

Mission Statement

Our mission is to inspire, educate, and nurture self-worth in each child we care for.

Our Goals

- Offer true quality child care by creating an environment where children feel safe, learn to trust, and feel comfortable exploring, growing and learning.
- Provide our children with quality educational experiences through hands-on activities that will allow them to observe, explore and interact with their environment.
- Maintain a fun, loving atmosphere that promotes healthy communication between staff, parents and children.

Our Values

- *Integrity* – honesty, trustworthy, reliability
- *Passion* – excitement, enthusiasm, delight
- *Trust* – faith, belief, hope, expectation, dependence, confidence, reliance
- *Caring* – kind, thoughtful, gentle, considerate, helpful, compassionate, loving
- *Dedication* – devotion, commitment, perseverance, loyalty

Our Principles

- Show respect for all individuals
- Teach children right values
- Seek to give the best care possible
- Cultivate and spread happiness and enjoyment of life
- Support growth, learning and development

Program Philosophy

At The Sunshine House Early Learning Center we value the positive learning experiences that happen during the first five years and realize that they can affect a child's lifelong educational journey. That journey is further enhanced during the elementary years. During the course of each child's time with us, our highly trained staff will facilitate learning by filling each day with teacher – and child-directed activities that will present physical, emotional, social, cognitive, creative and intellectual challenges in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. We believe that parents are a child's first teacher and we provide many opportunities for parents to get involved in their child's learning experiences.

Curriculum

The Sunshine House Early Learning Center uses the *Creative Curriculum* as a basis for our daily activities and classroom environments. This curriculum provides for each area of your child's development while providing opportunities for multicultural and inclusive experiences. We will consider the whole, individual child in our daily activity plans and provide experiences and environments that will encourage your child to explore and discover at their own pace and according to their own interests. While each classroom will have a daily schedule of activities, all schedules are flexible and can be changed at any time by the classroom lead teacher.

Educational Care Plan

In the event that a child needs specialized services outside our area of expertise:

1. A parent /teacher conference will be scheduled
2. An action plan will be agreed upon between parent and Center staff
3. Possible completion of screening request form for child to be observed by NWA Education Service Coop

Programs Offered

Infants: Ages: 6 weeks - 12 months

Infants will be loved, cuddled, talked to, played with and given a safe, secure environment to explore. Each child under 12 months will have their own crib and be carefully supervised. Good health and hygiene procedures will be followed (including hand washing, diapering, feeding and laundering procedures) to help control communicable diseases. Caregivers will fill out a daily report for each child to give you a complete record of your baby's care, including eating, diapering and sleeping.

Toddlers: Ages 13 – 24 months

Toddlers are developing rapidly in all areas. They are on the move and beginning to show independence, problem-solving skills and an understanding of language. These children are given opportunities to explore and learn through self-directed activities both indoors and outdoors. They are guided in building loving relationships with other children and adults and encouraged to develop self-help skills such as eating habits, toilet training and washing their own hands. Daily reports are provided to keep you informed about your child's eating, diapering/toilet training and sleeping.

Twos: Ages 25 – 36 months

Twos are gaining more independence and language skills as well as self-help skills. They are on the move and eager to explore their world. Through proper guidance and planning these children are encouraged to develop these skills through teacher and child-directed activities. They will be given opportunities to explore indoors and outdoors. We provide a daily report to keep you informed about your child's eating, diapering/toilet training and sleeping.

Threes: Ages 37 – 48 months

Threes are becoming more independent, verbal, and constantly exploring and testing the world around them. We provide them with a safe environment and a variety of experiences to explore. We help them to develop independence and teach them how to interact with their peers. Daily reports are provided that keep you informed about your child's eating, toileting, and sleeping.

Pre-K: Ages 4-5 years

Preschoolers are independent and creative. These children are given opportunities to enhance their creativity and curiosity through teacher and child-directed hands-on activities both indoors and outdoors. These activities will center around physical, cognitive, social and emotional development that will help each child have a successful start in kindergarten. We provide a daily report to let you know what your child did that day so you can have a meaningful conversation at home about their day.

All ages are approximate and may vary a month or so depending on the child's readiness to move up and/or availability in the next classroom. All ages are calculated according to the child's age by August 1st. Our programs are based on a twelve month period that coincides with the Fayetteville Public School calendar. All classes advance once per year in August. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis.

Staff/Child Ratios

We use the ratios recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

	<u>Our ratios</u>		<u>State Licensing ratios</u>	
	# of staff	# of children	# of staff	# of children
Infants (6 weeks – 12 months)	1	4	1	6
Toddlers (13-24 months)	1	5	1	6
Two's (25-36 months)	1	6	1	9-12
Three's (37-48 months)	1	8	1	12
Pre-K (4-5 years)	1	10	1	15

Note: Each room has a full-time Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher, and either a full or part-time Teacher's Aide.

Preparing For the First Day

It is important to us that you and your child have a positive experience at The Sunshine House from the very beginning. By taking care of a few details in advance, you can help ensure a smooth transition for your child to a new environment. Here's what we suggest:

Before the first day, you are welcome to come with your child and spend some time in the classroom or on the playground with him. You may participate in the class activities and help your child get acquainted with the environment in the safety of your company.

Create anticipation by talking with your child about things you noticed on your visit. Try to remember positive teachers, classmates, wall displays, and activities that your child experienced. If you get excited, your child will most likely feel some excitement as well.

Be sure to return all paperwork to the office before your child's first day. We are required by state regulations to have your child's emergency contact information, authorized pick-up, medical history and immunization records on file as soon as your child is enrolled.

Your Child's First Day

What to do

We suggest that you arrive a little early so there is no feeling of being rushed. Get your child's things settled in their new cubby and stay as long as necessary to help your child feel comfortable. It is our experience that even the most apprehensive children settle down shortly after the parent leaves. Give your child a kiss, hug and some reassuring words about when you'll be back. For your own peace of mind, feel free to call the Center at anytime during the day to see how your child is doing. And, of course you also have the peace of mind to go online to our website, www.sunshinehousekids.net, to see your child at any time.

When you arrive and depart, you will be required to sign your child in/out in the computer in the lobby. You must always accompany your child to and from the classroom and notify the teacher of your child's arrival/departure.

What to wear

Children should always wear comfortable, washable clothing and shoes (no flip flops or crocs please). Our activities are active, hands-on and sometimes get messy. We will not be able to restrict a child's activities in order to keep clothes clean. Remember that children's clothing tends to get well used during play, so special clothes are best saved for other occasions. The children will experience our Outdoor Classroom on a daily basis, so clothing should be appropriate for the season and weather.

What to bring

Each child will have a cubby in the classroom to store personal items. We ask that every child at the Center have a change of seasonally-appropriate clothes, including shirt, pants, underwear and socks in case the fun spills over onto their clothes. Please be sure to label all items brought from home including jackets and coats. We also encourage your child to bring any security item needed for naptime, such as a blanket or stuffed animal. Check with your child's lead teacher for any additional items they may require. Parents are required to bring diapers, 2pkgs of wipes each month, bottles, formula, and baby food for infants and toddlers. The exception to this would be if you have signed up for our diaper service. We also ask that during the months of April – September each parent provide 1 can of sunscreen and 1 can of insect repellent each month.

If you bring a diaper bag for your child we ask that you store it in the closet located in the front lobby. Many times there are items kept in the diaper bag that we cannot allow in the classroom; therefore, it's easier to keep the bags outside the classroom out of children's reach.

We ask that the children do not bring toys from home as we cannot replace them if they are lost or damaged (exceptions made for "Show-N-Tell" in the Preschool Rooms). We have a variety of toys in the classroom for them to explore. You can talk with your child's lead teacher about bringing items that might enhance the classroom experience

regarding classroom investigations or projects. We have a Lost & Found in the office for you to find anything you might be missing.

What to expect

Every child reacts differently to a new situation or change in routine. Don't be discouraged if your child doesn't adjust quickly. This is normal and it can take up to 2 or 3 weeks for your child to feel comfortable in her new environment. By the same token, your child may adjust very quickly and have no anxiety. This is also normal and has nothing to do with their attachment to you.

Partners in Learning

The Sunshine House has carefully chosen our staff because of their genuine love of children and enthusiasm for teaching and guiding young children on their path to becoming independent, creative, self-confident explorers of the world. Every member of our staff goes through an extensive training program upon being hired.

Each classroom has a lead teacher who will be in the classroom for most of your child's day. Each lead teacher will be responsible for planning and implementing activities to guide your child through each day of learning and fun. Lead teachers are supported by a team of caregivers who will work together to ensure consistency throughout the day.

All employees must have a current TB test. They are also screened through state and/or national criminal background checks. All employees must be at least 18 years of age and meet the minimum state licensing requirements.

Family Days & Parent/Teacher Conferences

The connection between The Sunshine House and its families is very important to us. We will have three "Family Days" per year in October, April, and July. "Family Days" begin as a usual day for you to drop off your child. At 11:00 AM we invite you to return to participate in a variety of activities that your child's teachers will have prepared for you. Family Day will end at 1:00 PM and the afternoon will be reserved for Parent/Teacher conferences that you will schedule through your child's classroom. If you choose not to participate in the activities, you are still required to pick up your child by 1:00 PM (October & April only).

*Please note that for the July "Family Day" we will not have Parent/Teacher conferences. You will be invited to have lunch with your child and participate in an activity that your child's teachers will have prepared for you. We will remain open for the remainder of the day.

Hours of Operation

The Sunshine House Early Learning Center is open from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday with the exception of the following scheduled closings.

Labor Day	Monday	September 5, 2011
Family Day*	Friday (1/2 day)	October 28, 2011
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday	November 24, 2011
Thanksgiving Holiday	Friday	November 25, 2011
Christmas Eve Observed	Friday	December 23, 2011
Christmas Day Observed	Monday	December 26, 2011
Family Day*	Friday (1/2 day)	April 6, 2012
Memorial Day	Monday	May 28, 2012
Independence Day	Wednesday	July 4, 2012
Family Day*	Friday	July 20, 2012

*On Family Days your child must be picked up by 1:00 PM whether you participate in the activities or not with the exception of the Family Day scheduled during the summer.

Drop-off Policy

While we don't have set hours that your child must attend we do ask that each child arrive at the Center no later than 10:00AM so we can have an adequate headcount for lunch. If you will be arriving later than 10:00AM we ask that you call the Center to inform us of your estimated time of arrival. Please note that it makes it difficult on children and staff when children are brought in during lunch time or naptime; therefore, we ask that this not be a daily occurrence. This is the busiest time of the day and every effort you can make to help keep this time undisturbed the better we can care for each child during this time. We appreciate your support in this area.

Late Pick-up Policy

We understand that time is precious and unexpected things arise. But you must pick-up your child by 6:00 p.m. Children become upset when parents are late picking them up, and this also creates staffing and licensing issues for the Center. Your child is only allowed to be in our care for a certain number of hours. Also, our caregivers work very hard to care for your child during the day; therefore, it is important for them to have time for themselves and their families. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute after 6:00 will be charged to you and paid directly to the staff member in charge. If your child is still at the Center more than one hour after closing and we have not been able to contact anyone listed on your child's enrollment form, we will consider your child abandoned and state licensing requires us to call Social Services who will pick up your child. **Please call if you experience an emergency so that we may reassure your child and avoid any unnecessary panic.**

If the Center staff observes a child being picked up by any adult who demonstrates an inability to safely transport the child, those concerns will be voiced to that adult in the interest of the child. That adult will be asked to contact another responsible adult to come transport the child. If that adult insists on unsafely transporting the child, local law enforcement will be notified to ensure the safety of the child.

Weather Closings

If inclement weather conditions prevent the Center from opening at the regularly scheduled time, an announcement will be made on our website (www.sunshinehousekids.net) and when possible also on the following television stations: TV Channel 40/29, KFSM-TV Channel 5, and KNWA-Channel 9. When the Center closes during regular hours of operation, parents/guardians will be called and are responsible for picking up their children promptly.

Admissions

The Sunshine House offers full-time and part-time enrollment. Part-time will be on a limited availability and will be on a first come, first serve basis by classroom and determined by the Director.

In order for a child to be admitted, the Center must have a completed enrollment form and current immunization records for that child before the child's first day. Children will not be admitted without these documents. Parents/guardians are required to notify the office of any changes in home/work phone numbers and addresses, place of employment and family/marital status. This information must be kept current so that we may be able to contact you in case of an emergency. An enrollment form will be provided at the end of each school year for the upcoming fall, but can be updated at any time. Children who do not have current and up-to-date information may be suspended from care until the information is received.

Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. A child may be placed on a waiting list in the event that the age-appropriate class is full. This **does not** guarantee that child a place. When there is an opening, eligible families will be contacted in the order of their waiting-list date starting with the earliest date. Should a family choose to decline the offer of placement; the next eligible family will be contacted. Priority is always given to siblings of currently enrolled students. When a family chooses to accept the offer, the one-time \$100.00 registration fee will be due immediately in order to hold a place for that child. ***This registration fee is non-refundable.***

When an opening cannot be filled from our waiting list, The Center will advertise for enrollment through the local public media for the purpose of informing all persons in the community of openings. Children are considered for enrollment regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, religion, or disabling conditions.

All personal information regarding enrolled children and their families will remain confidential and will be respected.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is due on Monday and you can make payments weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. **Please note, there is no tuition decrease for sick days, vacation days or snow days.** Payments that are more than 10 days late will be subject to a late fee of 10% of your child's weekly tuition each week until tuition is current. If payment is more than 15 days late and arrangements have not been made with the Center Director, your child will lose his/her place in the class and that place will be offered to a new student. All payment arrangements must be approved through the Center Director. A \$25 fee will be charged for all returned checks. If paying with cash, please have exact change. The Center does not keep change on hand.

Billing statements for the next month will be disbursed by the 25th of each month through your child's classroom. If you have any questions regarding your account please contact the Center's office.

Tuition Rates

Infants	\$190 per week (\$38 per day)
Toddlers	\$185 per week (\$37 per day)
Two's	\$185 per week (\$37 per day)
Preschool	\$175 per week (\$35 per day)
P/T – 2 days	\$80 per week (\$40 per day)
P/T – 3 days	\$120 per week (\$40 per day)

Registration Fee*	\$100.00 per child or \$150.00 per family
Activity Fee**	\$75.00 if child attends 3 or more days, \$50.00 if child attends only 2 days

*Our one-time Registration Fee is due upon enrollment and is non-refundable.

**Our Activity Fee is due at the time of enrollment for new students and August 15th and January 15th for returning students.

All tuition and fees are subject to change.

Diaper Service

The Sunshine House is pleased to offer a diaper service to you. If you sign-up for this service we provide all your diapers for you! No more worrying about bringing diapers every week or making sure you have enough. For an additional \$10 per week for 3-5 days/week and \$5 per week for 2 days/week we will take this worry off your shoulders. As a parent you will spend at least \$10 per week in diapers anyway, so why not let us take that burden for you? Sign-up sheets are included in your Parent Packet.

Friends & Family Club

If you sign-up, each month your child will do a special piece of artwork for a family member that may, or may not, live out of town and we will mail it to them! It's a fun and easy way for those closest to your child to be a part of their preschool experience! The cost is \$30.00 for the first address, and \$10.00 for each additional address you want us to mail artwork to. This will cover any postage, envelopes, etc. we will need for sending it throughout the year!

Financial Assistance

The Sunshine House Early Learning Center is a participant in the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Assistance voucher program. All interested families can get more information from the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services by calling 1-800-322-8176 or visiting the website <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport.html>. Brochures are also available in the front office. All families approved for vouchers must follow the admission procedures for the Center. A copy of the Certificate of Authorization from DHHS must be on file before a child will be enrolled under vouchers.

Withdrawal

When you are certain your child will no longer be attending, the Center requires that you fill out the “Withdrawal Form” located in the back of the Parent Handbook. We ask that you give the Center at least a two week notice for withdrawal. If no notice is given, all tuition and fees will continue to be charged until your child’s place is filled with a new student and you will be held responsible for paying this in full. No tuition reimbursements will be given for early withdrawals.

Authorized Pick-Up

Parent/guardians are required to notify the Center in writing if someone else will pick up your child. Any person other than a parent/guardian that is authorized to pick up your child must be listed on your child’s Enrollment Form. In the event of an emergency the Center requires written consent with a parent/guardian signature for anyone not listed on the Enrollment Form to pick up your child. Persons may be added to the Enrollment Form at any time. Any person other than a parent/guardian will be required to show a photo I.D. before your child will be released to them.

Health Policy

At the Center we strive to maintain a clean, healthy environment for our children and staff. One ill child can infect the whole classroom and ultimately the whole facility. We are not licensed to provide care for children who are ill. If your child shows any of the following symptoms, he/she must be kept home until they are ***without symptoms for 24 hours*** or a physician’s note is provided. This will minimize the spread of infection and allow appropriate recuperation time for your child. Even though your child may appear fine at home, they may not be ready for the active day they will have in their classroom. If your child is kept home because of illness, we ask that you call the office so that we may be informed and look for symptoms in other children to help control the spread of infectious diseases.

Symptoms

- Fever of 101 degrees or more
- Colored drainage from eyes, nose or ears
- Vomiting (2 or more times)
- Diarrhea (3 or more times)
- Rash or sores not associated with diapering
- Sore throat associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck

Infectious diseases

- Pink Eye
- Ringworm
- Scabies
- Head Lice (live or nits)
- Impetigo

If your child shows any of the above symptoms after drop-off, you will be called to pick him up as soon as possible. If we cannot reach you we will call other emergency contacts you have listed. We will provide an “Ill Child Information Form” for you to sign. On this form will be the date and time your child may return to the Center *if there are no more occurrences of the symptoms*. **In cases of the above symptoms or diseases, your child will not be permitted to return to the Center earlier than 24-hours without written consent from a physician.** This policy is set to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses and communicable diseases. Also, if your child is not healthy enough to participate in the entire daily schedule (including the outdoor classroom) he should be kept home for the day. Your consideration in observing these policies will help keep our staff and all of the children in our care healthier.

Medical Conditions

Please notify your child’s lead teacher if your child has a specific medical condition we need to be aware of. You will need to bring a statement from your child’s doctor confirming the condition and include any special instructions or emergency procedures.

Does Your Child Need Health Insurance?

ARKids First provides health insurance to more than 70,000 Arkansas children who otherwise might have gone without. ARKids First offers two coverage options. ARKids A offers low-income children a comprehensive package of benefits. ARKids B provides coverage for families with slightly higher incomes.

Eligibility for ARKids First is based on your family income and other factors. Only the income of the parents and children you want covered is counted. Children must be under age 19 and living in your home. Children must be

U.S. citizens or qualified legal aliens. If your children are not U.S. citizens, you must provide documentation of the child's alien status.

More information and an ARKids application is included in the parent packet upon enrollment or you can call 1-800-275-1131 or visit www.arbetterbeginnings.com.

Medication

Medication will be administered only if the dosage schedule cannot be adjusted around the child's time at the Center OR if the child has a disability or chronic medical condition, such as asthma, that may require immediate medication. Before our staff can administer any type of medication, you must complete a "Medication Administration Request" form which is available through your child's classroom. Ongoing treatment for chronic conditions, such as allergies or asthma, should be administered at home whenever possible. All medication must be in its original container, not have an expired date and your child's name must be clearly written on the container. Licensing requires us to have the following information: Date, Type, Drug name, Time to be administered (please note the last dosage you gave child) and Dosage (we will not exceed dosage on container/box). All medications will be kept in a locked container that is kept safely out of the children's reach.

Injuries/Emergency Treatment

While precautions are taken to avoid injuries, childhood accidents do happen as your child explores new physical skills and muscle control. All of our staff is trained in basic first-aid for minor injuries. In the event that emergency treatment is needed here is the protocol our staff will follow:

- 1) Level 1 - If your child suffers a minor injury (i.e. small scrape or cut) that requires first-aid, you will be notified with an "Accident Report" when you pick up your child.
- 2) Level 2 – If your child suffers a somewhat more serious injury (i.e. bump on head, or possibility of stitches) we will contact you to come to the Center to further evaluate your child.
- 3) Level 3 - In the event of a severe or critical injury (i.e. stitches or head injury) you will be notified immediately, we will contact your child's designated physician and call 911 for your child to be transported to the nearest medical facility for treatment.*

*If an ambulance is required, costs incurred are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. A parent/guardian signature on the "Authorization for Treatment" section of your child's enrollment form is required for our records.

**Please note: If we cannot reach you, we will refer to those listed on your child's enrollment form.

Guidance Policy

One of the goals we have for your child is to help them develop self-discipline and to be able to choose appropriate forms of behavior. We are committed to guiding your child toward acceptable choices through redirecting, role playing or removal from the situation. The use of physical punishment is never permitted, nor do we use degrading or embarrassing actions or words. Discipline will never be associated with food, rest, toilet training or illness.

Our general guidelines for dealing with inappropriate behavior are as follows:

1. Model and reinforce appropriate behavior
2. Make expectations clear and simple
3. Role play appropriate behavior with the children
4. Ignore inappropriate behavior when possible
5. Redirect children's attention to appropriate activities
6. Talk with the child about the inappropriate behavior in a positive, nurturing manner
7. Communicate behavior problems to the parent/guardian through an "Incident Report"
8. Use objective observations of the child's behavior to determine patterns and possible solutions

If the problem cannot be resolved through these steps, a parent/teacher conference may be requested to find a solution. The Center Director may also participate if needed. If the problem continues after all other options have been exhausted you may be asked to withdraw your child from the Center. Please let us know of any events in your child's home life that might affect his/her behavior at the Center so that we may be better informed when guiding inappropriate behavior.

Biting Policy

Biting is a common occurrence in facilities that serve children under 3 years of age. Infants who bite usually do so in an effort to explore, the same way they would a toy. Some toddlers simply have more of a sensory need to bite than others. In these cases, many chewable toys are provided. A verbal toddler who is communicating through biting is encouraged to use words instead. Appropriate words will be given to the child such as, "John, use your words. Tell Sue, 'That's mine'." A child who is chosen often as a victim is encouraged to be more assertive. If a child is biting to get attention, the Center staff will find appropriate times during the day to give that child extra attention. Biting is never appropriate, but it is normal behavior and is not intentional for infants and toddlers. However, we understand that this is an issue that concerns many parents of infants and toddlers.

The Center's staff deals with biting in the following steps:

1. The victim always gets the first response. They receive attention, consoling and any first-aid that might be necessary.
2. The biter is dealt with firmly but lovingly. He/she is told that it hurts, we don't use our teeth on people, and it is not allowed in the classroom. Also, with parent consent we will place the child in "time-out" (1 min. per year of the child's age).
3. The biter is then redirected to another activity.
4. For all bites that leave a mark, an "Accident Report" is filled out and presented to the victim's parents.
5. Parents/guardians are contacted regarding all bites that break the skin.
6. If a child bites repeatedly, a parent/teacher conference will be requested and the following actions will apply:
 - a) If a child bites two times in one day the child will be, briefly, removed from the classroom and the parent will be notified.
 - b) If a child bites a third time in one day, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day.
 - c) If a child is sent home more than twice in one week they will be suspended for one week.
 - d) In the event that the child's biting continues to be "excessive" the Director will then discuss with the parents the child's future at The Sunshine House.

We log each biting occurrence so when we have a child who frequently bites we can look back over each instance and see if there is a pattern to why the child is biting (i.e. victim, activity, time of day, etc.). We, then, will make adjustments as needed. If there is no real pattern to the occurrences, we will assign a staff member to the "biter" to shadow them through the phase. Their job is to catch the child before they bite and tell them calmly but firmly, "No biting. It hurts!" and then redirect them to another activity (a brief period of time-out may also be included). Our hopes would be that eventually the child will get past the phase. All children are closely supervised at all times. However, just as all falls cannot be prevented, all bites cannot be prevented.

We believe it is our job as caregivers, to ensure the safety of all children in our care. If there is one child jeopardizing the safety of others by frequently biting, action will be taken. Sometimes, no matter how hard we try to fix the situation, no matter how patient we are, a child just may not be a good match with our program. But this will be our last resort, after exhausting all other possibilities.

Child Abuse Policy

Every employee of The Sunshine House Early Learning Center is a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect and will report any such information to the Child Maltreatment Hotline (1-800-482-5964).

Childcare Licensing Specialists, CCFS Special Investigations and Law Enforcement may interview children or inspect a child's file at any time for investigative purposes and/or for determining compliance with Licensing Requirements without parental consent.

Emergencies

Emergency procedures and diagrams are posted in each classroom. All caregivers are trained in these procedures as well as basic first-aid. Fire and tornado drills are practiced on a monthly basis by children and all staff. If an actual emergency or evacuation occurs you will be notified as soon as possible. Our first priority will be to keep the children as safe as possible.

Field Trips

As part of our curriculum, we may be periodically taking the Pre-K children on field trips to enhance their learning experience and help make connections with the community. Parents/guardians will be informed of all field trips and outings well in advance and asked to participate*. Parents/guardians will be required to sign a permission form before their child will be allowed to participate in the trip. Parents are required to make other arrangements for their child to be cared for if they choose for their child not to participate in the field trip. **Children may not stay at the Center while their class is away.**

*Our Center is not currently insured to transport children away from the Center so we would ask for parents/guardians to volunteer to help transport the children.

We are very fortunate to live right next to Gulley Park and we enjoy taking advantage of it! Periodically, the classes will walk the children over to the park and play on the playground and/or use the park for class projects and learning experiences. We do need parent/guardian permission to take your child off the school premises; therefore, a parent/guardian signature is required on the "Authorization for Field Trips" section of your child's enrollment form.

Learning Center staff/child ratios will be maintained on all trips away from the facility including transport time. Children will be closely monitored at all times during the trip and the children's emergency information will accompany them on all trips.

Seat belt and child safety seat laws will be strictly followed on all trips, so be prepared to leave your child's car safety seat at the Center on field trip days. All vehicles will be licensed, insured and in proper working condition.

Portfolios and Assessments

At The Sunshine House Early Learning Center we want to provide the best early learning experience we can for your child. One of the ways we do this is through portfolios. Your child's portfolio will contain photographs, artwork, assessments and other items that will show your child's progress throughout the year. Your child's progress will be assessed at least 2 times per school year using our curriculum's assessment tool. Assessments are not meant to put a label on your child, but to help us better serve your child's individual needs. Your child's lead teacher will set up a conference with you to discuss these assessments and share the portfolio with you. This is also a time for you and your child's teacher to discuss any concerns you may have.

Nutrition

To get your child off to a good start we ask that you serve them breakfast before you arrive at the Center. Nutritious snacks are provided at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. Weekly menus are sent home each month and also posted in each classroom as well as in the lobby. We ask that children do not bring food, candy or gum into the Center for any reason. If you wish to participate in a nutritional experience with your child's class, please contact your child's lead teacher.

If your child requires a special diet for medical reasons, please inform the office so that we may prepare an appropriate choice for your child for lunch or snack. We must have a doctor's note on file. We do not honor individual preferences, knowing that children often learn to eat new foods they have previously refused.

Food Allergies

Please notify your child's lead teacher if your child has food allergies. You will need to bring a statement from your child's doctor confirming the food allergy and including any special instructions or emergency procedures. Menu items with equivalent nutritional value will be substituted for allergy-causing foods.

Naptime

Naptimes for infants up to 14 months of age are determined on an individual basis and an individual crib is provided for infants up to 12 months of age. Toddlers and preschoolers take one nap right after lunch. The Center provides a cot, bottom sheet and top cover. Children are allowed to bring any security items that they need to help them sleep. If older children no longer sleep during this time, state licensing requires that they rest quietly for at

least one hour. Crib sheets are changed daily or more often if wet or soiled. All cot sheets and blankets are washed weekly.

Parent Communication

Periodically the Center office will send home important information and newsletters through your child's classroom. Please ask your child's lead teacher about where to find this in the classroom. There is also a Family Information bulletin board in the lobby for your convenience. Parents/guardians may request a conference at any time with a teacher or administrator.

Our staff will appreciate a brief conversation with you each morning about your child's previous night or weekend in order to further their relationship with your child. Changes in the daily schedule or routine can also be conveyed at this time.

Birthday Parties

Birthdays are important to every child and we will accommodate any parent wishing to include their child's class in the celebration. These arrangements should be made with your child's lead teacher. Birthday celebrations are strictly voluntary and you are not obligated to celebrate at the Center. However, we do have a few important rules. Because of food allergies, our concern for good nutrition, and Child Care Food Program regulations, we ask that no homemade food be brought into the classrooms *for any reason*. However, you may purchase store bought snacks or make arrangements with our kitchen staff to have nutritious refreshments prepared at the Center. Also, because balloons have been known to cause choking in young children, ***no balloons will be allowed into the Center***. For parties held away from the Center, invitations may be distributed through the classroom if everyone in the class is invited. If everyone is not invited, please send them through the mail.

Grievance Procedures

If parents have any concerns about anything they experience at the Center, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Talk with the child's lead teacher and explain the concern.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved with the lead teacher, consult the Director.
3. A written summary of the decision made by the Director will be sent to all involved and kept on file.

Parent Participation

We have an open-door policy at the Center. You are welcome and invited to come by anytime you wish. Your child will be made available to you at any time. You may call anytime during the day to check on your child or leave a message for his/her teacher. We encourage you to talk with your child's lead teacher about opportunities to get involved with the classroom through Family Days, story time, field trips, parties, etc.

We offer many opportunities for parents/guardians to be involved outside the classroom as well. We have fundraisers, field trips, community involvement projects, teacher appreciation weeks, and special parties and events. You can be as involved as you want to be and we want you to be!

