

HANDBOOK

For Families, Visitors, Volunteers & Other Friends of Young Children



St. Cecilia Early Catholic Learning Center
Established in 2019

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Hello!

We bring you a warm welcome to St Cecilia's Early Catholic Learning Center (STC-ECLC), the child development center of St. Cecilia, Independence. We like to think of ECLC as a place that children and adults consider their second home...a place where they are accepted and loved...a place where laughter and play are cherished...a place where children's rhythms are caught and given warm response.

We hold special pride in the center's professional staff. Selected for their knowledge of child development as well as their strong interpersonal skills, they are the strength of our program. When visiting our Early Learning Center, please take time to listen, to watch, and to learn from this unique group. You will be enriched.

It is the role of all staff members to facilitate the learning of children, parents, and one another. We are pleased to embrace these roles.

Sincerely,

Kim Murphy
 Director
 St. Cecilia Early Catholic Learning Center

Philosophically Speaking

Childhood is a time like no other. It's a time for exploring... for creating... for discovering about oneself... for meeting the world... for learning how to learn... for being accepted "just the way I am". It's a time for blossoming and being cherished... a time for being allowed the time to be a child.

Our child care center administrator and caregivers are committed to the belief that children have achieved... that is, they CAN DO a lot. It is the role of the caregivers to build upon those things that children are able to do. We believe that much of life's learning – including how to learn – occurs in the first five years of life. Since each child learns at her own pace, our staff will look to her to determine how to support the next stage of development. This "can do" approach is the basis of our philosophy. This "can do" viewpoint allows the children we serve to become confident and to enjoy successes in an atmosphere of respect, warmth, and love.

Some Background

We offer full and part time weekday service for children from 12 months old through preschool age.

STC ECLC Hours 7:00am – 6:00pm Monday through Friday
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Our services stretch beyond child care to support the whole family. Families using the center receive daily communications on their child's day and prompt attention to any concerns. Parents are invited to meet with teachers at least once per year. Parents may request a conference at any time deemed necessary. All classrooms have lesson plans specific to the activities of their rooms.

No child may be in the program until the parent has submitted a completed registration packet, including health forms showing up-to-date child immunizations.

The center is licensed to operate by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services Division of Regulated Child Care (DRCC). Our license is posted in the lobby. Our compliance with all licensing requirements is monitored regularly. Licenses are renewed in a timely manner. Recent licensing compliance reports are also posted in our lobbies. To report any suspected violation of the state law call (502) 564-7962. All state child care licensing rules are also available at the center.

The staff participate in the professional development programs through 4C for Children and other state and local agencies.

Our Disciplinary Approach

Children at our center will not receive physical punishment. Children who have conflicts or problems with others while at our center will be encouraged to verbalize their feelings and concerns. Even toddlers without verbal skills will hear their caregivers describing problems, solutions and logical consequences. The role of the adult at school is to be a helper to positive problem solving. Our staff members view discipline as guidance, not punishment. We want children to value cooperation and teamwork. We help them to learn peaceful approaches as ways to get along.

Our spaces are set up with preventative measures in mind. Multiples of toys are provided. Verbalizing feelings, redirection, and explaining to children what they may do are some of the techniques we use. Verbal processing is our preferred approach. Discipline, i.e., guidance, will always be positive, productive, and immediate when behavior is inappropriate.

Children whose behavior endangers others will be supervised away from other children. The child will then process the problem with a staff member and any other concerned parties. Staff rarely use "time out" unless a child is emotionally out of control and needs private time to regain composure. Parents will be informed of behavioral concerns and if deemed necessary, teacher, parents, and administrators will develop together a specific behavioral plan to support children who are struggling with frequent concerning behavior. If a child's behavior is of extreme concern we may refer for further support and in very rare cases may dismiss a child whose behavior does not improve with time and support. Our goal is always to support children who are struggling to avoid dismissal.

No child will be humiliated, shamed, frightened, or subjected to verbal or physical abuse by an employee or by parents or any other person on the premises.

Our Staff

We employ people who are caring, warm, and nurturing, who understand child development, who can apply their knowledge in the classroom, and who respect each child as an individual. We seek employees who value working as a team with parents, colleagues, and volunteers.

We select our staff carefully in order to provide the best possible care and education for the children. The director has a degree in early childhood education and expertise working with young children and adults. The director supervises the teaching staff, and is available to parents. Lead teachers have training and experience as teachers of young children. Assistant Teachers have training as well as demonstrated competence with young children.

