

HADDONFIELD CHILD CARE



PARENT HANDBOOK

2009-10

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of HADDONFIELD CHILD CARE is to inspire creativity, promote mutual respect, and encourage opportunities for enriching the lives of children while providing a safe, caring environment in our before and after school programs.

PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT

HCC believes that staff, children and families are entitled to a peaceful, non-threatening environment in which all people, young and old, are respected and respectful. We will not tolerate threatening or aggressive behavior by children, family members, or staff. Anyone exhibiting such behavior may be immediately barred from further participation in the program.

The behavior of adults can directly impact the feeling of safety and security of children. The program cannot allow children or staff to be exposed to verbally or physically abusive behavior. Any behavior by an adult, which is deemed physically or emotionally threatening by the staff and/or the Executive Director, may result in the barring of that person from the program site. Since parents must have immediate access to their children at all times, any barring of a parent from the site may necessarily result in removal of the child from the program as well.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

Haddonfield Child Care is a private, not-for-profit organization founded to provide care for kindergarten through eighth grade children before and after their regular school hours. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. This care is provided on site at each of the Haddonfield schools currently being served by Haddonfield Child Care:

- J. F. Tatem School
- Elizabeth Haddon School
- Central School
- Haddonfield Middle School

In order to participate, children must be currently enrolled in one of these schools. Children must attend the program at the same school they attend. The only exceptions are:

- Kindergarten children enrolled in EDKP, who must be transported from their home school to the school where the EDKP program is housed.
- Children sent out-of-district by the Haddonfield Public Schools for special services. Attendance by children sent out of district will be by special arrangement between the schools and the HCC Executive Director.

CALENDAR

The HCC programs operate on a school calendar year, and each program will follow the Haddonfield Public Schools calendar. Please check the Haddonfield Public Schools calendar for starting and ending dates, school closings, and early dismissal days.

HCC provides care beginning at dismissal time on each day school is in regular session, and on scheduled (entire school) early dismissal days. Your child will be expected at the program if it is his/her regular day of the week to attend. If your child will not be attending, or it is not your normal attendance day but care is needed, please contact the HCC Office in advance to make arrangements.

Unscheduled or emergency late openings or early closings (those not appearing on the regular school calendar), and early dismissal days affecting only specific schools or grades, may or may not be covered by HCC. This will depend upon the circumstances, the number of children involved, and availability of sufficient staff. Please check with the HCC Office for further information in these circumstances.

There will be no program on snow days, school closing days, or during the summer. For detailed information on weather related closings, please refer to our Snow Policy, included in your Parent Packet. Though not currently offered, you will be notified should any special full day programs be planned for teacher in-service or other school closing days. These would require advance sign up and would be at an added fee.

HOURS OF OPERATION

SCHOOL- AGE CARE (SAC) PROGRAMS

In schools where sufficient enrollment permits, a Before School program may be offered from 7:30 a.m. until school begins. The After School programs run from dismissal to 6:00 p.m. daily. Parents have the option of a 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. pick-up time for billing purpose, but are welcome to pick up earlier if they wish. There will be no tuition credit, however, for early pickup.

EXTENDED DAY KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM (EDKP)

When the children attend the **A.M. Kindergarten** session, EDKP begins at approximately 11:10. The children are picked up by bus at their home school and transported to the EDKP classroom. Regular EDKP ends at 3:15 p.m.; however, EDKP children may be enrolled at the after school program at the EDKP site for after school hours until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. When these children need before school care, they will attend the before school program at their own elementary school.

Children attending the **P.M. Kindergarten** session may go directly to the EDKP classroom as early as 7:30 a.m. to join in the before school program, with the regular EDKP session beginning in the same room at 8:30 a.m. Those not attending kindergarten at that site are transported by bus to afternoon kindergarten at their home schools beginning at approximately 12:05 p.m. For care following afternoon kindergarten, the children may be enrolled in the HCC after school program at their own elementary school.

Children enrolled in kindergarten located at the EDKP site may participate in the EDKP, and will remain at that school for all programs.

HCC contracts with a transportation company for bus services to/from EDKP. Our regular bus is equipped with seat belts, and an HCC staff member rides on the bus with the children. On rare occasions the bus

may be delayed due to traffic conditions, or severe weather conditions. The schools will be notified that there will be a schedule disruption, and generally this can be accommodated. However, should transportation be completely unavailable due to inclement weather or extremely poor road conditions, HCC reserves the right to cancel EDKP or open only if parents/guardians are able to provide transportation, at our discretion.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

Regular school rules of behavior apply to the HCC program, and all children participate in the development of rules specific to their program. In order for our programs to be effective, parents/guardians must be supportive of the actions of the staff and administration. Parents/guardians should discuss the rules with their children to affirm their importance and the expectation that children will follow them. Children will also be asked to sign a contract agreeing to certain standards of behavior.

DISCIPLINE

HCC feels that a positive approach to discipline is appropriate and effective. The full HCC Policy on Positive Guidance is included at the program site, the HCC Office, and on our website.

