

EDUCATION
EXPLORERS
Learning Center

Family Handbook

Arlington Physical Address: 355 Nth 4th St. Arlington, NE 68002

Mailing Address: PO BOX 63 KENNARD NE 68034

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Mission: Education Explorers Learning Center focuses on three main principles: faith, exploration, and growth. We are passionate about outdoor opportunities, to promote social, emotional, physical and cognitive development which includes life skills. Our educational objective is building kindergarten readiness. Successful education is rooted through exploration. We provide opportunities for children to explore their individual talents through indoor/outdoor education. We have served over 500 children and have been in business for 7.5 years. We partner with local programs, provide volunteer opportunities and offer employment in the community. It is our purpose to inspire, guide, teach and care for children, and most importantly to act as an advocate and a resource to the families at Education Explorers.

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Education Explorers Learning Center provides services for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age. Children will...

- Demonstrate creativity and expanded self-expression through work and play through indoor and outdoor education
- Participate in activities that encourage children to be self-thinkers, decision makers, problem solvers, and confident in self-expression.

Education Explorers Learning Center embraces the beliefs that...

- Parents are the most important teachers of their children
- Parents are always encouraged to participate in a variety of center activities
- Parents are welcome visitors in the classrooms at all times

Education Explorers is based upon the principles of faith, exploration and growth through...

- Teachers not only instructing, but also encouraging the development of socialization skills and positive self-image
- Teachers understand that each child is unique and will benefit from differentiated instruction geared toward individual learning styles and needs

Demographics

Arlington Physical Address: 355 Nth 4th St. Arlington, NE 68002

MAILING ADDRESS: PO BOX 63 KENNARD, NE 68034

Background

Education Explorers Learning Center began growing from three principles: *faith, exploration, and growth*. This center's philosophies stem from the thought that all children are unique and deserve the opportunity to grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially through exploration and discovery. Education Explorers Learning Center provides a stimulating and nurturing environment where children can discover the joys of learning. The programs are designed to empower children to identify and express their feelings through experiences that will enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem. We at Education Explorers Learning Center feel this concept is extremely important during the formative years of preparing them for school.

Licensing/ Personnel/ Communication

Education Explorers Learning Center is licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services for the State of Nebraska. As a licensed facility, every employee and volunteer of Education Explorers Learning Center must be qualified and of good moral character with: *a completed Report of Law Enforcement Contact Check, Criminal History Record Check, Health Report, Registry Check, Orientation Training, understanding of the DHHS regulations and remaining updated on annual in-service training, including CPR/First Aid.*

Employee Qualifications:

Certified Teachers: valid teaching certificate

Non-Certified Teachers: must be 18 years of age with a bachelor's degree, associates degree, or GED with 1500 hours of verified experience

Support Staff: must be 16 years of age

Parent Grievance: *please contact the licensee or director regarding all questions or concerns.*

If there are ever any questions regarding Child Care Licensing you can contact them toll free at 800-600-1298 or access the website <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/cr/ChildCareLicensingIndex.aspx>

Open communication is crucial for success through our mission as a childcare facility. We encourage communication to best reflect and grow. Please contact the director regarding day to day operations. On-going issues or concerns should be communicated to the owner/licensee. All questions regarding tuition and payment should be communicated to the owner/ licensee. Never hesitate to contact us in all regards.

Hours of Operation

6:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday

Holiday Closings:

New Year's Eve Day- *open until 3:00*

New Year's Day

Presidents Day

Easter Monday

Memorial Day

Independence Day, and day after (July 4th / July 5th)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve Day

Christmas Day and Day after Christmas (December 25th / December 26th)

If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed on the following Monday. Full payment is still expected on the weeks in which a holiday falls.