Each staff person has a NBCP record check prior to hire.

Continuing education is an important part of working at St. Cecilia. Many of our staff attend training in first aid, recognizing communicable diseases, recognizing and preventing child abuse, child development, and teaching methods. Each classroom teacher must complete a minimum of fifteen hours of Cabinet Approved Early Care & Education training each year.

Parent Involvement

We welcome parents to share their interests, talents and occupations with the classes. Parents may see their child's teacher to explore these opportunities.

Teachers meet with individual parents to review each child's progress throughout the year. Conferences will be scheduled once per year but parents may request conferences at any time.

Social and educational events are held throughout the year to encourage interactions between staff and families.

If parents have concerns or need assistance with problems related to the child care center, they may discuss the issue, if applicable, with the staff involved. If they are not satisfied, they may discuss their concerns with the Director. If the issue is not resolved with the Director, parents may contact the Principal or Pastor at St. Cecilia.

Center Ratios and Group Sizes

We ask that parents with fluctuating schedules inform us in a timely manner.

We maintain these child/adult ratios and class sizes:

Ones	1 staff for 6 children; licensed for group no larger than 12
Twos	1 staff for 10 children; licensed for group no larger than 20
Threes & Fours	1 staff for 12 children; licensed for group no larger

School Age than 24
 1 staff for 15 children; licensed for groups no larger
 than 30

Typical Daytime Schedule

Parents must always deliver the child directly to the teacher and sign in. At departure, the parent must inform staff that the child is leaving for the day and sign out.

Although each classroom's daily schedule varies, activities alternate between quiet and active, free play, and total group experiences. Daily lesson plans are posted in classrooms. An example of a general daily schedule is:

Opening – 9:30	Arrival, special activity, and learning centers
9:00 -	Diapers and Bathrooms
9:30 – 10:15	Outside time
10:15 – 10:35	Hand washing and morning snack
10:35 – 11:30	Planned activity available and learning centers and/or table activities
11:00 -	Diapers and Bathroom
11:30 – 11:45	Small group and hand washing
11:45 ~ 12:15	Lunch Hand washing and diapers/bathrooms Small group story time
12:30 ~ 3:00	Nap/quiet time
3:00 -	Hand washing and diapers/bathrooms Snack
4:00 ~ 4:30	Outside time, special activity available and learning centers
4:30 ~ 5:00/5:30	Hand washing Planned activity available and learning centers and/or table activities
5:00 -	Diapers and Bathrooms
4:50 – 6:00	Free play, outside time, and departure

Please note that this schedule is flexible. We try as much as possible to let the schedule adapt to the children's interests and moods as well as the weather!

Note: Attendance sheets are kept with the teachers throughout the day to assure that all children are accounted for at all times of the day. All children are encouraged to rest and nap each day.

Outdoor Play

Children of all ages go outdoors for fresh air daily unless the temperature (or temperature combined with wind chill) is 20 degrees or below. We do not take the children outdoors when the temperature exceeds 90 degrees.

If a smog alert or heat advisory is placed in effect, children can go outside early morning, but must be inside by 10:00a.m.

Children must be prepared to be dressed for outdoor experiences. On days of weather extremes, all children have opportunities to participate in gross motor in their classrooms.

In warm weather, sprinklers and raised water tables are used during outdoor play. No wading pools are used at St. Cecilia ECLC. There are no areas for swimming at St. Cecilia ECLC.

What to Bring from Home

(Please check with classroom staff as well.)

All items brought from home must be permanently labeled. Food and formula must be labeled with the child's name, dated, and brought in fresh each day.