In the case of typical, manageable behavior problems, the staff will work to maintain the child in the program, while helping the child to modify his/her problem behavior. Following certain disciplinary actions, incident forms will be filled out and a copy given to the child's parent. Should these problems continue, parents/guardians may be asked to meet with the child's Program Supervisor and/or the Executive Director to discuss the concerns and possible solutions. Failure to accede to this request, or to follow the recommendations resulting from the discussion, may be cause for suspension or removal of the child from the program. Serious and/or persistent behavior problems may also be cause for suspension or removal of the child from the program (see the Discipline Policy).

If, after repeated notice of behavior problems, or no improvement following discussion of serious problems with the child's parent(s)/guardians, HCC decides to disenroll a child, the parent will be notified of the effective date of the termination of enrollment in writing, and every effort will be made to notify the parent in person or by telephone first.

Since HCC makes every effort to maintain children in the program, suspension and/or expulsion are a last resort, and therefore the previous incident reports and/or discussions with the parent about the seriousness of the situation constitute prior warning, and disenrollment may be immediate. HCC also reserves the right to remove a child without notice if, in the opinion of the Executive Director, his/her behavior poses a serious threat to the safety or well being of the other children, staff, or the child. All expulsions of children from the program are done with the prior knowledge and approval of the President of the HCC Board of Trustees, or his/ her designate in the absence of the President.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

HCC strives to accommodate all children who are enrolled in the schools we serve. Acceptance of all children is conditional upon the child's ability to function safely and appropriately within the current structure and curriculum of the program involved. For some children, the HCC program structure may not be appropriate. When such incongruities become apparent, HCC will make reasonable attempts to accommodate the child's individual needs. We reserve the right to remove a child if we find those efforts cannot solve the problem, and/or the child cannot function within this type of program or curriculum.

In the case of a new applicant with special needs, each child is evaluated individually with the parents, and with the classroom teacher or other school personnel as needed, to determine whether the program is appropriate and can meet or be adapted to meet the child's needs. In some cases, accommodation may include the condition that enrollment may need to be delayed until a special needs care plan can be developed, and/or specific training needed by staff can be completed.

Please be aware that the schools do not automatically notify HCC if your child is classified, or being evaluated by the child study team. However, please feel free to invite HCC administrative or program staff to participate in the process. In fact, we encourage you to do this, as way for HCC to offer any insights we may have regarding your child's recreational needs or abilities, and to engage with therapists or other team personnel in order to make your child's time in HCC more comfortable and successful.

It is always best for a child to have a consistent program in place throughout the day. Parents/guardians of children who are classified by the Child Study Team are encouraged to share any IEP's or care plans with the HCC Executive Director in order to determine whether accommodations in the program structure need to be made to insure such consistency

LICENSING

The Office of Licensing of the State of NJ, Department of Human Services, licenses HCC programs. The programs meet or exceed all licensing requirements, including qualifications and ratios of staff. A copy of the complete Manual of Standards is available for your review at the program sites.

PROGRAM

The primary function of Haddonfield Child Care is to provide a safe and secure care situation for the children who attend. In addition, the staff and administration of HCC are dedicated to making the program as enjoyable for all children as possible.

CURRICULUM

We provide many occasions for children to participate in planning activities, and encourage the children to feel ownership of the programs. Within the structure of the day's planned activities, the children have the opportunity for choices of various options. These include indoor or outdoor play. On rare occasions, we will ask that all children join in a unique activity, or be attentive to a visitor presenting a special program.

Every attempt will be made to provide a variety of activities for all ages and developmental levels. Other than EDKP, we do not restrict or group the children by age. We maintain multi-age grouping, and try to guide the children in playing together successfully. Occasionally, however, we may have projects or activities targeted to particular age groups.

Our activity plans are designed to promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of our children in an enjoyable, playful way. A monthly calendar of activities planned for the after school program at each program site will be available to parents, describing daily games, projects, special programs, and "theme" days or weeks.

From time to time our curriculum is reviewed and new facets may be added to enrich the programs. Suggestions and comments by parents are always welcome. Should you have any concerns, please first discuss them with the Program Supervisor at your child's site. If your concerns continue, or cannot be resolved with the Supervisor, do not hesitate to call the Executive Director.

COMPUTERS AND VIDEO GAMES

Children attending HCC may have access to school computers in the after school programs and EDKP, depending upon availability of school computers and appropriately trained staff monitors. When computer use is possible, the programs and games accessible to the children are determined by what is available at the particular school.

HCC discourages the use of hand held video games from home, as the children have many opportunities for other types of play, and because they are often the cause of disagreements among children.

MOVIES, VIDEOS, AND MUSIC

Viewing of movies and other videos is kept to a minimum at HCC. They are used primarily as part of a theme, or on half days or in inclement weather. Each month, staff should post a list of potential movies that may be shown. Based on that list, parents may indicate that they do not wish for their child(ren) to view a particular video; otherwise, it will be assumed that parents find the selections acceptable.

HOMEWORK

HCC understands that children and families are often under enormous time stress caused by large amounts of homework and the pressure of other family commitments. Therefore, time will be set aside at the program for children to work on homework.

It is also our belief that all children need a brief respite from the stresses of the school day, and an opportunity to enjoy the socialization of snack time and the opportunity to hear any special instructions/plans for the day which may be discussed prior to or during snack time. To this end, the homework time will begin after the completion of snack by the majority of children.