Registration Fee \$60.00/child (nonrefundable) **Wait-List Fee** \$25.00 /child (nonrefundable)

2024 ARLINGTON Tuition Rates / Fees

6 weeks to 18 months \$300 / 5 Days a week (starting September 2023 \$350/ 5 Days a week)

18 months to 3 years \$270 / 5 Days a week

3 years thru Preschool \$250 / 5 Days a week \$225 / 3 Days a week

Summer Care-School Age \$220 / 5 Days a week \$200 / 3 Days a week

Before & After School \$175/ 5 Days a week \$110 PM ONLY \$90 AM ONLY

Preschool ONLY 8:30-11:30am \$150.00 / week M-F

Summer Activity Fee \$50.00 / child/ per months May-August

Drop-In Rate: \$75.00 / day

- Automatic Withdrawal will be taken out of your bank account EVERY MONDAY FOR CURRENT WEEK, unless other arrangements have been approved by the OWNERS. Arrangements will be made through your bank before the first day of your child's attendance.
- Even if a child is absent for the entire week, full payment for that week is due.
- No reimbursement for unexpected closures
- 2 weeks notice is required to terminate payment
- We do not offer discounts on additional children attending
- We do not offer transportation at this time, if we offer transportation in the future additional charges will apply
- Late payments and fees are required to be paid in full before further care is to be provided. Education Explorers has a *\$25.00 fee for any return payments*. We must receive this payment within 3 business days of notification or childcare will be terminated until the payment is received in full. If this becomes a recurring problem a cash payment may be requested on Mondays.
- If you will be late picking up your child, please contact the center to inform us. *There is a \$5.00 per minute PER CHILD fee for childcare after 6:00 P.M.*
- Rate changes are based on your child's age.
- An additional charge of \$10 / day will be added to the full-time enrolled school ager's tuition if they attend on a day that school is out during the school year, this is a per day charge for each day your child attends when school is out.
- Transportation costs to Arlington Public Schools is included in tuition

Payments:

When you are enrolling your child in Education Explorers you are contracting for a time slot that will be held open for your child on a regular basis. Unfortunately, once we have agreed to hold the space open for your child, we have already incurred all of the same expenses whether your child attends or does not attend on a particular day. We have already paid for the correct number of staff to be present, for enough food to be prepared, and may have turned away another child who might have attended in your child's place. For this reason, the tuition of your child will be due whether your child is in attendance or not. The center's facility, salaries, supplies, trainings and expenses are supported entirely by parent's fees. Therefore, in order to provide the best possible care at the most reasonable rates that we can offer, we must insist on prompt payment. No matter how unfortunate the circumstances, each family must meet their financial obligations. The following schedule has been set in order to ensure a fair and equitable situation for everyone involved

- Each year Education Explorers will review tuition fees. Parents should expect some level of increase each year to cover the cost of inflation. Education Explorers will give families a 30 day written notice prior to the rate increase.
- **Vacation Days:** *tuition free weeks are not offered*
- **Meals:** breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack are included.
- **Weather Closings:** In the event of a complete closing or early closing, we will attempt to contact you as early as possible as well as posting it on local news channels. You will be expected to find alternate care for your child. If your child is at the center at the time of closing, we will attempt to call and email you to let you know that your child needs to be picked up. Education Explorers will remain open as long as the facility has power and can meet staff to child ratio. Education Explorers will NOT have late starts. ***Weather closings are NON-REFUNDABLE towards your child's tuition.***

Child Enrollment

- 1.) **Prior to enrollment:** a visit can be scheduled to introduce the parent and child to the school and to observe the program in which they are interested in enrolling. This is to assure that both the parent and the child are comfortable, and that the program fits their needs. If, after that visit, the decision to enroll the child is made, a registration form and fee must be completed, signed and returned and the child will be added to the roster.
- 2.) **Enrollment:** A non-refundable *enrollment fee of \$55 per child*, first week's tuition, and all other enrollment documents must be completed prior to the child's start date. Enrollment forms include DHHS documents, Automatic withdrawal form, proof of immunization, and permission forms regarding: off premise activities, photo and video use, sunscreen, ointment, bugspray, and blanket use at nap time.
- 3.) **Trial Period:** The first two weeks at Education Explorers Learning Center are a trial period for both the child and the caregivers. Either party may decide to terminate care without reason and without notice at any time during the two-week trial period.
 - **Conditions on suspending/terminating care:** failure to make payment, child or family is putting others in harm, belligerent behavior of parent /guardian, child behavioral issues
 - **Please note:** If the administrative team and teachers at Education Explorers Learning Center feel that a child's placement is inappropriate and/or the center is unable to meet the child's needs, Education Explorers Learning Center will request for withdrawal with a two week notice.
- 4.) **Dis-enrollment:** Education Explorers Learning Center requires a two week notice if you choose dis-enrollment of your child from our center. This needs to be documented and communicated to the director and licensee.
 - *If you choose to dis-enroll your child for any reason, whether it is for an extended vacation or for the summer, your spot will NOT be held. Re-enrollment will include a new enrollment fee. Education Explorers has the right to disenroll children at any time for any reason which includes but not limited to behavior, slander, and failure for timely payment.*

