporting injuries:

We believe in allowing children to engage in 'risky play'. This is how they will learn to assess their own risk when playing (under supervision). Research has shown us how important this type of play is. A fact of life is that children sometimes get hurt. They may fall and bump their chin while learning to walk or misjudge the width of a doorway. Unfortunately, it happens sometimes. In the event of an injury, first aid will be administered. Your child will have a "boo-boo report" written up and it will be given to you to sign at pickup. If it's a more serious injury than a bump or a scratch, or if the injury is above the shoulders on the head or face, you will likely receive a phone call or text message in addition to the incident report. If a child's injuries require attention from medical personnel after you have left for the day, I need to know that right away. We are required to submit an incident report to the state for any injury that requires professional medical attention within 7 days.

Potty Training:

We will not potty train your child *for* you, but we will support *your* efforts to potty train if we agree that the child is ready. We do this together or not at all. When a child can go for a full **two weeks with no accidents**, then they may transition out of diapers/pull-ups into underwear. Wearing diapers/pull-ups during naptime is always ok. However, if there are more accidents than successes, we may need to reevaluate timing. The supervision of the other children may be compromised if we need to clean up an especially messy accident, not to mention a sanitation hazard. Please only bring pullups that open and close on the sides. Fully undressing a child to change a pull-up is highly impractical in a group care environment.

Notes on successful potty training:

Your child will show signs that they are ready for potty training such as: • Taking off diapers • Showing interest in using the toilet • Expressing discomfort when wet or dirty • **Ability to dress and clean self with minimal assistance** • Telling adults when they need to go to the bathroom or diaper needs changed • Sleeping through the night with a dry diaper.

We would prefer to go **directly from diapers to padded underwear**. Pull-ups often confuse children as they still feel like a diaper and the children know it's ok to go in them. Children can easily pull a diaper off themselves to go to the bathroom, and it makes pulling pants on and off easier without the added bulk of a pull-up.

Please be sure to send your child in **potty-friendly clothing** (no snaps, buttons, tight elastics/ shoes that can be rinsed off in the event of an accident). They need to be able to pull their pants on and off by themselves before potty training can begin to be successful.

Dedicating a week or two at home for a focused “potty training boot camp” is often very successful. I do understand that taking that much time off from work may be difficult, but if you are able to **dedicate a week or even a long weekend to focusing on just potty training** your child, it can often be a one and done event.

Biting, Hitting, and Hurt Feelings:

Unfortunately, with young children, this can happen sometimes, too. Little children bite for several reasons that are developmentally appropriate for their age, especially young toddlers. As they get older and develop vocabulary, biting can turn into hitting, shoving or hurting feelings. We can assure you that if this situation arises (as it often does in a group of young children, especially children as close as we are), it will be dealt with in a thoughtful, constructive manner. It will not be handled punitively. **This is a learning opportunity...** an opportunity to learn how to effectively communicate one's needs, how to solve problems, and how to learn handle themselves socially. We will do everything in our power to protect your child from being hurt by another child. This is an on-going learning process for children, and we will keep you informed of any situations that become bigger than normal developmental behaviors. With that said, please know that we keep other children's behavior confidential, so please understand if I cannot tell you which child did the hurting (although your child might).

Sick Policy:

We do not do sick care. The following is a list of symptoms that require exclusion from childcare. If your child is presenting **any** of these symptoms (even for "just teething" or "allergies"), please **keep them home for 24 symptom-free/medication-free hours**. If a child becomes ill while they are here, we will call you to come pick him/her up. They may return to care after 24 symptom-free hours *without* medication.

I do expect the child to be picked up *immediately* if they are sick.

***Fever 100.4 degrees or greater (even with teething, vaccines, & allergies)**

***Vomiting within the last 24 hours (exclude for 48 hours)**

***Diarrhea in the last 24 hours (exclude 48 hours)**

***Undiagnosed new rash of any kind (even if you think it's just allergy)**

***Croup (seal barking cough)**

***Yellow/green discharge of eyes, ears, or nose**

***Signs and symptoms of any contagious illness**

***Children should stay at home on days that they receive vaccinations.**

CDC considers a person to have a fever “when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or greater”.

In some cases, your child may return with a doctor’s note. For example, a fever that was caused by an ear infection is not usually a contagion threat to other children. However, **if your child is lethargic, in pain, or is feeling too ill to participate, please keep them at home.** We go outside every day when there is no active precipitation regardless of cold, heat, or recent illness. If they are too sick for outside, they are too sick for school.

Mouthed toys are immediately removed after the child is done playing and are cleaned and sanitized daily. All other toys are cleaned and sanitized weekly on a rotating schedule. If there is an illness among the children in care, we will make an extra effort to diligently and rigorously sanitize the toys and house to prevent the spread of infection.

We will inform you ahead of drop-off time if staff is too sick or contagious to provide care. In this rare case, a substitute may be called in or you may have to find alternate care if a suitable substitute cannot be found in time. That said, at least 2 of us are rarely ever sick.

Tuition is still due when your child is out sick. Tuition is still due if we are out sick.

*If we are required to close due to federal, state, or county mandate or quarantine, due to communicable disease, **tuition will remain due for the entirety of the closure regardless of who is sick or how they became sick.**

Immunizations:

Documentation of NC required immunizations is due on the first day of care. This is a state requirement. Your child may not start until I have their immunization record. Children should stay at home on days that they receive vaccinations, in case of an adverse reaction.

Hand washing:

Proper and frequent handwashing is the number one way to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses. Please be sure to help your child wash their hands at drop off each morning prior to allowing them to come in and play. We also encourage you to have your child wash their hands prior to going home for the day. Let's keep the home germs at home and the school germs at school.

Meals and Snacks:

We provide a healthy breakfast (8:30), lunch (12:00) and afternoon snack (3:00) that includes whole grains and fruit at least once daily. Milk is served with breakfast and lunch. Water is served with snacks and in-between meals. Children will be served 1% low-fat or skim milk as per the state requirement for children over the age of two. 1-year olds will receive full-fat milk.

Food Allergies

We rarely serve beef or pork with any of our meals due to Lori's acquired food allergy. If your child has a food allergy, please let me know and we can make a substitution. If it is an allergy that is too difficult to accommodate, we can discuss opting-out. If you decide to opt-out of meals, you will need to plan on providing *all* of your child's meals and snacks daily.

Parent Involvement:

We welcome parent involvement! We always need help with making batches of homemade playdough, going to the library and getting a few new books to read, and donations of supplies. We also welcome opportunities for you to come into read or share a talent or knowledge with the group. We love art projects and can always use things such as paper towel tubes or another adult to help with the project. Donations of fresh fruit are also welcomed...we eat a lot of fruit here!

Smoking Policy:

Smoking/tobacco use is prohibited on the premises during operating hours.

Additional forms and policies:

*Sample menu

*Sample lesson plan

*Daily schedule

*Shaken baby policy

*Summary of NC Child Care laws

*Nutrition information for meals and snacks

___ Safe Sleep Policy

___ \$75 Enrollment fee (made out to Lori Lay, *not* to Country Day)

___ Child Care Agreement form (will be given at interview)

___ Application page

___ Medical Form *submitted within 30 days*

___ Immunization form (as well as official record from pediatrician)

___ Discipline policy

___ Travel/Activity authorization

___ Pet acknowledgement

___ Signature page- Handbook, Laws, Shaken Baby/ Photo permission form

___ Blanket permission form for Sunscreen and Bug Spray (if wanted)

___ Allergy Action Plan (if applicable)

___ Asthma Action Plan (if applicable)

___ Food Program enrollment form

___ Ethnic and racial data form