Every effort will be made to supply an appropriately stocked, quiet area to facilitate an optimum environment for children during homework time, within the constraints of space and staffing. Staff will not act as tutors, but will assist children much in the way a parent would.

Upon enrollment, each family will be asked to complete a Homework Agreement, outlining their preferences as to whether the child(ren) will or will not be expected to do homework at the program, as well as the time the child may be expected to work on homework, if applicable. This will serve as the basis for each child's participation in our homework period, and will be followed unless parents/guardians choose to revise it during the year or on specific occasions.

Children participating in homework time will be expected to behave appropriately and respect the need for quiet. HCC may suspend or terminate a child's participation in homework time for repeated failure to abide by the rules established by the Program Supervisor at that site.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

HCC recognizes that children and staff enjoy celebrating traditional holidays. We attempt to be inclusive and multicultural in our holiday celebrations, and to encourage children to share the varied traditions and activities of their families. Every effort is made to emphasize secular celebrations and keep religious references balanced and to a minimum. No child is ever required to participate in an activity about which the child is uncomfortable or to which a parent objects.

TUITION

Your HCC tuition includes daily care, light snacks, activities, and most materials and supplies. In the case of EDKP, it also includes daily transportation where applicable.

You have been supplied with a fee schedule describing the various charges, covering both regular monthly tuition as well as the fees for additional (per diem or unscheduled) charges.

There are no refunds, credits, or exchanges of days for illness, vacation, or when a holiday falls on your regularly scheduled day. Parents with varying work schedules must work closely with the HCC office staff in arranging schedules, and have their weekly schedule into the HCC office by the preceding Wednesday afternoon. Please refer to the separate tuition sheet provided for your convenience, which details in greater depth your tuition obligations and policies regarding schedule changes.

All matters related to billing/scheduling must be discussed with the Bookkeeper or Executive Director. For the sake of you and your child and your relationship with the staff, we have deliberately distanced our program staff from tuition matters. Please do not give them tuition payments, nor attempt to resolve billing problems or schedule changes with them.

REGULAR TUITION

Tuition is a yearly figure, which is divided into ten equal installments for ease of payment. Because the tuition has been divided into equal installments, the installments do not necessarily reflect the actual number of school days in a given month.

A security deposit representing one full month's tuition will be required upon enrollment. This deposit will be applied to June, or to the final month billed, if notice is given according to policy. Withdrawal from the program without required notice will result in loss of this deposit.

You will receive a statement each month outlining both your regular monthly installment as well as any additional charges or late fees incurred. Please keep one copy of these statements for your personal record of child care expenses, and return the other along with your check or money order (no cash, please) by mail to:

Haddonfield Child Care
P.O. Box 107
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

Payments may be made in person at the HCC Office in Haddonfield Memorial High School, Room B105. Although the Office is usually staffed from 8 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the school year, it is best to call and check if you will be coming in early or late in the day, or during summer or school closing days.

We cannot be responsible for payments left at a school office, under the HCC Office door, or any other location. Under no circumstances may a program teacher accept a tuition payment.

Payment is due on the first of each month. Payments not received in the HCC office by the seventh of the month are subject to a \$15.00 late charge. Should tuition remain unpaid on the last day of the month, the child will be refused admission on the next scheduled day. Re-admission will require payment in cash, or by certified check or money order. An unpaid balance remaining at the end of the school year will result in refusal of future admission of that child or other children in the immediate family until all financial obligations have been met.

Reduced fees are available for families with multiple children enrolled in the program, with the discount given on the lesser tuition or the non-EDKP child. A five-percent discount is offered to families who pre-pay

tuition for a five-month period, either the June deposit plus September to December, or January to May. The same discount applies to lump sum payments of the full year tuition.

Checks returned by the bank will be re-deposited once; if refused again, payment must be made by certified check, money order, or in cash within five business days. Parents will be charged for any fees incurred due to returned checks.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Once a care schedule has been designated for a month, full tuition is obligated for that month. No refunds will be given for mid-month withdrawals or enrollment reduction. All changes in schedule must be given in writing to the HCC Office at least two weeks prior to the first of the month in which the change will take effect. Change from a regular schedule to per diem is not considered a schedule change; it requires the same notice as a withdrawal (see below).

All refunds for reductions in pre-paid tuition will be paid at the end of that semester.

Administrative fees will be applied in cases of schedule changes or withdrawals with insufficient notice, except in cases deemed by the director and Board President to be extraordinary life circumstances.

Because of the potential to cause non-compliance with legal ratios, we cannot allow parents to switch days during a week. Any non-scheduled days attended will be billed at the per diem rate.

All schedule changes must be arranged with the HCC office, and will not be considered official unless and until proper procedures have been followed. Please note that while program staff members may give you the forms to send to the office for schedule changes, they are not authorized to accept or approve any schedule changes.

WITHDRAWAL

If withdrawal from the program is necessary, notice of thirty days prior to the first of the month in which the withdrawal will take place is required, whereupon the June prepayment fees will be returned if all financial obligations have been met. Failure to meet all financial obligations prior to withdrawal or the end of the school year will result in refusal of future re-admission as outlined above.