Arrival / Pick Up: *Doors are locked at all times for security.* As you arrive at the center, please encourage your children to be respectful of their caregivers and the facility. By demonstrating to your child that the rules still apply even when you are present, you are helping us to not only facilitate the transition into the center for your child, but also helping us to continue the work that you do in teaching your child respect for authority and personal property. Children will not be released to anyone other than parents or guardians unless you have given written consent on the State forms given to you at the time of registration and you have notified the center of another individual picking your child up that day. We also require a photo I.D. at time of pickup to verify that person.

Communication: The center utilizes the Brightwheel App for communication, written daily reports when necessary, accident / injury reports, emails, text and phone calls to ensure the best communication to all families.

School Transportation

Education Explorers Learning Center provides transportation to Arlington Public Schools with no additional cost. The center is not responsible for any child transported by an employee while they are off the clock doing it as a favor for families. .

Court Orders

If there is a court order prohibiting one or both parents from having custody of the child, we must have a note from the custodial parent or guardian as well as a copy of the court documentation. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. Please understand that we cannot legally keep a parent away from his or her own child without legal documentation. In the absence of a court order on file with the center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order and/or Restraining Order we are obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. Any violations of these orders will be reported to the court.

Absence Policy / Notifications:

Notification by parents when children will not attend due to illness or other absence is encouraged. The center must be notified by 10:00am if a child is not attending or will be arriving late. Late arrivals may be denied if not approved in advance.

Meals

All meals will be provided at no extra cost. Meals will consist of breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Copies of the menu will be available at the front desk. Children are not allowed to bring food or drinks from home unless approved by the director in respect of students with allergies. We will honor a parent's religious or philosophical objections to a menu item and the parent can substitute any objectionable item with an item from home. If your child has allergies, and requires a modified diet, we must be notified of this in writing. We will need to have a physician's written instructions describing any food the child is not permitted to eat. An appropriate substitution will be made, if possible. We never force a child to finish what is on his/her plate, but do encourage each child to try everything. All eating patterns will be communicated to the parents.

Illness Policy

In order to maintain the health of all children at Education Explorers we ask that parents NOT bring children who exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100.4 or higher
- Any contagious condition (chicken pox, mumps, measles, flu, conjunctivitis, etc)
- Unusual rashes
- Excessive unexplained drowsiness
- Vomiting
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Diarrhea (more than 3 in 2 hours – exception: if your child is on an antibiotic with a doctor's note to support it)
- Flu like symptoms
- Head lice

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms while in our care, we will notify you and expect you to make arrangements to pick up your child within two hours. If we are unable to reach the parents/guardians we will utilize the emergency contact list. If your child has any of the above symptoms and is sent home from Education Explorers Learning Center they will need to be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to our center.

Communicable Diseases – *proof of immunization is required at enrollment.*

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease you would need to notify the center immediately so that we can alert the other families in the center. We would distribute detailed description detailing the disease, symptoms and child’s classroom but we will protect the child’s privacy according to state regulations. We are required to report certain diseases to our local health department. Communicable diseases can be spread through direct contact with body excretion, discharge or open sores and through indirect contact with inanimate objects such as drinking glasses, toys, and blankets. The list below contains some of the possible diseases your child could come in contact with along with the exclusion period:

- Chicken Pox- *6 days after rash appears or all sores are dried and crusted over*
- Pink Eye- *24 hours after treatment has begun*
- Measles or rubella-*6 days after onset of rash*
- Hand Foot & Mouth-*after sores on hands and mouth have healed, usually 3-5 days*
- Hepatitis A-*Once treatment has begun*
- Impetigo-*24 hours after treatment has begun*
- Mumps-*9 days after onset of swelling*
- Ringworm or Scabies-*24 hours after first treatment*
- Strep-*24 hours after antibiotics have begun*
- Thrush-*24 hours after first dose of medication*
- Tuberculosis-*After health Department verifies that the child is no longer contagious*
- Pertusis-*5 days after treatment begins*
- Covid 19

COVID 19 Policy

Education Explorers will follow guidelines in accordance with CDC to reduce the potential spread of COVID 19. Timely communication of illness is critical and required.

Please review guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Where you can find our county’s Direct Health Measures

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Directed-Health-Measures.asp>

Tuition is not reimbursed for families that are required to quarantine or for center closures due to outbreaks.. Refer to CDC guidelines for quarantine length. Families are not reimbursed if the center needs to close for 1 day for thorough cleaning following a COVID exposure.

Medications

If your child is well enough to attend the center but still needs medication, we will administer the medication under the following circumstances:

- A signed current competency statement must be on file.
- A signed daily medication sheet must be completed for each medication.
- The medication must be in the original container. The original container must be labeled with:
 1. The name of the medication
 2. Your child’s name
 3. The doctor’s name and phone number (prescription medications)
 4. The dosage including the time each dose is to be given
 5. The proper storage method for the medicine
- Medication must be given to the director, assistant director, or supervisor.
- Medication will not be administered in any manner other than oral, topical, inhalations, or instillation (placement into the eyes, ears, or nose). Medication is administered by staff with proper training.

Allergies

If your child has a food or environmental allergy, Education Explorers will work with the family to develop an individualized action plan specific to your child and the severity of the allergy. This will be done at the time of enrollment or at the onset of a new allergy.

EPI-PEN

If your child has an allergy that may require the use of an Epi-pen, Education Explorers will require the child’s own Epi-pen to be kept on site which will be provided by the parent or guardian. If your child would require the use of an Epi-pen while in attendance, the following steps will be taken:

1. The Epi-pen would be injected by a staff member.
2. 911 would be called after the Epi-pen is injected.
3. The parent or guardian would then be contacted and given further information.

Cubbies

To help children feel secure and to encourage a sense of responsibility, we provide cubbies for our older toddlers and pre-school children, which may be shared with another child. The cubby is for your child’s personal property: clothing, naptime items, etc. *Please label all belongings with your child’s first and last name prior to bringing them to the center. For germ and disease control, we will send blankets, pillows, and other sleeping items home to be washed every Friday. Items should be returned Monday morning.*

Personal Items / Student Supplies:

Personal toys from home are not permitted for the following reasons:

- They may not be safe for all children in the room.
- They may be lost or damaged by other children.
- They may make sharing difficult.

<p><i>Children in our Infant Room: label items</i> Wipes /Diapers Formula or breast milk (Please label and date) 2 complete changes of clothing (including socks) Bottles and baby food need to be brought daily Sunscreen for children over 6 months (summer)</p>	<p><i>Children Toddler Age and Above: label items</i> Wipes/Diapers/ Training pants if needed 1-2 complete changes of clothing (including socks & underwear) Child-Sized Blanket Travel-Sized Pillow Fitted crib sheet or king size pillow case for nap mat 1 inch kindermat OR sleepingbag Sunscreen (summer) Sippie Cup</p>
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Preschool children will have a school supply list when the curriculum year begins in August

Discipline Policy

Education Explorers Learning Center’s philosophy of discipline focuses on communication and consistency, while understanding every disciplinary situation is a learning opportunity. Positive Reinforcements are used to help children behave constructively. Among the guidance methods are classroom management tools such as: clear understanding and review of classroom rules, redirection, organization, encouragement, and problem-solving skills. Children are encouraged to vocalize their thoughts and feelings in a calm, respectful manner. Positive character traits are taught and reviewed throughout the year to help all children understand the importance of progressive social skills. Children are taught empathy to build encouraging relationships with all peers.