Ones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• whole milk, prepared formula/breast milk• lunch (details provided under Nutrition in the handbook)• diaper wipes• disposable diapers/extra underwear• sweater or jacket• blanket & crib sheet• pillow and pillowcase (if desired)• 2 or more changes of clothes• photo of family• security items if needed - pacifier, special blanket/toy...• 1 box of sandwich size Ziploc bags• 1 box of gallon Ziploc bags• 2 boxes of tissues• 4 rolls of paper towels• 1 pack of baby wipes• 1 pack of construction paper• 1 box of Band-Aids
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Twos:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1% milk• lunch (details provided under Nutrition in the handbook)• diaper wipes• disposable diapers/extra underwear• sweater or jacket• blanket & crib sheet• pillow and pillowcase (if desired)• 2 or more changes of clothes• photo of family• security items if needed-pacifier, special blanket/toy...• 1 box of sandwich size Ziploc bags• 1 box of gallon size Ziploc bags• 2 boxes of tissues• 4 rolls of paper towels
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 pack of baby wipes • 1 pack of construction paper • 1 box of Band-Aids
Threes & Fours:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1% milk • lunch (details provided under Nutrition in the handbook) • diaper wipes • disposable diapers/extra underwear • sweater or jacket • blanket & crib sheet • pillow and pillowcase (if desired) • 2 or more changes of clothes • photo of family • security items if needed-pacifier, special blanket/toy... • 1 box of sandwich size Ziploc bags • 1 box of gallon size Ziploc bags • 2 boxes of tissues • 4 rolls of paper towels • 1 pack of baby wipes • 1 pack of construction paper • 1 box of Band-Aids

What Not to Bring from Home

(Please check with classroom staff as well)

Toys of violence

Toys from home except for security items

Candy

Chewing gum

Flip flops

Anything unlabeled

The One Year Old Program

Our program for ones sets its pace around the needs and unique differences of each child. Routines are the curriculum for a one year olds day. Every moment of a young child's day offers opportunities for learning. The skilled educator catches these moments and helps each baby establish trust, discover and feel good about herself, tackle a motor task, realize the power of language, and begin to understand this strange new world from many angles. This is accomplished as each teacher keys into the verbal and non-verbal messages the child is sending.

A teacher, with the education and understanding of early childhood development, knows that rich verbal interactions with children help them to understand that language is a tool for identifying and expressing their needs, ideas, and feelings in later life. Each of our caregivers accepts that one year olds, developmentally, need to explore the world through mouthing and touching and allows for this, viewing it as a valuable learning experience. This teacher is alert to the need for proper sanitation measures and follows them consistently and conscientiously. As the trained adult looks at the environment, she views it from the child's eye and creates a

cozy, inviting, and stimulating place for children. She understands that what is made available for children to use depends on who the children are and what their developmental needs. This might necessitate frequent rotation of toys to “keep up” with a growing child, or prompt a teacher to make a toy that focuses on the child’s interest or need.

One year olds should view the world from many angles and are allowed that experience. This includes walking, crawling, being carried, and outdoor play, climbing, and rocking so that various perspectives are gained. Diaper changing, feeding, and other routines are viewed as vital times for communication, self-discovery and socializing. They are encouraged to master feeding themselves despite the messiness that accompanies this activity. While being supportive of ones in their quest for competence, our teachers look to the parents as the best resource in working with their children. Early childhood educators view themselves as professionals with children and with parents.

Special health and cleaning practices are used in one year old room. All toys are removed from the play space once mouthed, then sterilized. All shelves and climbing equipment are cleaned with a bleach solution daily. Staff wash their hands before and upon entering the room and during any diapering, nose-wiping or food service. Infant formula must be removed each day by the parent.

Diapers are changed every two hours and when soiled. Schedules may be adjusted with parent written request.

The Two Year Old Program

In providing a program for toddlers, our teachers understand that these children learn with their whole bodies. They learn more by doing than by being told. Toddlers discover their world on a physical level, so it is expected that they will prefer walking, climbing, carrying objects, dumping, or dropping objects over sitting, picking up toys, or playing only in a designated space. These large muscle activities are the legitimate activity of toddlerhood.

In planning for toddlers, our educators are prepared to be flexible and spontaneous. Because they are active explorers, toddlers are eager to try new things and use materials in different ways. Our understanding teachers will go with the cues of the child and view that as learning-extending it even if it isn’t part of the day’s planned curriculum. Toddlers are working on becoming autonomous. The educated teacher respects this and allows opportunities for the child to be responsible and to make choices. This teacher also understands why certain behaviors must be limited, and sets limits that are fair and consistent. Expectations for behaviors are developmentally appropriate and allow the child to be challenged yet to feel support from the teacher. Consequently, frustration is kept to a minimum and the child’s dignity and self-concept remain intact.