CUSTOMIZED CARE SCHEDULES

We recognize that certain occupations require flexible schedules. Those parents with schedules that involve the same number of days, but with the actual days changing each week, must request a custom care schedule. This requires calling in the upcoming week's schedule no later than Wednesday afternoon of the preceding week. If a new schedule is not called in, the schedule will remain the same as the preceding week, and any different days attended will be calculated at the per diem rate. Repeated notification problems may result in requirement to go to either a per diem or fixed care schedule.

Due to the high cost of processing very complex care schedules that do not fall into any of the standard categories, a schedule for each month may be chosen. However, tuition fees will then be calculated on an individual basis at the per diem rate, and subject to a \$5.00 per month processing charge.

For children attending on a very occasional basis, the \$5.00 per month fee applies in addition to the cost per day of attendance billed at the per diem rate. Per Diem enrollment is on a space available basis.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF

BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

All children must be accompanied by an adult and signed into the before school programs. Staff members are not permitted to accept children prior to 7:30 a.m. Under no circumstances is a child to be left alone or with school personnel to wait for the program to open.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

All children must be signed out of after school programs by a parent/guardian or other authorized person. No child will be permitted to leave the program alone, even by request of a parent.

Children will be released only to their parents/guardian or to authorized persons who are listed on the emergency form. Parents/guardians are encouraged to name as many authorized persons as they wish when completing the emergency forms. Authorized persons must be in sixth grade or older.

Parents/guardians are also required to name two adults (not residing in the child's household, and not both from one household) who are authorized to act *in loco parentis* should we be unable to reach the parent/guardian in an emergency situation. These designees must live close by, be able to drive, and be at least eighteen years of age. Of course, every attempt would be made to first reach the parent/guardian; however, having failed to reach a parent/guardian, HCC would rely on one of those authorized persons to act *in loco parentis* if a decision needed to be made or a child needed to be released from HCC to someone immediately. Although we understand that it is sometimes difficult for parents without family or close friends nearby to find people to do this, we cannot permit children to participate in the program without the provision of the names of two persons who are ready, willing, and able to assume this role.

Any additional authorizations/deletions occurring through the year must be given in writing. A parent/guardian needing to authorize someone by phone in an emergency will be requested to fax written permission. In an extreme circumstance, where verbal permission may be necessary, the parent/guardian may be required to give a password or other identifying information for verification purposes.

Parents/guardians and other persons picking up children will be asked to produce identification until all site staff are familiar with them. Please remind anyone new picking up your child to bring identification with them to the program.

For children routinely picked up or dropped off by a stepparent, relative, babysitter, or any adult other than a parent/guardian, custodial forms are available authorizing that person to receive information and make decisions on behalf the child.

If parents/guardians will be out of town for more than a day, they are encouraged to complete the form included in the Parent Packet to inform the program staff of their whereabouts in case of emergency, and to designate which person(s) will temporarily act *in loco parentis*.

Please be aware that, in the case of separated or divorced parents, we are unable to restrict one parent's right to visit or pick up a child without a current court order signed by a judge. A copy of such order must be given to HCC to be retained in the child's file.

Should the older sibling or other relative of a child attending the program be employed by HCC, the parent must first speak with the Executive Director for approval before designating that person as an authorized pickup person.

Once a child has been signed out of a program by a parent/guardian or other authorized person, the safety of the child becomes the responsibility of the person signing him/her out. Once signed out, children may not be left on site to play with children remaining under the care of HCC.

LATENESS

All children must be picked up by their scheduled departure time. This applies to 3:15 (EDKP only), 5:00 or 6:00 pickup times. All parents arriving after their scheduled pick-up time will be required to sign a late pick-up form verifying the actual time of arrival. The form will be forwarded to the HCC office for further action. A one-time waiver of late fee is given to each family. After the first occurrence, a late pick-up charge will be billed. The late charge will be \$5.00 for every fifteen minutes, or part thereof, after the scheduled pickup time.

The first lateness will be noted but not billed. The second lateness will result in a fine indicated on your next bill. The third lateness will be billed, and a final warning will be sent. Frequent or extreme lateness (more than three times during a semester) will be cause for mandatory change to a 5:00 tuition rate for 3:15 pickup, 6:00 tuition rate for those scheduled for 5:00 pick-up, and may be cause for removal from the program in the case of scheduled 6:00 pick-up time.

The report of lateness is not at the discretion of the teacher, nor is it based on the reason for lateness. Time will be based on the clock at the program site. If you are scheduled for a pick-up prior to 3:15 or 5:00 and you know you will be late, a phone call in advance to the HCC office alerting us to your intention will reduce your late charges considerably (see Tuition Schedule for details on cost). Actual billing of the late pick-up charge may take four to eight weeks to appear on your bill.

If you know you will be late, it is also important to call so that we can reassure your child, as he/she is usually aware of the time and may be worried about you. This is also a courtesy to our staff, who may have plans immediately after work that will be affected.

Although we understand that occasionally a traffic problem or other situation may cause you to be late, we ask that you try to arrange for an alternate person to come for your child. If we have not been able to contact you to arrange for pickup within fifteen minutes of your scheduled time, we reserve the right to call someone on your emergency form to come for your child. If we have not heard from a parent/guardian, and are unable to locate anyone to pick up a child by one hour after closing time, the Executive Director may, at his/her discretion, choose to consult with the police and/or DYFS for instruction as to how to proceed.

No credit will be given for early arrival.

RELEASE TO AN IMPAIRED INDIVIDUAL

HCC follows the DYFS guidelines prohibiting release of a child to an individual suspected to be impaired due to drugs, alcohol or other cause. This is a very subjective decision, but HCC reserves the right to refuse to release a child to anyone under suspicion of impairment. Should a dispute occur regarding release in such a circumstance, the police department may be called in to make the final judgement.

SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Please be aware that the staff and administration of HCC are considered mandatory reporters, and HCC will follow all applicable laws/regulations regarding suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

COURT ORDERS

If a child is the subject of any court order, HCC must have a copy of the most recent version, signed and with a judge's seal, included in the child's file. This includes orders regarding guardianship, parental custody, restraining orders, or any other orders relevant to the child's enrollment or pick up from the program.

Please note that, without proper documents, HCC may not restrict a parent from visiting or taking a child from a program, or provide information to anyone other than the parent(s).

HCC will make every effort to follow the order as written; however, if there is any confusion as to the meaning or requirements of the document, we may consult our attorney for clarification and/or request interpretation by the court or police.

STAFF BABYSITTING

Due to potential liability issues, we do not permit our staff to sign a child out or to baby-sit for currently enrolled program families. Exceptions can only be made in the case of a staff member who is a family member of the child, or where an arrangement existed with the staff member prior to staff employment or the child's enrollment. In those exceptional cases, the situation must be fully explained in advance in writing to the Executive Director.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

Every effort will be made by HCC to facilitate effective communication with parents. Each program will employ a "Parent's Corner" with a message board for display of information particular to that site. Activity and snack calendars, the sign in/out sheet, and other written notices will be placed in this location for distribution. Please check both of these locations daily to keep abreast of important information. As these materials are sometimes time-sensitive, your cooperation in checking frequently for items targeted to you will save the program considerable mailing costs.

Throughout the year we will also utilize the mailing of your billing statement to distribute information of special interest/importance to all parents/guardians. Please be sure to read all of these enclosures carefully.

The HCC website, www.haddonfieldchildcare.org, is another source for information about the program. Every effort will be made to keep the information on the website up-to-date.

From time to time, should an incident occur relating to your child, the Program Supervisor may choose to put the information to you in writing in the form of an incident report. This is not meant to be intimidating, but merely to ensure that both you and we have record of such incidents for future reference.

PLANNED ABSENCES

If your child will be absent from an afterschool program on his/her scheduled day, whether or not they will be in school that day, you must call the HCC Office in advance to report the absence. We ask that you call prior to 10:45 a.m. for afternoon EDKP, or 2:30 p.m. for the after school programs. Please be aware that we may ask for your designated code or a faxed written confirmation to verify. No child will be excused from

attending the program, or permitted to go home with a friend, without advance, verifiable notification from a parent.

Staff will call a parent/guardian when there is any doubt as to where a child should/may be. However, failure to report your child(ren) absent can be extremely disruptive to program operations. The search for a missing child takes staff away from care of the other children, and is frightening for all of us conducting the search. After the first such occurrence, a fine will be charged and subsequent incidents may result in suspension from the program. Please see our "Policy on Reporting Student Absence" in the Parent Packet.

PARTICIPATION IN OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Parents/guardians must notify HCC in advance, in writing, if their children wish to participate in any outside activities during program time. Forms describing the details of the planned outside activity, whether on or off-site, must be completed and turned in to the HCC Office. These forms are available on the HCC website and at the program sites for your convenience.

SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES

Children attending HCC may participate in school-based after school activities, as long as these activities take place on the same school property. Children must report first to the HCC after school program to be checked in, and then go directly to the school-based activity. HCC must know the time the activity is expected to end, and the children must return and check in with the HCC staff immediately upon dismissal from the activity. Just as failure to report an absence can cause unnecessary problems at the program, so can parents/guardians or children failing to follow any of these procedures; therefore, they may be subject to the same penalties as those who fail to report an absence.

OFF-PREMISES ACTIVITIES

Children who will be attending an off-premises activity (scout trip, class party, athletic practice, etc.) must be signed out by an authorized adult. The authorized person must later sign them back in if it is necessary for them to return to the program. These situations can become quite complex, and parents/guardians must discuss them fully with the HCC office and the Program Supervisor prior to the event. Children will not be released on their own to attend activities off school premises; therefore parents/guardians who wish for their child to attend off-premises activities must arrange for an authorized person to sign the child out, or notify HCC that the child will not attend at all on that day.

HCC is not responsible for the safety of the children during the time they are engaged in or traveling to/from out-of-program activities. Please note that HCC staff will not wait for children attending an off-premises event who do not return prior to the closure of the program (when the last child is picked up), nor will they be responsible for notifying a parent if the child fails to return.

SAFETY PATROL

A reminder that older children who plan to participate in the school Safety Patrol program must request a post **on** school premises (within the same block and on the same side of the street as the school), and follow the same procedure as for other on-site school activities (above). Children must then report directly to HCC upon completion of their patrol duties. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and child to remind the school safety patrol of this requirement.

FIELD TRIPS

As part of the program, staff may plan walking trips in the neighborhood, or even to nearby program sites. Except for an occasional short walk in the immediate vicinity or in any emergency where children must be moved off-site, parents/guardians will receive notice of any walking trips. The plans will be on the program calendar and/or posted prior to the day of the trip. Generally, a description as to the destination and expected time of return will be posted at the program site for parents/guardians or other pickup persons who may arrive before the children return.

Individual permission slips will not be required for these trips, as they are covered by the release signed by parents/guardians on the emergency form. In the case of more extensive trips, parents/guardians will receive complete information, and will be asked to sign a separate permission slip. HCC will staff appropriately for the developmental needs of the children attending.

Any child whose behavior on a trip is disruptive, or who jeopardizes the safety of himself or others, may be barred from subsequent trips.

When a trip is planned for the entire group at a program site, all children will be expected to participate. As all staff are needed to supervise the children on these trips, we cannot leave staff back at the site to supervise a child who has been barred from a trip, whose parent/guardian chooses not to allow him/her to attend, or a child who elects not to go along; therefore, parents/guardians will be asked to make other arrangements in advance for their child(ren) on those occasions. No refunds will be given for the day if children do not participate.

SNACKS

A light snack and beverage will be served at both sessions of EDKP and all after school programs each day. A daily listing of the snacks that will be served at your child's program will be on the back of the monthly activity calendar. Variety, nutrition, and child-appeal are all considered when planning snacks. However, please understand that storage, access to refrigeration, and budget constraints sometimes limit what we can serve.

If your child may not/will not eat a particular planned snack due to a dislike or allergy, you may send an alternate snack from home. Parents/guardians may also send additional snack with a child if he/she has a hearty appetite and is not satisfied by the light snack served. Please make sure that these treats from home are non-perishable and as nutritious as possible. Children may not bring candy, soda, and or glass bottles to the program. Also, children will not be permitted to purchase drinks/food from vending machines located within the school.

Due to the increase in and severity of nut, dairy and other food allergies, HCC may decide to eliminate foods containing nuts or other ingredients from the snacks served, and if necessary and feasible, go so far as to prohibit them from the program site. If a child has any serious or life threatening allergies or medical conditions related to food, these must be clarified, and a care plan from a physician outlining needs/solutions prepared in advance with the Executive Director.

Snack time is an integral part of our program. It gives the children time to relax and enjoy conversation with their peers, while learning sharing and table manners. We sometimes incorporate simple food preparation skills into the daily snack, and often "special snacks" will relate to a particular theme for the day or the week. We encourage input from parents/guardians and children regarding favorite foods or suggestions for new snacks.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

As children spend a great deal of time in our program engaged in gross motor activities, parents/guardians are asked to dress them appropriately to maximize their safety. Children dressed inappropriately for a particular activity may not be permitted to participate.

Open shoes, jellies, platforms or slides are dangerous when climbing or running. If a child wishes to wear these types of shoes to school, we suggest that sneakers or other sturdy, closed shoes be brought along for changing. Extremely short or long skirts may also limit playground participation or be a safety hazard. During inclement weather, children should arrive with appropriate outerwear and footwear, or they may be required to remain indoors.

Please also note that although every effort will be made to purchase non-staining creative materials, accidents do happen, and HCC cannot be responsible for stained or damaged clothing. Parents/guardians should always feel free to send a change of clothing on days when the child is dressed in especially good school clothing.

MEDICAL ISSUES

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

It is HCC policy that staff generally may not administer any medication, either prescription or non-prescription. Exceptions will only be made in extraordinary cases of a chronic or life threatening nature, and only after adequate notice and thorough review of the circumstances with the Executive Director.

Parents/guardians sending a child to the program with medication for self-administration, and/or without following the proper procedure, will be called immediately to make alternate arrangements for administration of the medication.

If a child has an illness that is not chronic or life-threatening but requires a short or long-term course of medication, we ask that the dosage times be scheduled so that they may be administered at home or by the nurse during the regular school day. Please do not give medication to an HCC staff member to give to the school nurse, nor give medication to your child to bring to the program or the nurse. We cannot take responsibility for lost or forgotten medication, or for the availability of the school nurse to dispense medication.

In the case of a child with a chronic or life threatening condition requiring immediate or ongoing medication (i.e., asthma or life-threatening allergy), parents/guardians must contact the Executive Director well in advance of the child's first day of attendance to determine whether the program is equipped to handle the medical needs of the child, and/or the necessary medication and its administration. Parents/guardians must clear all medication with the Executive Director. Under no circumstances may medication be administered by an HCC staff member, nor may a child self-administer, without prior discussion with and written approval of the Executive Director.

Even after such approval, the administration of medication may not begin until a care plan has been developed with and signed by the child's physician, and until all staff involved have received any necessary training related to the administration of the particular medication. Such training must be at a level deemed adequate by the Executive Director, and parents/guardians may be required to arrange for the training. HCC reserves the right to consult with the child's physician and/or other medical professionals as needed in order to develop and implement the care plan and insure that the medication can be and is given safely and appropriately. Please be aware that accommodation of a child may require a delay before the child begins attending in order for the care plan to be completed, necessary consultations arranged, and staff adequately trained.

Should administration of medication be approved for a particular child, parents/guardians must follow the agreed upon plan for supplying appropriate signed authorizations and handing over medication, as well as supplying/maintaining an adequate amount of the medication and replacing it by the expiration date. Any tools or equipment needed to administer the medication must also be supplied by the parent. The medications supplied must match exactly that which is ordered by the physician in the care plan and/or authorization of medication form. Staff receiving the medication for the first time or upon replacement may not accept anything other than the medication as specified by the physician.

Forms needed for administration of medication may be obtained from the HCC office, and are also available on the HCC website.

Parents/Guardians are asked to take any remaining medication home when the need for the medication ends, at the end of the school year, or if the child is withdrawn from the program. Medication remaining with HCC one month after such time will be disposed of/destroyed.

The policies and procedures outlined above as to administration of medication would apply to any other necessary medical procedures related to a chronic or life threatening condition.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

In the event of a minor injury on site, the staff will administer basic first aid, and depending upon the degree of the injury, the parent/guardian may be called and an accident report may be given to the parent/guardian (or other pickup person with prior authorization to receive such reports) upon arrival.

In the case of a fall from a height, a possible head injury, or a bite which breaks the skin, parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

In the case of a serious injury, the Program Supervisor, in consultation with the Executive Director, may judge that additional medical care is needed. Every attempt will be made to contact the child's parent/guardian, physician, or other authorized person to discuss options for further care. In the case of an injury or acute illness deemed very serious or life threatening by the staff, HCC may call the Haddonfield Emergency Squad immediately and turn the decision for subsequent appropriate care over to their professional judgment.

HCC maintains accident insurance secondary to the family's own policy to cover injuries which occur at the program. Parents wishing to utilize this secondary insurance coverage should contact the Executive Director to request the appropriate claim forms.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

HCC seeks to maintain a healthy environment for all children involved, and so follows the standards outlined by the DYFS licensing manual, as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics' book *Caring for Our Children*, regarding illness.

In some cases, a child may be refused admission due to a presenting illness. If a child was absent from school due to illness, is too ill after school to attend, or is prohibited from attending school due to an illness or medical condition, they may not attend HCC. If a child becomes ill at the program, a parent/guardian or authorized person may be called to pick up a child earlier than scheduled. These situational restrictions apply particularly to illnesses such as acute diarrhea, vomiting, fever, or contagious illness as outlined by the Office of Licensing and the County Health Board.

For the safety of all children and staff, parents/guardians are expected to report to HCC directly and immediately if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. As always, HCC will respect the

confidentiality rights of children and families if/when we find it necessary to notify other participating families of detection of communicable diseases within the program environment.

HCC will confer with the program's consulting physician or other appropriate physicians or child care health consultants on matters of general medical concern.

SUNBLOCK

HCC staff will only administer sunblock provided by parents/guardians, and only with prior written authorization.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLAN

HCC has developed an Emergency/Disaster Plan for response to emergencies, disasters, or other traumatic incidents which may occur during program hours or impact on the children enrolled in our program. This plan was developed in accordance with best practices and coordinated with the plans followed by the school district.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information contained in the plan, it is not available to the public. However, parents/guardians may be assured that it has been reviewed and approved by the HCC Board of Trustees, and by the school district administration.

TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Through community fundraising, the HCC Board of Trustees provides a limited amount of funding each year for the Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) Fund.

APPLICATION FOR TUITION GRANTS

Parents/guardians wishing to apply for TAG funds may request appropriate application materials from the HCC Office at the time of registration. Most TAG awards are granted during July or early August, when the committee convenes for its primary annual meeting. Applicants must fully complete and return all parts of the application, including supporting documents, by the summer deadline in order to be considered for a fall grant. Grants are awarded based on relative need among applications submitted and the funds currently available, and are determined as a percentage of the applicants' tuition. Please note that full grants are rarely given.

When current funding and applicant pool permit, a limited amount of funds may be kept in reserve to assist families who have missed the deadline, enrolled later, or have found themselves in financial difficulty during the school year. Parents/guardians who wish to apply for TAG funds later in the school year should contact the Executive Director regarding their circumstances and availability of funds for later grants. TAG applications received any time after the summer meeting will not be reviewed by the committee until January.

FUNDRAISING FOR TAG

All program parents/guardians are encouraged to support the ongoing fundraising efforts of the Board of Trustees on behalf the TAG Fund. A once yearly "Voluntary Contribution" to the TAG Fund may be posted on the account of each child if/when additional funds are needed for TAG or other special activities. We

hope that most families will support this effort to reduce the amount of more intrusive fundraising activities. Parents/guardians preferring not to participate are permitted to deduct that amount from the tuition payment at the time it appears on their bill.

Through United Way contributions, corporate matching gifts, and individual donations, as well as by support of fundraising events, you can also assist HCC in insuring that families in need have access to our program and that no child will be turned away for lack of funds. Please call the HCC Office for more information about how you or your employer can contribute to the TAG Fund, or to learn more about the United Way Donor Choice option.

GRANTS

From time to time HCC has the opportunity to apply for grants to purchase equipment, receive training, or otherwise improve program services and quality. These grants are often made available through corporations whose employees are served by HCC. We encourage program family members (this can include parents/guardians, step-parents, grandparents or other family members) to be alert to announcements of possible grants, and to notify HCC promptly if such an opportunity presents.

We may also occasionally receive such information directly from the source, and contact families who may be eligible to nominate HCC for funding. Your support in such circumstances helps us to keep quality high and costs low.

COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOLS

Haddonfield Child Care is a private, non-profit organization, and does not fall under the jurisdiction of the schools it serves. However, we believe that it is in the best interest of the children for the program to work closely with school personnel at all times. Communication is the key to successful collaboration. We have found that by working and strategizing together, we are often able to prevent problems or improve the level of service we can provide to a child.

For this reason, parents/guardians are asked to sign a release permitting the sharing of information about their child between HCC and the school. This may include (but is not limited to) such things as events of the day, homework strategies, medication administration, and general behavioral issues.

From time to time the school or HCC may feel that more extensive information would help to meet the needs of a child or family. In these cases, either HCC or school personnel may request permission for more in-depth discussion. We hope that, should these circumstances occur, parents/guardians will feel comfortable permitting a more extensive dialogue. Be assured that HCC considers any such information confidential, to be shared with school or HCC staff only a need-to-know basis.

Please be aware that the schools do not automatically notify HCC if your child is classified, or being evaluated by the child study team. However, please feel free to invite HCC administrative or program staff to participate in the process. In fact, we encourage you to do this, as way for HCC to offer any insights we may have regarding your child's recreational needs or abilities, and to engage with therapists or other team personnel in order to make your child's time in HCC more comfortable and successful.

As HCC is a private, not-for-profit organization separate from the school district, it is inappropriate for any program concerns to be taken to the Haddonfield Public Schools for resolution.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Haddonfield Child Care strives at all times to be a family friendly program, with many opportunities for parents/guardians to have a voice in their child's program. Communication is the key to making the program work best for your family. Many problems are the result of misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or rumor.

PARENT VISITATION

Parents/guardians with children currently enrolled in the program may visit for short periods at any time during program hours, with or without prior notice. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to visit and conduct special activities with the children through prior arrangement with the Program Supervisor. In order to insure that children feel safe and secure at all times, parents/guardians wishing to visit for an extended period of time should first consult with the Program Supervisor, so that he/she may explain the presence of the parent to the other children.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF/ADMINISTRATION

Short conversations with staff to discuss a child's participation are always welcomed and encouraged. However, we ask that a parent/guardian desiring a lengthy, private conference arrange this in advance with the Program Supervisor, so that staff may give undivided attention to the issue under discussion without jeopardizing the safe supervision of the children.

From time to time throughout the year, parents/guardians may also be given special opportunities to complete brief surveys. We hope that parents will find them useful. These surveys are reviewed by the Executive Director, and comments and concerns are considered for curriculum and policy reviews, staffing decisions, and other decision-making processes. Respondents may indicate on the surveys that they would like a follow up call to discuss serious concerns or to share suggestions.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss program questions or concerns first directly with the Program Supervisor at the site. We find that most issues are best resolved at this level. If, after speaking with the Supervisor, you wish to discuss the matter further with the Executive Director, please call the office during business hours, or make an appointment for an individual meeting. A synopsis of any serious concern directed to the office is passed on to the Board President for review.

Should a parent/guardian have a concern about the program, it is expected that they will make every effort to resolve the issue with the staff at the program site first, and if there is still an issue, with the Executive Director. If the issue remains unresolved, and the parent/guardian feels that the concern has not been appropriately addressed by the Executive Director, they may express the concern in writing to the President of the Board of Trustees. It is never appropriate for a concern about HCC to be taken to the Board of Trustees or without it first going through the proper channels of Haddonfield Child Care.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A Board of Trustees, comprised mainly of program parents, oversees HCC. Each school served has a parent representative on the Board of Trustees. Having a parent board gives HCC a unique sensitivity to the needs of parents and families.

From time to time, parents/guardians who have followed the above procedures may still feel that their concerns remain unresolved, or wish to request special consideration or exception to a policy. In these circumstances, they may address the issue in writing to the President of the Board of Trustees, c/o the HCC post office box. The President of the Board of Trustees will determine the disposition of the matter.

A limited period of time open to the public is available at the start of each meeting. Due to the potential for the compromise of confidentiality, some portions of Board meetings may be closed to the public. Parents, guardians or others are asked to contact the Board President or the Executive Director in advance if they wish to be on the agenda to address the Board at an upcoming meeting.

Parents/guardians interested in being part of the strategic planning and policymaking processes of Haddonfield Child Care are encouraged to contact the Board of Trustees about openings on the Board. The full Board meets approximately 4 to 5 times per year, and elections are held each spring for the upcoming school year. Parents/guardians or others interested in serving on the Board should contact either the HCC Office or the Board member who represents their site.

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