Steps to problem solving when a child misbehaves:

- Acknowledge the negative behavior
- Discuss why we have this specific rule
- Ask the child to follow the rule
- Support the child with redirection/positive reinforcement
- Praise child for making positive, independent choices
- Remove child from activity if negative behavior continues
- Remove child from environment if negative behavior continues
- Discuss emotions with the child to better understand their decision making
- Communication with parents

If a problem behavior persists, the parent/guardian of a child will be contacted. They will be asked to work with the staff and director as a team to develop, support, and implement a plan focused on promoting acceptable behavior. If, despite these combined efforts, a behavioral problem continues that causes a child to be a danger to themselves or

others and consistently requires the attention of staff beyond available services, Education Explorers Learning Center reserves the right to discontinue services at any time, including excessive biting habits.

Biting Policy -When a child is bitten:

1. The child who is bitten is comforted first. Administer First Aid
2. Separate victim and biter - The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "Biting hurts." Avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the biter. The caring attention is focused on the victim.
3. The biter is not allowed to return to play for an appropriate amount of time and is talked to on a level that the child can understand.
4. Redirect the biter to other play after disciplinary action is taken.
5. Write an incident / injury report and notify the parents of the biter and child bitten immediately following incident and communicate their signature is needed at pickup
6. Do not develop emotions or judgement towards the biter or their parents
7. Follow privacy policies in communication and documentation

If biting continues:

1. **Individual Behavior Plan**- document is created to record, track and communicate habits and strategies used to decrease behavior. This plan is created by management, lead teachers and shared with the child's parents.
2. **Action Plan** – is a child bites more than 3 times in one day the child's parents are contacted and is sent home early. This is documented in behavior plan and if the child is sent home early more than 5 times in a two-week period the parent and management can discuss professional behavioralists observing the child, support from the school district, and short-term or long-term disenrollment without obligation to pay tuition.
3. **During Intervention** - Staff will meet with the director for support, advice, and to implement a plan to protect other children. Document every occurrence, including: attempted bites, and indicate location, time, participants, behaviors, staff present, and circumstances. Communicate the issue and the strategies to be applied to resolve the issue with parents and staff. "Shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite:
 - a. Head off biting situations before they occur.
 - b. Teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior.
 - c. Adapt the program to better fit the individual child's needs.
4. Support all families involved
5. If developmentally appropriate, consider an early transition of a child to change their environment
6. **Strategies to Implement:** teething necklaces, fidgets, preschool / school age mentor time (independent time reading, playing, puzzles, coloring with an older peer), incentives / sticker charts, ice to chew on, calming center, busy bags, etc.

Suspicion of Child Abuse/Neglect

As individuals that work with children on a daily basis we are obligated to report any suspicion of child abuse/neglect. If at any time we feel a child displays signs of abuse/neglect we are required by law to document all concerns. If we feel the child is in danger we will call the *Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline* to report the suspicion.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks or cuts on the body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing cleanliness
- Transporting a child without proper restraints
- Dropping off or picking up a child under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Children who exhibit behaviors consistent with an abusive situation

Attire

We want your children to enjoy their day to the fullest. As much as we try to maintain clean attire through the usage of paint shirts and washable markers, children's clothes do sometimes stain. Please keep this in mind and dress them comfortably for a day of adventure and exploration.

Diapers & Training Pants

Please provide a consistent supply of diapers/training pants. Education Explorers Learning Center will have a limited supply provided for emergency use. There will be a \$2.00 fee included on tuition for each use of diapers/training pants provided by the childcare facility.

Potty Training

When you feel your child is ready for toilet teaching, we ask that you begin the teaching process at home. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. The child must be showing signs of readiness. Parents need to supply training pants/pull-ups and extra changes of clothing each day (shirt, pants, and socks). During toilet training, we ask that the child be dressed in clothing that assists in teaching them independence in the restroom.

Celebrations of Holidays and Birthdays

Holidays and birthdays are a very exciting time for children. To help them fully enjoy the special days of the year, we often do related crafts and may have special snacks and activities. We embrace traditional differences and teach children the importance of respecting peers. We celebrate all Christian holidays and incorporate traditions into our curriculum. We will make each child feel special on their birthday. Children are allowed to bring special treats on their birthday, but are not obligated. In consideration of allergies, all outside snacks must be peanut-free and store bought.