Our teachers, with patience, warmth and respect, redirect toddlers to help guide them toward controlling their impulses and behaviors. The teacher draws more attention to a child’s appropriate behavior than to the inappropriate because she understands that toddlers will act in a way that draws the most attention. Constant testing and expressions of opposition are viewed as the child’s development of a healthy sense of self. The teacher accepts this and offers positively worded directions to avoid getting into power struggles. The teacher views herself as a model for how she wants the children to develop. She does this in her verbal interactions because she understands that toddlers lack the skills to cope with frustrating situations and might act out in a physical way without her guidance.

The teacher recognizes that routine times are important moments to help children learn about themselves and others. An early childhood educator views play as valuable and facilitates this so that children stay interested and move from simple to more complex aspects of their play. The classroom includes materials for children to engage in imaginative play, appropriate art experiences for creative exploration, various

manipulatives to develop cognitive and physical skills, as well as building blocks, music, and books. The environment allows for the children to choose activities. The teacher respects the child's need for ample time to use and reuse activities because repeated experiences foster competence. The setting is stimulating and inviting. It offers comfortable spaces for privacy and for interacting in small groups. Children's art is displayed proudly and respected for what it is. The little ones are encouraged by a knowing adult to care for the belongings and the environment in ways they can handle. The teacher creates and adapts the environment and activities to meet the children's changing needs from day to day.

The Three & Four Year Old Program

Preschoolers are usually most responsive to activities in which they are involved in a "hands-on" manner. Our teachers accept that and design their classroom spaces with "learning centers" at which children can freely choose whether to participate or not and for how long. Our quality staff rotate and add materials frequently to maintain and extend the child's interest. Young children seem to learn best when trained teachers build on the interests and abilities of the children. This reflects the currently recognized theory that endorses non-pressured, child-centered activities guided by an adult with a solid child development base and strong problem-solving skills. Open-ended questioning and activities are offered so that children develop creative thinking skills. In such a program, parents can truly become partners with the professional staff. Information or discoveries about the child's development are mutually shared, resulting in a program tailored to the individual child.

The Three & Four Year curriculum includes activities centering on communication, science, math, social studies, music, and art, large and small motor development. Dramatic play opportunities reinforce learning of practical life experiences.

- LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION – Children are exposed to print and language that is integrated into each activity center. The classroom offers many opportunities for literacy awareness. Books are readily available for children's use.
- SCIENCE – Hands-on activities include using simple machines, sensory table play, plant and animal life. Nutrition awareness activities are offered. Open-ended questions by the teacher help the children learn how to question... how to be thinkers.
- MATH – Activities include concepts of introductory geometry, seriation, classification, sets, number, quantity, length, and weight, use of simple graphs, simple addition/subtraction (more/less), and money.
- SOCIAL STUDIES – Learning about the "world around us" and appreciation of others is the focus of this curriculum area.
- MUSIC – Exposure to and involvement with simple rhythm instruments is part of our music program. Rhythms are also "practiced" by the learning of songs and finger plays. Tone, volume, and pitch awareness is part of the music curriculum.
- ART – Exploratory, sensory art activities help the child experience a variety of media. Collages and creating mobiles are offered. Paints, chalk, pencils, paper, markers, glue, paste, and play dough are all available in a "free choice" activity center for the children to use as they wish.
- LARGE MOTOR – Movement activities including free dance, parachute handling, climbing, crawling, running and balancing are just a small part of the large motor program.
- SMALL MOTOR – From the handling of simple tools to completing pegboards, children are continually offered opportunities to develop their smaller muscles, an important prerequisite for writing.
- DRAMATIC PLAY – From "playing house" to being a cashier in a pretend grocery store to repairing cardboard automobiles in a child-sized garage, the children are able to practice roles that productive adults hold.

Transitions

Transitions to a new group can be very exciting and sometimes a little scary. We strive to make every move into a new classroom a pleasant, “seamless” experience for all. We always allow for a transitional period so that the child and parents gain gradual exposure to the room and its practices. This also allows the “new” teachers to learn about the child, family and their customs. Usually a transitional period lasts two weeks. Each day the child’s visits become a bit longer, gradually working up to a full day. A written transition plan is provided prior to the visits. Parents are always informed and involved in the transition process between classrooms as well as into and out of the program.

Daily Health Checks

Intent Statement

This policy outlines practice and procedures to ensure the health and safety of all of the children in child care settings. This policy sets forth the need for and description of a daily health care check upon the arrival of each child at the center and whenever a change in health status occurs while at the center. By following the policy of doing a daily health care check on each child, the parents/guardians of the children in our care can be assured of quality child care.