Health and Safety Practices: *Education Explorers Learning Center strives to maintain an environment that is both safe and healthy for the staff and children.*

Hand washing: taught, encouraged and required for all ages and frequent hand washing is considered to be the best means of preventing the spread of disease.

Staff is asked to wash their hands:

- When entering the classroom
- Before handling food and bottles
- After using the restroom themselves or helping the children
- After handling of coming in contact with bodily fluids
- Before and after administering medication
- After using cleaning products
- After handling trash
- After handling an ill child

Children will be assisted in hand washing:

- Before and after meals
- After toileting and diaper changes
- After playing outside
- After coming on contact with bodily fluids

Steps on hand washing:

1. Always use warm water and a liquid soap
2. Wet hands and apply a small amount of soap to hands
3. Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds
4. Rinse hands with warm water
5. Dry hands with a paper towel

Sanitized Items

The items listed below will be cleaned with appropriate bleach/Water solution which consists of 1 tsp bleach to 1 gallon of water or ¼ tsp bleach to 1 quart of water (do not rinse off after being sprayed and let air dry):

Crib rails, Pacifiers, Teething rings, Counter tops, High chairs, Tables, Infant bouncers and swings

Disinfected Items

The items listed below will be cleaned with a stronger bleach solution on a daily basis at the end of each day, this consist of ¼ cup bleach to 1 gallon water or 1 Tablespoon bleach to 1 quart of water:

Hand washing sinks, Soap dispensers, Nap mats, Toilets, Door knobs, Diaper changing areas

Medical Emergencies

Minor Injury:

1. First Aid will be given by a trained staff member: The staff will nurture and sooth the child
2. An accident form will be filled out and given to the parent at pick up time.

Moderate Injury:

1. First aid will be given by a trained staff member
2. A parent may be called and given details of injury for them to decide the best plan of action to be taken.
3. An accident form will be filled out and given to parent at time of pick up

Head Injury:

1. A parent will be notified immediately to inform you of the injury and you can choose to pick up your child to supervise the injury. If there is excessive blood or the child is inconsolable, we will ask that you come pick up your child.
2. An accident form will be filled out and given to the parent at time of pick up.

Major injury:

1. Determine the extent of the injury and administer first aid
2. If the injury needs medical attention and is not life threatening we will contact the parent immediately to inform and receive instructions.
3. If the injury is life threatening we will:
 - Call 911 and administer first aid until EMS arrives
 - Call parents
 - Go with child in the ambulance to your specified hospital and bring the child files with to the hospital

Any costs or liability in association with 911 or emergency medical care will be the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. Education Explorers Learning Center is not financially responsible for any cost of an accidental injury.

Emergency/ Crisis / Disaster Plan: drills are practiced regularly and appropriate reaction plans are set into place.

The Education Explorers Management Team and staff are determined to maintain a normal school experience for all the children, staff, and families. Education Explorers Learning Center maintains a safe environment, which includes controlled access to our building, safety plans, crisis procedures, and practice drills for our staff and children. Our center is updated with a complete automated sprinkler system, and automated fire alarm system to best protect children and staff. We will not do fire/evacuation drills when the temperature is below twenty degrees or above eighty-five degrees. Evacuation cribs with wheels are used to transport infants and non-walking toddlers to the emergency meeting area. In the case of a tornado warning all children are moved to shelter in the bathrooms and remain in a safe position covering their heads. During any of these unfortunate events we will send an email out to all of our families updating them on our current situation and communicate our plan of action.

If we would have to evacuate the building for any reason and not be able to re-enter, we would escort the children outside of the building safely. In the event that the weather is too extreme to remain outside children and staff will walk to a designated location for each center. They will remain there until all students are safely united with a parent or guardian. Arlington’s designated location: City Auditorium, 410 W Elm St, Arlington, NE 68002.

Millard’s designated location: Hope Presbyterian Church 5220 S 159th Ave, Omaha, NE 68135. If we are made aware of a crisis in the area, our center will go into immediate lockdown. Parents will be contacted immediately via email. No one will be allowed to enter the building (including parents) until safety is assured. The teachers will barricade their doors and the teachers will make a decision whether to hide or escape through their fire exit doors when necessary. *We practice our crisis procedure along with our annual fire and tornado drills.*

Special Needs specific staff will be assigned to a 1:1 ratio in the case of a disaster or emergency. This staff member is responsible for having appropriate tools or medications to ensure all children's needs are met.

We, at Education Explorers, hope that we never have to experience anything that would cause our center to have to execute any sort of crisis procedure. However, we wanted to assure you that we are prepared and taking every necessary precaution to make sure that all children are safe at Education Explorers.

We are required by the state law to do one fire/tornado drill per month. We vary the time of day to help the staff and children prepare to evacuate the building quickly and safely.

Education / Curriculum: Montessori / Pearson / Frog Street / Handwriting Without Tears

Infants

It is amazing to watch an infant grow and develop. Warm and nurturing care between children and adults, and positive stimulation from the time of birth makes a difference in a child's development. We strive to make life as a parent as simple as possible. Supporting the importance of keeping your child on a routine schedule will assist parents in making their child's day as easy as possible. Education Explorer's program enhances the infant classroom with high-quality materials and stimulating activities that promote brain development. Each day your infant attends, you will receive a report that documents your child's feeding times, diaper changes, and important milestones.

Toddlers 18-36 Month Room:

The best type of learning environment for toddlers is one that allows them to explore and play in a safe, impressionable setting. Young children need to be introduced to activities that engage their attention and hold their interests enhancing their growth and development. Education Explorer's toddler curriculum encourages toddlers to explore the world around them through monthly themes. Toddlers will build vocabulary, fine and gross motor skills, creative expression, socialization, and independence daily. We provide opportunities to engage play, concrete and abstract manipulation, interaction, and problem solving. Each day, Education Explorers will document your child's day (how your child napped, ate, drank, played, and diapered/potty trained).

Preschool

Preparing children for school success is essential. Preschoolers are provided with indoor and outdoor education. Our curriculum focuses on exploring learning through hands-on activities to keep children actively engaged as they learn letter recognition, phonics, number recognition and computation, name writing, and all other standards to best prepare children to enter grade school. In addition to all subjects, we teach children life skills and positive social skills to encourage them to be a kind peer with leadership skills focused on independence and achievement. Weekly lesson plans are submitted to meet appropriate preschool standards while incorporating our experience based, Montessori style curriculum themes. Education Explorer's pre-school program builds a strong foundation upon which children construct a world of knowledge. Each day provides for a balance of individualized, small group, and large group activities. Classroom activities focus around a number of themes. This approach enables the instructors to address the various interests of young children while including an interactive approach to overall growth across developmental areas. Each child will be assessed throughout the year to evaluate progress and develop individualized instruction. Pre-kindergarten provides a more academic based environment for children. This program feature readiness for school activities in a structured environment.

School Age Children

We believe that all children should engage themselves in areas of interest to encourage the desire to learn. This also promotes self-learners and teaches children to be self-advocates. Education Explorers Learning Center provides a safe, fun environment with time to play outdoors, interact with friends, explore creative arts, and complete school projects. Staff will provide monitored play and tutoring. School age children are permitted to bring personal items from home with parents understanding that Education Explorers are not responsible for lost, stolen, damaged items. We value the opportunity for school age children to share their hobbies with peers. School age children may not be permitted if behavioral issues arise affecting other children in attendance.

Curriculum

Education Explorers Learning Center has developed a curriculum based on exploration and growth. This educational approach allows teachers to plan daily activities in which children experience learning initiated by a quality instructor. Children will follow a daily plan that produces easily assessed results. Education Explorers Learning Center gives great attention to the characteristics of the classroom. Teachers work as researchers collaborating to advance development in your child. Children are encouraged to dialogue, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work and play. The curriculum at the Education Explorers Learning Center recognizes that children's learning experiences must be desirable and rewarding to ensure educational value. Activities are kinesthetic based lessons that encourage freedom of expression. Activities are related to each child's individual developmental stage. Standards are met to best prepare for grade school through incorporating Montessori curriculum and Handwriting Without Tears.