Procedure

The daily health check is a quick way for the child care provider to check a child’s well-being or a change in the child’s health status while at the center. The daily health check will be performed by a trained staff member upon the arrival of each child at the center. It will be determined by the center’s staff, not the parent/guardian, upon completion of the daily health check whether or not the child remains in care for that day. The daily health check is to be performed before the parent/guardian leaves the child at the center.

The exclusion of an ill child from care is determined by:

- Whether or not the child can participate in the activities planned for the day in his/her classroom/age group
- Whether or not the child requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the care needs of the other children at the center
- Whether keeping the child in care will pose an increased risk to other children and adults at the center

See the St. Cecilia ECLC Child Care Center’s policy on excluding ill children stated below and the staff handbook. The daily health check will be documented each day that the child is in care. If needed, due to a change in the health status of the child, the trained staff will perform additional health checks that will be recorded on the Daily Health Check Symptom Record.

1. Greet the child and parent/guardian. Ask the parent/guardian of a nonverbal child, “How is (name of the child)?” “How are you doing (to be asked to the parent/guardian)?” “Was there anything different last night?” “How did he/she sleep last night?” “Are there any changes at home that may cause him/her to act differently today (death of a pet, illness or death of a relative, change in family structure, etc.)?” Listen to what the parent/guardian says. Also ask these questions to the parent/guardian of a verbal child. Additionally, if the child is verbal, ask the child, “How are you today?” Listen to the child talk. Is the child complaining of anything? Is the child hoarse, wheezing or making other unusual sounds?
2. Look for signs of health or illness.
 - a. Breathing:

- 1) Is the child coughing?
 - 2) Is the child breathing fast, or having difficulty breathing?
 - 3) Is the child making any unusual sounds?
- b. Skin:
- 1) Does the child look pale or flushed?
 - 2) Do you see a rash, sores, swelling, or bruising?
 - 3) Is the child scratching his/her skin or scalp?
- c. Eyes, Nose, Ears, Mouth:
- 1) Do the child's eyes look red, crusty, watery, or other than normal?
 - 2) Is there a runny nose?
 - 3) Is the child pulling at his/her ears?
3. The child's parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible if the child requires minor first aid, has a head injury, has a facial injury, or requires transport to an emergency room. In the case of a situation requiring transport of a child to an emergency room, an ambulance (911) will be called first, and then the parent/guardian will be notified.
 4. If it is determined that there is a change in the child's health status while the child is in care, this will be documented on the Daily Health Check Symptom Record. This form will be retained by the center for three months after the last date on the form and it will be destroyed three months after the last date on the form. A verbal report and a copy of the Daily Health Symptom Record will be given to the parent/guardian.
 5. The center will arrange staff and space to temporarily care for an ill child without compromising the care for the other children in the center's care while waiting for the parent/guardian to pick up the ill child.
 6. As a courtesy and to maintain communication, call the parent/guardian on any newly recognized signs or symptoms that do not require immediate action. This action will enable the parent/guardian to take any health measures that they deem appropriate.

Applicable

This policy applies to all staff, substitute staff, and parents/guardians and volunteers in the child care setting.

Communication

Parents/Guardians will review a copy of this policy upon enrollment of their child. A copy of this policy is stated in the parent handbook. This policy will be available for review by parents/guardians on the center's premises during regular business hours. Staff will also review and be given this policy in the staff handbook. Any changes to this policy will be shared with staff and parents/guardians.

Effective Date/Review Date

This policy is effective immediately. It will be reviewed yearly by the center director.

Health

Our center operates for well children and staff only. Children should be fully able to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Parents should provide appropriate changes of clothing so children do not become either chilled or overheated. Snow pants and boots are needed for snowy days. Light sweaters or jackets should be made available, as well. "Jellies", "flip-flops", and sandals are not appropriate for wear at school. Sun screens or diaper lotions may be applied by staff with the written permission of the parent on a center-supplied form.

Children with symptoms of communicable disease remain with a staff member until the parent or designated family representative arrives for the child. **Children must be picked up within one hour.** We take temperatures two times to assure accuracy. We make every effort, including cell phones and email, to reach the parents when a child is ill, but after 30 minutes, we will attempt to reach the emergency contacts indicated by the parents.

We will not serve children with:

- A fever of 100.4°F or above
- Severe coughing
- Rapid or difficult breathing
- Excessive fatigue or body aches
- Unusual spots, skin rashes or untreated, infected skin patches
- Diarrhea
- vomiting
- Evidence of head lice, scabies or other parasites
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of eye with obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning or itching
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- An infant or toddler may not remain with an open sore in or around the mouth

Children with fever over 100.4°F must be excluded for 72 hours fever free without the use of fever reducing medication. Children with other minor illnesses (such as skin rash) may be able to return once they have been medically cleared and symptom free for 24 hours. We will exclude all children in a family if one child shows signs of illness-especially those symptoms associated with COVID-19.

For COVID-19 and other highly communicable illnesses we will follow the guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Kentucky Division of Childcare and public health guidelines. If a child or family member is experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19 (shortness of breath coughing, sore throat, body aches, etc.) the child may not return until medically cleared and with a note from the doctor stating that they may return without risk of exposure to others. We reserve the right to override any doctor's note if conflicts with guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Kentucky Division of Childcare and public health guidelines.

It is our policy that staff with symptoms of illness remains away from the center.

We follow strict handwashing and disinfection procedures.

First Aid and Medicine

Prescription and nonprescription medication shall be administered to a childcare:

1. With written request of the child's parent or the child's prescribing health professional; and
2. According to the directions or instructions on the medication's label.

The child-care center shall keep a written record of the administration of medication, including:

- Time of each dosage;
- Date;
- Amount;
- Name of staff person giving the medication;

- Name of the child; and
- Name of the medication.

Rescue/Emergency Medication Release

There are some rescue medications that may have to be stored at the child care center, i.e., EPI pens, inhalers, diabetic or seizure medications. These are lifesaving medications that will need to be administered at a moment's notice. A blanket permission form or written instruction from a physician may be kept on file with the medications that includes: symptoms to watch for, administration directions, continued action plans that might include dialing 911 and notification of parents.

The child-care center shall keep a written record of the administration of medication, including:

- Time of each dosage;
- Date;
- Amount;
- Name of staff person giving the medication;
- Name of the child; and
- Name of the medication.

Blanket Sunscreen or Diaper Ointment

Staff is required to administer medication according to the directions or instructions on the medication's label. Sunscreen and diaper ointment can be given with a blanket permission form.

The child-care center shall keep a written record of the administration of medication, including:

- Time of each dosage;
- Date;
- Amount;
- Name of staff person giving the medication;
- Name of the child; and
- Name of the medication.

Nutrition

We provide nutritionally balanced morning and afternoon snack. The snacks include two food groups. Menus are posted in the lobby as well as each classroom. Copies are made available to parents upon request.

Breakfast

If your child does not have a chance to eat breakfast before he/she arrives, they may bring something to eat with them and we will provide the time and place for them to eat it.

Lunch

Lunch is served around 11:00/11:30. Please check with your child's classroom for an exact time. **EACH CHILD MUST BRING THEIR OWN LUNCH.** According to state regulations, unless your child is allergic to milk, he or she must drink whole milk for children 24 months and younger at lunchtime. Children 25 months of age and older have 1% milk at lunchtime. Please send milk with your child's lunch. Lunch **must include:**

- something from the bread group (bread, crackers, pasta, rice...)
- a protein (meat, fish, chicken, beans, cheese...)

- and either two vegetables **or** one fruit and one vegetable.

All four food groups **must** be represented in your child's lunch. **We are not able to heat or cut your child's food.** Please send lunch ready to eat.

Parents are always welcome to join us for lunch. Parents are sometimes asked to donate snack items.

Nut Free Zone

St. Cecilia Early Childhood Learning Center is a "NUT FREE" school. We ask that you assist us in providing our students with a safe school environment. It is important that there is strict avoidance of all nuts and nut containing products (peanuts, walnuts, pecans, almonds, peanut butter, almond butter, Nutella, etc.) to avoid a life-threatening allergic reaction. To reduce the chance of this occurring, please be mindful of the following:

1. If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please be sure your child's hands and face have been thoroughly washed before entering the school.
2. Please do not allow your child to bring any food items containing nuts or nut products into the school or store them in their locker for after school consumption. (Please read all labels.)
3. When planning your child's lunch, we ask that no foods containing nuts or nut products be brought into the school under any circumstances. (Please read all labels)

Your understanding and support in helping us to provide a "NUT FREE ZONE" within the St. Cecilia's Early Childhood Learning Center is greatly appreciated.

Safety

Safety of children and adults is the top priority at STC ECLC. All children are supervised by classroom staff members at all times. The following policy outlines specific measures to assure that all children are within sight and hearing of classroom staff at all times. *Children are never left alone or unsupervised.*

Classroom supervision

While children are engaged in the classroom, qualified staff members supervise at all times. Steps are taken to arrange classroom furniture so that children are able to move to small, calm areas that are able to be seen by active supervision. Active supervision requires that teachers move regularly to small groups while still visually scanning the room. Active supervision also requires that adequate numbers of adults are present in the classroom.

Appropriate staff to child ratios are maintained at all times. It is the responsibility of each staff member to assure that additional staff members are obtained if ratios appear to be out of compliance with State of Kentucky regulations.

Sometimes parents drop-off or pick-up their children at different times than planned. If in these circumstances the classroom is at risk for exceeding acceptable staff child ratio limits, it is essential that classroom staff notify the Director. Arrangements will be made for additional staff. Until additional staff arrive it may be necessary to ask the parent to wait in the room until the classroom staff numbers are adequate.

During free play, adults position themselves to see as much of the room as possible. And, classroom staff strategically place themselves around the room so that all areas are supervised. Special attention is paid to areas in which children likely require assistance or redirection.

Teachers must maintain an up-to-the-minute child roster and indicate the exact time a child arrives or departs on that roster. When a teacher moves with children to any space outside of the classroom the teacher must carry the roster with the names of children for whom they are responsible. Teacher regularly count and perform face-to-name attendance tracking throughout the day.

ECLC staff supervise children at nap times. Licensing regulations and ratios are followed at all times. Lighting during nap will be bright enough that sleeping children can be easily seen. If music is used, the volume is low enough so that children can be heard.

We ask that parents closely supervise their children on the driveway, lobby and elsewhere on the premises. It is recommended that as children exit from cars, they be offered a hand to hold. Sticking together seems to be a reasonable safety request. When going to the classroom, the family is asked to stay together. If there are multiple children in family, parents may leave a child with a staff member at the front desk while dropping off the other child.

Children must be signed in and out each day. Clip boards are located outside of each classroom. This is extremely important since this list is used to check attendance during emergency drills or events. Children are released only to persons for whom the staff has written permission from the parents. We ask to see photo identification. We may release children to either parent unless there is a restraining order or custody arrangement of which we have a copy. If a child will be absent, parents should call the center or email the Director to report the absence. If a child who is expected does not arrive, staff will call or email to check on the child's whereabouts. If someone other than a parent or guardian comes to pick up a child and we were not informed of the change, we must receive confirmation from the parent or cannot release the child.

No child is ever left alone or unsupervised. At arrival, parents are expected to help the child settle into play, which may require five minutes or so per child. Parents of our One and Two year olds complete a portion of the daily report form before departing. Parents are permitted access to all parts of the center at all times, including nap times and pre-admission tours or observations.

Incident or injury reports are completed whenever first aid is given, there is a blow to the head, whenever 911 or any unexpected event has occurred which jeopardizes the safety of others.

Admittance to the building is by a doorbell. All doors are locked at all times for security. Doors are easily opened from the inside in case of emergency. Parents and staff members are to be aware of others at the door who may "slip in" behind them. Parents and employees are asked to never admit an unfamiliar person.

Aerosol sprays are not used when children are present. Smoking is not permitted in the building or on the playground.

All center employees are required to report any suspicion of child abuse or child neglect. All teaching staff have training to recognize signs of neglect and abuse. We will report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Policies are in place to suspend for investigation a staff member suspected of abuse, in the unlikely event that it occurs.

Safety Drills and Procedures

St. Cecilia School maintains safety procedures for students and staff in all aspects of potential school safety issues. The school staff reviews the procedures often and practice drills are conducted periodically with the students to ensure preparedness. Monthly emergency drills are held at varying times and are documented by the Director. Documentation is posted in the lobby. Questions or information concerning our safety procedures should be directed to the Director. The city of Independence provides a School Resource Officer to St. Cecilia School. The officer will do periodic walk-throughs of the school to ensure safety procedures are being followed and to identify potential concerns. The SRO is also here to educate and assist in the daily operation of the school whenever needed.

First Aid – All school staff participates in First Aid, CPR, and AED training. This certification/training is held every other school year.

Fire – Fire drills will be conducted monthly throughout the school year. At the sound of a fire alarm, students should immediately stop and move quickly to the assigned exit. The exits are posted near the door of each room. Students should exit the school and remain silent throughout the fire drill. When the all clear signal is given, students may return to their classrooms.

Tornado – Tornado drills will be held twice during the school year. At the sound of a tornado warning, students should immediately stop and move quickly to their assigned shelter area. Maps are posted near each room's door. Students are to remain silent throughout the tornado drill. When the all clear signal is given, students may return to their classrooms.

Earthquake and Lock Downs – Earthquake drills and lockdown drills are conducted at least once each school year. Students are to follow the teacher's instructions during these drills.

Emergency Transportation

The center obtains written emergency transportation authorization from each parent or guardian before the child begins attending the program. We will not accept any children whose parents or guardians refuse to grant permission for emergency transportation.

If a child is seriously injured and needs treatment immediately, the center will call the life squad and for assistance transporting the child. A staff member will go the hospital with the child and will take the child's records. The parents will be called to meet the child and staff person at the hospital. The staff person remains at the hospital until the parent arrives or longer if possible.

Enrollment & Financial Information

Our hours of operation are **7:00 AM - 6:00 PM** daily Monday-Friday.

The Early Catholic Learning Center will follow St. Cecilia's school calendar which is attached. However, we will be in session on the scheduled NTI days as well as the PD days for faculty.

There is a **\$25 fee due at the time of registration**. When you register your child for care, we ask that you tell us on which days to expect your child and the approximate times so that we may have proper staffing and to maintain our high standard of quality.

We budget for everyday costs related to our dedicated teachers and our educational resources. To cover these costs, biweekly billing will reflect your child's schedule, whether your child is in attendance or not.

If you wish to bring your child on a day that is not in his/her normal routine, please give us a call at 859-363-4314 x304 to make sure we have availability for the day.

We offer full-day/half-day services for children from 12 months of age through preschool age. Tuition fees are collected bi-weekly. **Fees are as follows:**

\$35 a day/child
\$20 for half day/child (anything less than 5 hours)

No sick or vacation allowances are made. No reimbursements are given for unforeseen center closings or days missed due to illness. There are no fees charged for center holidays.

Children who have not departed the building by 6:00pm are considered "late pick-ups". We ask you to call if you know you are going to be late. After closing hours, if a child has not been picked up, staff members make all possible efforts to reach the parents and secondary contacts. Fees for late pick up are: \$1/minute.

Licensing states that we must have the following items ON FILE BEFORE a child can be admitted to start:

- a completed registration form
- a copy of your child's birth certificate
- a copy of your child's social security card
- a current immunization certificate
- parents must also complete an emergency card and general permission form.

School Closing Policy

St. Cecilia School and ECLC will follow, when able, Kenton County for winter weather school delays. **A one hour delay will mean the center will open at 8:00am and a two hour delay will have the center opening at 9:00am.** It should be noted that if there is a delay of an hour or more announced our Morning Preschool Class for that day will be cancelled.

If Kenton County closes, St. Cecilia may close or may choose to keep school in session. If school is in session on these days, each parent must make their own decision as to the hazards involved in getting to and from school. If a parent feels it is too hazardous to attempt getting to school, they should not make the attempt. When it becomes necessary to close or delay school, the following procedures will be followed:

1. An announcement will be made using the phone calling system.
2. The local news stations will be notified. Parents should look for **St. Cecilia – Independence and the status.**
3. An announcement will be made on social media.
4. If the decision to dismiss early is made by Kenton County, parents will be notified via email and phone calling system.

Termination of Services

A parent's right to withdraw a child from St. Cecilia Early Catholic Learning Center is respected. A two week written notice is required for withdrawal. There may be situations in which termination of service to an individual

child or family is initiated by center management. Although each circumstance is unique, efforts will be made by the parties concerned to improve the situation prior to a termination decision. If termination becomes necessary, a two-week written notice is generally provided.

Closing Statement

We hope that visitors and participants will sense that we have created a home away from home for our children. We appreciate feedback from any visitor or family member. We are pleased to elaborate on any facets of our program. Tours are available by prior arrangement to small groups of persons wishing to see quality programming for children.

Thank you for your continuing interest in quality child care in our community.

February 2021