Field Trip and Other Activities

All field trip and activity fees will be automatically deducted from your account. We will notify you ahead of time with all the details of the activity and the account deduction date. Education Explorers will have scheduled field trips that may require transportation to and from the center. A *permission to transport* form is provided at enrollment. If a permission form is not filled out and signed by the parent or guardian, we will be unable to provide transportation for your child and he/she will be unable to attend the field trip. All traffic and safety laws will be followed. Only staff members that have completed the *State Issued Transportation Safety Courses* and carry a safe driving record will be approved to transport children. No child will ever be left unattended in a vehicle. Staff members will take attendance before loading the vehicle, after loading the vehicle, and when children unload the vehicle. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for any field trips.

Nap requirements for all classes at Education Explorers:

Infants (6 weeks to 12 months): Follow schedule as requested by parents

12-18 month rooms: 2 hours (unless requested by parents to let them sleep longer or shorter)

18-36 months: No child will be required to sleep longer than two hours. No child will be required to remain on their nap mat for more than thirty minutes. After thirty minutes of quiet time the child will be provided with a quiet activity.

36 months and older: Education Explorers students are required to rest for thirty minutes on a mat. After thirty minutes teachers will provide the child with a quiet activity.

All children twelve months and older will be woken up by 3:00 P.M. unless requested otherwise by the parents!

Indoor Play

We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. Age appropriate toys will be shared, along with introducing new ones weekly to eliminate boredom. During play time children will learn independence, and structure. They will have an opportunity of choice, and an opportunity to explore with toys that assist in each individual's learning style and needs.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will be incorporated into daily education, weather permitting. Outdoor play will not be permitted if the temperature is below 20 degrees or above 90 degrees. Please ensure that your child has appropriate attire for weather variation. Daily outdoor activities include: free play, games, exploration, exercise, water play, gardening, animal care, and other learning activities that promotes growth through outdoor exploration. Increased space helps children to develop physically and gain coordination. Outdoor play also allows for a number of unique games and activities that promote teamwork and good sportsmanship. Education Explorers has designed an outdoor educational area where students can learn about agriculture, nature, and other living things. Students will have a curriculum that teaches animal care, plant growth and life cycles. Children will learn responsibility through the care of wildlife and the environment around them.

Progress Reports

To ensure we are meeting the learning needs of each individual, progress monitoring will be included in all age groups. Progress reports will be utilized to communicate areas of growth, and areas to celebrate success. Formal conferences are held to best discuss each child's current developmental stage socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

Families in Our Center: Rights and Responsibilities

Rights:

- To know all aspects of the program
- To know all about your child’s experiences in the program
- To feel welcome to visit or observe
- To feel free to ask questions
- An assurance that your beliefs, concerns, and values are sought out and respected
- An assurance of complete confidentiality on all matters involving the welfare of your child and family

Responsibilities:

- To read handbook and parent agreements and follow all policies
- To read all notices that are sent home with your child
- To keep all important information current- addresses, medical exams, etc. and to respond to requests for information from staff
- To respect staff as professionals who work with you to provide quality childcare

Education Explorers Learning Center Aims To:

Promote all aspects of development- social, emotional, and intellectual- in a loving, nurturing, exploratory based environment. Allow each child to develop his or her unique individual talents and develop a foundation that promotes success in future education. Be free of discrimination or prejudice. Encourage children to desire to learn. Create discipleship and praise the Lord for daily blessings.

POLICIES LISTED IN THIS HANDBOOK MAY BE UPDATED WITH A TWO-WEEK WRITTEN NOTICE. IF POLICIES WILL BE CHANGING, PARENTS WILL BE GIVEN AN UPDATED HANDBOOK AND A NEW “PARENT/CENTER AGREEMENT” TO SIGN.



2024 Parent/Guardian Handbook Agreement Form

I/We have read Education Explorers Learning Center’s Handbook.

I/We the parents/guardians understand the policies and procedures of this handbook.

I/We commit to uphold these policies and procedures.

Parent Name (Please Print)

Parent Name (Please Print)

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date: