

**First Environments Early Learning Center  
(FEELC)**

**Parent Handbook**



# **FEELC Parent Handbook**

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to FIRST ENVIRONMENTS EARLY LEARNING CENTER (FEELC), a day care facility organized by parents and supported by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). First Environments operates as a nonprofit cooperative venture, and is dedicated to providing quality care for preschool children.

FEELC is located on the EPA's campus. All parents, staff and visitors must comply with the rules and regulations of the Federal campus.

This HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS provides general information about the Center's program, administrative procedures, operating guidelines, health and safety policies, and required parental involvement. Parents will find that most of their questions about First Environments are answered in this handbook. For specific situations that may not be covered, parents are encouraged to seek additional information from the Director or a member of the Center's administration.

## **HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS**

### **1.0 Introduction to First Environments**

#### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the First Environments Early Learning Center (referenced throughout this document by name, as "FEELC", or as the "Center") is to support First Environments' families, and to provide quality programming. To accomplish these ends the Center provides a safe, consistent, and enriched environment where developmentally appropriate activities encourage exploration and "hands on" learning.

## 1.2 Philosophy

First Environments Early Learning Center strives to provide children with a caring, safe, and secure environment that utilizes a child centered curriculum. This curriculum is based on the emotional, physical, social, and cognitive needs of the individual child. The developmental needs of the child are used to determine appropriate activities carried out with that child. Children grow and develop at different rates, so this approach offers them the opportunity to explore each area of development at their own pace.

Center staff members create an atmosphere of support and affection as well as providing the materials, equipment, and experience required to optimize the experiences of each child. They also serve as examples to the children, since children learn as much by observing others as they do by direct instruction. The teaching staff members act as facilitators rather than directors of activities.

The environment is carefully planned based on an assessment of each child's skills. Planning is most obvious by the presence of "interest centers" in every classroom. These centers include art, dramatic play, manipulative or small motor skills, gross motor play or blocks, sand, water, books, listening, etc. Teachers make available a wide variety of activities in each "interest center." Children are encouraged to explore all interest centers. Teachers provide an external structure for the day and provide the children time to work in the centers. Their exploration of the environment is usually self-initiated. Because of the variety of materials, children can learn several different skills in each center. Creativity is enhanced by the open-endedness of the learning materials. A sense of responsibility and autonomy is also promoted by allowing children to choose their own activities.

We believe developmentally appropriate child-centered curriculum is:

- Play is the child's way of working and learning.
- Children's play becomes their work as they discover new materials in the environment.
- Learning is what children do; it is not something that is done to them.
- The classroom environment will be designed to encourage self-learning with guided practice from the teacher.
- Children grow and develop at unique, individual rates that are often unrelated to their ages.
- Classroom activities should support this developmental approach for each child.
- Every child has the right to feel good about himself/herself.
- Enhancing of the child's positive self-concept will be the focus of many classroom activities.
- Children's natural curiosity and eagerness to learn are enhanced if children are free to follow their natural interests.
- A discovery approach to learning will be incorporated in the classroom to encourage and develop children's curiosity.
- Children learn from interactions with other people.
- The environment will be designed to encourage children to observe other children working, work with other children, and work individually.
- Children need a variety of opportunities in order to encourage creativity.
- The classroom will contain interest centers thereby encouraging simultaneously occurring learning activities. In this way, each child has an opportunity to work in a variety of centers using a variety of materials.

## 1.3 Goals and Curriculum

### 1.3.1 Goals

The goals established by the Center are:

1. To provide a safe, intimate, consistent and enriched environment where developmentally appropriate activities encourage exploration and “hands on” learning experiences. Staff will supervise infants, toddlers, and preschool by sight and sound at all times.
2. To enhance the sense of dignity and self-worth within the child and his/her family.
3. To encourage spontaneity, curiosity and self-discipline.
4. To enhance the child’s mental processes by building confidence and self-esteem.
5. A rich, innovative curriculum to stimulate children’s intellectual, emotional, creative, and physical development.
6. To enhance patterns and expectations of success for the individual child.
7. To provide consistently high quality care by continuously evaluating Center operations.
8. To maintain the lowest possible staff to child ratios.
9. To constantly encourage parent visitation, input, and participation.

First Environments Early Learning Center is a home away from home, in the true sense of the phrase. What we know is that the most important part of a young child’s life is to feel safe, loved, and nurtured in an environment that meets his/her individual needs. In order to do this, FEELC sets the stage for families to bond with their teachers and feel comfortable sharing daily information about both their child(ren) and family. There are many strategies that come into place in effectively creating a home for staff, children, and families. One of the most important is to retain professionals who are passionate and dedicated to the mission of FEELC. Our school serves a diverse population with families of many nationalities and cultural backgrounds. FEELC has programs in place to support language barriers and invite families to share their stories with us. FEELC celebrates a wide range of holidays where children and their families embrace the diversity of our community.

The curriculum is determined by the needs of the individual child and the developmental goals of that child. Children are naturally curious and teachers are inspired by each child’s curiosities; this is where activities and projects are drawn from. Our curriculum is immersed in the arts and nature. We offer a wide range of arts programs with specialists in areas that include music, theater, puppetry, and onsite studio artists who work in various mediums. FEELC children spend a great deal of time outside exploring, gardening, and observing the seasons. With the help of our onsite master gardener, children grow approximately 700 pounds of food each year and feast on a variety of greens, beets, carrots, asparagus, many colors of potatoes, squash, and their all-time favorite, cherry tomatoes. Eating healthy and staying active is a huge part of our curriculum. We have an onsite science teacher who works closely with all of our classrooms bringing children outside to enjoy the fruits of each season and nature inside for children to explore, discover, and enjoy. These enrichment programs, guided by our staff, create inspirational experiences through which children develop their cognitive, social, physical and emotional abilities to their fullest.

First Environments Early Learning Center recognizes the importance that the environment has on our community and that relationships are the foundation for giving each child the opportunity to reach his/her potential. Our school is surrounded by beautiful gardens with pathways leading from garden to garden, playground-to-playground and even woods to a lake. Teachers, children and their families often explore the campus together and the variety of wildlife that inhabits our grounds. Through these adventures we all build loving relationships with each other. The importance of this environment is directly connected to the development of the whole child.

A school day typically includes a rich combination of indoor and outdoor activities. These activities include:

Art, sand and water play, science, language and literature, math, music and movement, dramatic play, block building, large motor play, and self-help and care activities, including lunch, snacks, and nap. Children spend time in both group and individual activities.

## 1.3.2 Curriculum

FEELC provides a blended emergent curriculum with each approach scaffolding off one another. FEELC's curriculum builds upon the interest of the children. Teachers work together to formulate hypotheses about the direction of the projects and themes, collect the materials needed, and possible parent and/or community support and involvement.

**Individualized** – lesson plans are developed for each child based on individual needs and goals.

**Theme Based** –A theme is an idea or topic that a teacher and children can explore together. Teachers can integrate literacy, social studies, math, music and art. In younger classrooms the teacher may determine the content and as the children get older the content will be more child initiated and learning experiences integrated over a broad topic. Teacher directed inquiry with the teacher directing in-depth research and exploration by children.

**Project Based** – In depth investigations that may be child or teacher initiated. Research is focused on finding answers to the child's questions and the direction follows the child's interest. Specific topics are explored with the idea of finding out more through exploration rather than to have answers provided by the teacher.

[http://www2.ku.edu/~kskits/ta/Packets/RoleOfCurriculum/4\\_EarlyChildhoodCurriculum/4\\_1\\_EarlyChildhoodCurriculum.pdf](http://www2.ku.edu/~kskits/ta/Packets/RoleOfCurriculum/4_EarlyChildhoodCurriculum/4_1_EarlyChildhoodCurriculum.pdf)

FEELC curriculum is guided by each child's individual needs and goals. We loosely group our children into two developmental age groups (Infants-Toddler and Preschool) with curriculums that meet the needs of the child.

### 1.3.2.1 Infants-Toddlers

Our infant/toddler curriculum emphasizes caregiving routines and building relationships. Teachers use the guiding principles set forth in the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development that recognize the 5 domains in development and learning:

- Emotional and Social Development
- Health and Physical Development
- Approaches to Learning

- Language Development and Communication
- Cognitive Development

Examples of Lessons Plans are on our website.

### *1.3.2.2 Preschool*

Preschool curriculum encourages children to think and reflect through investigations. Children’s inquires spark projects leading children to investigate how things work and why, and to explore the world around them looking closely and collaborating together. Some projects might last a month others carry on for several months. Some projects are completely child initiated, some teacher initiated, and others are a combination of both. Teachers use the guiding principles set forth in the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development recognizing the 5 domains in development and learning:

- Emotional and Social Development
- Health and Physical Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Language Development and Communication
- Cognitive Development

For more information on The Project Approach

<http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/Publications/Young%20Investigators%20chapter%201.pdf>

Examples of Lesson Plans are on our website.

### *1.3.2.3 Curriculum Resources*

First Environments strives for innovation and keeps current with research in early childhood education. Our curriculum goals are aligned with the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development.

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/earlylearning>

### *1.3.2.4 Assessments*

Children’s development and interests vary. In order for our staff to keep track of each child’s development and individual needs, FEELC uses the following assessments tools both formal and informal. The formal assessments are:

**Infants to 3 years - Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ – 3) and  
Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional**

**3 to 5 years –Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment**

Through play, teachers have the opportunity to observe and informally assess each child’s development every day. These methods may include anecdotal notes, checklists, and observations. These observations and assessments are tools teachers use to help each child reach their maximum potential. Please review the Assessment section 5.2.2 in the FEELC Parent Handbook for more detailed information regarding the assessment process for all our age groups.

## 1.4 General Operation

First Environments Early Learning Center strives to provide services for young children from the ages of six weeks through entering kindergarten. The center will provide a safe, secure, and stimulating child care environment within a developmentally centered curriculum. All of the developmental areas of early childhood will be incorporated into an integrated “play as work” organizational concept. These developmental areas will include fine and gross motor development, social skills, moral development, self-help skills, cognitive skills, and pre-academic skills. No one-skill area will be emphasized over any other.

As part of the services of the Center, children will receive nutritious meals and snacks.

Parent involvement will be an ongoing part of the center’s activities. It is a fundamental concept in early childhood education that parents are a child’s most important teachers. The staff works hard to create strong relationships between the Center and home. It is our hope that our school will become an extension of your family.

### 1.4.1 Security/Access

The center is located on the federal campus of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). To enter the campus, guests must pass through manned security gates at the front or rear of the campus. The front gates are accessible at all hours but the rear gates are closed at 7pm to incoming traffic and may be closed at times of heightened national security or severe weather.

Our building has a state of the art security system. Each parent will be given a numeric code to enter the building. Be sure to enter or exit the building through the main entrance as you will be required to sign your child both in and out each day. If someone else is going to pick up your child, you must contact us in advance. No child will be permitted to leave with an adult whom is not their parent without prior written permission.

Children may not be dropped off or picked up from an outside entrance or over the fence. Please let your child’s caregiver know when you are leaving with your child. It is important that we know where the children are at all times.

### 1.4.2 Staff

The quality of any day care center is a direct reflection of its staff. First Environments Early Learning Center recognizes its employees as the center’s most valuable component. The FEELC personnel policies reflect the respect felt for staff as professionals and provide a basis for understanding and meeting the needs of both the Center and the families. For this reason, we are committed to providing a working environment that exemplifies cooperation and support.

Our teachers meet and at times exceed the requirements set by the State of North Carolina for qualification and annual training. All staff members are required to obtain certification in CPR and First Aid. The cost of training is paid for by the Center.

Prior to hiring, each employee must have a criminal record check. FEELC only accepts teachers with a commitment to parents and children. In order to optimize your child's growth and development, we hire teachers who are interested in providing quality care and stimulating environments.

## **1.5 Corporate Organization**

First Environments Parents' Organization is a nonprofit child care facility located in North Carolina's Research Triangle Park. FEELC is sponsored and serves the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and their contractors. FEELC is licensed by the State of North and serves children ranging in age from six weeks to six years. The Center abides by all relevant State rules and procedures.

The 1985 North Carolina Legislation on Child Care and the Child Abuse Reporting Act are on file in the Director's Office. These documents are available to parents to view upon request.

The daily operation and management of the Center is the responsibility of the Director, while overall direction is the responsibility of the First Environments Parents' Organization Board of Directors. There are five members on the Board of Directors and annual elections alternate between two and three new members.

Members of the Corporation include all parents of children enrolled in the center. Parents are encouraged to serve on the Board of Directors and/or Committees (See section 5.0 Parental Involvement).

## **2.0 Programs**

### **2.1 General Information on Programs**

First Environments Early Learning Center strives daily to get ongoing feedback of both staff and families. FEELC is a community of learners, understanding that creating a community where adults freely share ideas contributes to the success of a strong early childhood program. Staff and parents are given opportunities to share ideas both through formal and informal processes. Annual program surveys gather feedback from our community and results are shared with all members of FEELC. Surveys are sent out in the spring of each year prior to move ups.

Concerns are addressed through collaborative processes that include the administration, the parent board, the staff and parents. Informal assessments and feedback are shared as needed. FEELC works hard to create an environment where all members feel at ease to communicate, share ideas and or concerns.

First Environments is committed to maintaining low staff to child ratios. We firmly believe that any quality environment begins with creating close and nurturing relationships between teachers and children. FEELC strives to ensure continuity of care in the classroom. We make every effort to minimize teacher and child transitions throughout the school year. Classroom transitions are routinely made between May and September as children graduate from FEELC and transition to Kindergarten.

**First Environments follows the Highest Voluntary Enhanced Ratio Requirements for the State of NC.**

<b>Age of Children</b>	<b>Highest Voluntary Enhanced Ratio (Staff : Child)</b>	<b>Maximum Group Size Permitted Per Class</b>
<b>0 to 12 months / Infants</b>	<b>1:4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>12 to 24 months / Toddlers</b>	<b>1:5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2 to 3 years / Middlers</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3 to 4 years / Preschool</b>	<b>1:9</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4 to 5 years / Pre-K</b>	<b>1:12</b>	<b>24</b>

**\*Centers may choose to meet lower ratios than what the state requires. FEELC often has lower ratios in some of the classrooms.**

**\*\* During the first and last hours of operation and as needed, FEELC follows the Voluntary Enhanced Requirements when necessary.**

**\*\*\*For more information on classroom ratios, Please see Appendix I or check your child's classroom posting.**

## **2.2 Transition Philosophy and Procedures**

First Environment Early Learning Center (FEELC) strives to eliminate as many classroom transitions throughout the school year as is possible. We believe that children, families and staff benefit by keeping the core group of children in their classroom for the entire school year, which runs from September to June. FEELC does take into consideration input from parents on classroom placement, however the final decision rests with the FEELC administrative and classroom staff.

### **2.2.1 First Environments Annual Transition**

At the conclusion of each school year, we have an Annual Transition, where the oldest children are "graduating" from the Center. Typically, this is early summer when our graduating children move into K-Camp. Following our transition philosophy of keeping students together as they move up, the majority of the vacancies are in the infant and toddler classrooms.

When determining class configurations, FEELC must ensure that the ages of the children are appropriately grouped in classrooms, so that when children move up, the classroom remains developmentally appropriate. Therefore, children are not enrolled simply by who is first on the list, but by which child best fits the developmental level of the classroom.

In March of each year, FEELC administrators and classroom teachers will meet as a team to begin mapping out the classroom configurations for the next school year. Teachers are very involved in this process, providing valuable information about each child's transition to the next classroom.

## 2.2.2 Classroom Transitions

If a child leaves our school, FEELC must take into consideration the age and developmental abilities of the remaining children in the classroom before contacting a family on the waitlist. No child will be enrolled without the Center Director's approval. Only children of the appropriate age to fill the vacancy will be contacted. If it is determined that no child on the waitlist is of the appropriate age or developmental level to be in that classroom, the Center will consider moving a child up within the school. Prior to any move ups taking place, the Director and the classroom teachers will meet with the families to discuss this possible move up. Close consideration will be given to the move up child's developmental level and the developmental level of the children in the older classroom.

If the opening cannot be filled, the Director and Board will work together to adjust the school budget in order to meet the fiscal needs of the Center.

By minimizing moves in our school and paying close attention to our individual peer groups, FEELC will maximize relationships among the students and their teachers while creating strong family connections.

## 2.2.3 Transition Schedule

Each child is unique and transitions are different from child to child and class to class. Understanding the child and his or her needs helps teachers understand and bond with the child more effectively. Once enrollment for the new school year is decided and teachers have their list of children, informal visiting begins. Teachers make a point of introducing themselves and saying hello on the playgrounds. Prior to your child moving into a new classroom, FEELC will provide you with a visitation schedule.

## 2.2.4 General Classroom Information

<b>INFANT ROOMS (6 weeks to ~1)</b>		
<b><u>Classroom</u></b>	<b><u>Room Number</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>Leap Frog</b>	FE 117	919-541-2634
<b>Tadpoles</b>	FE 119	919-541-7949
<b>INFANT OR TODDLER ROOMS (Dependent upon enrollment needs)</b>		
<b><u>Classroom</u></b>	<b><u>Room Number</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>Butterfly</b>	FE 120	919-541-7990
<b>Caterpillar</b>	FE 122	919-541-1365
<b>TODDLER ROOMS (~1 to ~2)</b>		
<b><u>Classroom</u></b>	<b><u>Room Number</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>Turtles</b>	FE 151	919-541-2455
<b>Bees</b>	FE 153	919-541-7852
<b>Dragonflies</b>	FE 155	919-541-7754
<b>Lizards</b>	FE 157	919-541-4839
<b>MIDDLER ROOMS (~2 to ~3)</b>		
<b><u>Classroom</u></b>	<b><u>Room Number</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>Rainforest</b>	FE 160	919-541-7651
<b>Rapids</b>	FE 162	919-541-2550
<b>Jungle</b>	FE 164	919-541-7850
<b>Otters</b>	FE 166	919-541-4134
<b>PRESCHOOL ROOMS (~3 to ~4)</b>		
<b><u>Classroom</u></b>	<b><u>Room Number</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>Bear</b>	FE 175	919-541-3961
<b>Islanders</b>	FE 177	919-541-4348
<b>PRE-K Rooms (~4 to ~5)</b>		
<b><u>Classroom</u></b>	<b><u>Room Number</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>City</b>	FE 171	919-541-3836
<b>Villagers</b>	FE 173	919-541-3043

## **3.0 Enrollment Policies and Procedures**

### **3.1 Application for Enrollment & Waiting List**

Application for enrollment of children ranging in age from six weeks through entering kindergarten will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. However, priority will be given as follows:

- 1.** Siblings of children currently enrolled at FEELC will have first priority for admission to FEELC. (Follows priorities as listed below in #2-4)
- 2.** Children of Federal Agency (EPA / NIEHS) employees as well as children of other Federal facilities will have second priority for admission to FEELC.
- 3.** Children of visiting Fellows, non-Federal Post Docs, and other trainees on stipends at EPA/NIEHS as well as children of FEELC staff will have third priority for admission to FEELC.
- 4.** Contractors for EPA and NIEHS and non-Federal siblings of current or past FEELC students will have fourth priority for admission to FEELC.

#### **3.1.1 Sharing Slots**

First Environments Early Learning Center wants to make a difference in the lives of families and understands that parents or guardians may have many different working schedules. We do not offer part-time enrollment but we do allow families to share days of the week per single enrollment slot.

The rules are as follows:

- (1) Arrangements for sharing a slot must be arranged by the FEELC Admin and authorized by the FEELC Executive Director.
- (2) You may only share with one family.
- (3) You must share a minimum of two days a week and no more than three.
- (4) You can only share days of the week, not hours of a day.
- (5) There are only two shared slots per classroom.
- (6) Children must be close in age and only share slots in the same classroom
- (7) Both families sharing the slot will contract with Tuition Express to pay for their pro-rata portion of the tuition.
- (8) The FEELC 30-day withdrawal notice requirement applies to both families sharing the slot.
- (9) In the event that the child whose family holds the contracted slot leaves FEELC, the child sharing that slot will lose placement at FEELC after 30 days. Children on the FEELC waitlist have priority to fill any slot openings.
- (10) In the event that the family sharing the slot leaves FEELC, with or without notice, the family holding the contracted slot will be responsible for paying full tuition for the slot.

## **3.2 Required Fees, Tuition, and Late Pickup**

### **3.2.1 Required Registration & Deposit Fees**

#### *3.2.1.1 REGISTRATION FEE*

First Environments requires a \$50.00 non-refundable wait list registration fee per child.

#### *3.2.1.2 DEPOSIT FEE*

A separate deposit is required to secure an agreed upon start date. This deposit, minus any monies due, will be refunded upon withdrawal from the Center. The Center requires a 30-day notice of intent to withdraw, with the exception of rising Kindergartners, in which we require a 45-day notice of intent to withdraw. The Center has 30 days upon withdrawal of the Center to refund your deposit. See section 3.3 for more information about withdrawals.

*FAILURE TO ACCURATELY COMPLETE FORMS OR PAY FEES IN A TIMELY MANNER MAY RESULT IN CANCELLATION OF THE ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT.*

### **3.2.2 Tuition Policies**

First Environments' tuition payments are made by bank draft only. Tuition is drafted every two weeks on Friday. The Board sets the tuition when the budget is presented at the annual July Parent Meeting. The Board will attempt to approve no more than single digit (%) annual increases in tuition.

Any family that participates in a FEELC recognized tuition assistance program will be responsible for any charges or tuition that is not covered by their assistance program.

Tuition payments are required whether or not the child is in attendance. Tuition payments will not be adjusted for vacation, sickness, holiday, inclement weather closure, and when there is an Executive Order by the President for Closings of the Federal Government. Tuition payments are due for all periods of absence regardless of reason. The full tuition and fees are due for all periods where the Center is open but the federal government is in furlough or shutdown. The Board may be petitioned in cases of lengthy absences due to illness.

#### *3.2.2.1 Required Documentation for Annual Employment Status Verification*

Please make your paystub available to determine Federal Status. By default, all families will be charged the contractor rate until federal status is verified. Personal information can be marked out. If you are a new employee to the campus you can have your hiring manager or immediate supervisor or HR email FEELC to verify that you are a Federal employee.

### *3.2.2.2 Veteran of the US Military or USPHS (Commissioned Corps)*

Parents who are eligible for enrollment under enrollment guidelines may apply for federal rates if they are a veteran of the US Military or USPHS (Commissioned Corps) - honorable discharge paper required. Veteran status does not affect enrollment eligibility.

### *3.2.2.3 INSUFFICIENT FUNDS (NSF) FEE*

An insufficient funds fee will be charged for any account with insufficient funds to cover the cost of the tuition draft. **The fee for insufficient funds is \$25 per draft.**

### *3.2.2.4 EMERGENCY CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS*

Emergency credit card payments can be made by using the Square credit card system. Since the Square is for emergency use only, use of it will be limited to once per quarter for tuition, and there will be a \$25 fee included each time to cover charges incurred by FEELC for use of a credit card. Tuition Payments made with the Square can only be made from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm on the Tuesday before the tuition drafts. The tuition draft weeks are listed in the monthly classroom calendars.

## 3.2.3 Late Pickup Policy

**A late pickup fee of \$15 for each 15-minute period past the Center's closing time of 5:30pm will be charged for late pickup.** There is a 5-minute grace period for parents arriving close to closing time, so pickup anytime between 5:36-5:45pm will result in a \$15 charge, anytime between 5:46-6:00pm will result in a \$30 charge, etc.

**Phone calls to notify of late arrival are appreciated but will not exempt late fee charges.** FEELC's policy is to always waive the initial late charge. Record of your initial late charge is kept in the Procure system. The initial late charge will not show up on a tuition statement because that charge is voided. Any following tuition charges will show up on your monthly tuition statement.

You are required to clock your child in and out at the front desk every day. Your clock out time determines if you are charged late fees. If late fee charges are generated they will be posted to your child's account. **Late fee charges will be billed and drafted from your account on the following tuition draft.**

## 3.3 Withdrawals

To withdraw your child from enrollment at FEELC, it is the Center's policy that parents must:

- Provide written notice 30 days (minimum) prior to the date of withdrawal. In the case of rising Kindergarteners, the Center requires a 45-day notice. Please email Heather Ray (hray@firstenvironments.org) and Beth Lake (blake@firstenvironments.org) with your intent to withdraw.

- Failure to provide written notice before withdrawal will result in parents being held responsible for 30 days of tuition costs beyond the date of withdrawal and possibly forfeiture of the security deposit.

To obtain more information about this process, please contact Heather Ray (hray@firstenvironments.org) or Beth Lake (blake@firstenvironments.org).

## **3.4 Special Needs Children and Their Families**

First Environments welcomes all children to participate in all areas of our program. The center enrolls children with special needs and challenges in accordance with ADA regulations. The center, however, does not primarily serve such children.

FEELC reserves the right to ask a parent to withdraw their child from enrollment at FEELC if it is determined that the child cannot be adequately cared for in the Center. In such a case, FEELC may waive the required 30-day notice of intent to withdraw.

## **3.5 Pre-Enrollment Visit**

FEELC would like parents to spend a minimum of two to three hours at the Center with their child before the child comes to the center alone. This helps make your child's first experience at our Center a pleasant one. It also gives you an opportunity to get to know the staff. We encourage you to set up a series of "mini" visits. Short stays help your child gain trust in the staff and become familiar with the surroundings. If at all possible, we encourage both parents to accompany the child during these "mini" visits. When possible please coordinate your visits with your child's teachers.

## **3.6 Required Enrollment Information**

Upon accepting a spot in our Center, you will be given a folder containing documents that will need to be completed and returned to the front office prior to your child's first day. The children's folder includes the child's application for child care, children's medical report, immunization history, travel and activity authorization, discipline and behavior management policy, FEELC enrollment agreement, child and adult care food program form, photo/media consent form, summary of the NC child care licensing laws, FEELC family and child information form. The infant folders have in addition the infant safe sleep policy, CACFP provision of breast milk or infant formula form, and the infant feeding schedule. Please note, prior to enrollment your child must receive a physical examination and the Medical Information Form must be completed by your child's physician.

To keep children's records current, please update any changes of emergency contact information, place of employment, additional immunization records, or anything else that you feel we need to know about your child. FE will also send our quarterly reminders by e-mail to parents requesting update changes. Your child's records will be stored in the FEELC

front office. These records are kept confidential but are also immediately available to administrative staff or teaching staff that have consent from a parent or legal guardian, the child's parents or legal guardian, and the regulatory authorities including our state licensing consultant.

For more information on the **FEELC Enrollment Agreement**, please see **Appendix II**.

If you have any questions regarding completion of any documents, please contact the Office Manager, Kim Graper at [kgraper@firstenvironments.org](mailto:kgraper@firstenvironments.org) or (919) 541-9452.

## 3.6.1 Immunization Records

It is North Carolina policy that your child receives immunizations in order to attend day care. Therefore, it is extremely important that your child's immunization records be kept up to date. It is the parent's responsibility to bring the Center a copy of their child's immunization records for their files and update them as immunizations occur throughout the year. Here is a link for more information about NC immunization laws for childcare centers

[http://www.immunize.nc.gov/schools/ccf\\_requirements.htm](http://www.immunize.nc.gov/schools/ccf_requirements.htm)

# 4.0 Center Practices and Policies

## 4.1 Times of Operation

Operating days and hours will be Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Please pick up your child in time to exit the building by 5:30 p.m. For the safety of our children, parents are asked to leave the property at 5:30 and not to visit on days when the Center is closed. Security cannot distinguish between visiting and loitering and may ask individuals to vacate the area. Please refer to section 3.2.3 for policies on late pickup after 5:30 p.m.

### 4.1.1 Scheduled Closings

The following list of scheduled closings includes Federal holidays and additional Center closings. As other important events are scheduled for the Center, updates will be communicated and will be posted in the Center.

A list of scheduled closed days (and typical months of occurrence) is as follows:

- New Year's Day (January)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (January)
- President's Day (February)
- Memorial Day (May)
- Independence Day (July)
- Labor Day (September)

- Columbus Day (October)
- Veteran's Day (November)
- Thanksgiving Day (November)
- Fall Break (The day after Thanksgiving in November)
- Winter Break (The day before Christmas in December)
- Christmas Day (December)

When a date to be closed falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed on the previous Friday. When a date to be closed falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed on the following Monday.

## 4.1.2 Closures/Delayed Openings for Special Circumstances

Under certain severe conditions such as inclement weather, facility crisis (i.e. loss of water or power) or national emergency, the Director, in conjunction with the Board, may close the center or delay opening for the protection of the children and staff. The Center may contact parents through phone, e-mail and/or 541-KIDZ (5439) during working hours so children can be picked up as quickly as possible. Outside of working hours, please call 541-KIDZ (5439) for the center's operating hours. Emergency situations can be very stressful on children and the staff is trained at maintaining order in a calm and friendly manner. Parent cooperation during these situations is greatly appreciated.

## 4.2 Attendance

Regular attendance is expected of all children in the program. In order to maintain staff/child ratios, it is important to call or email your child's classroom if you will not be bringing your child or you will be arriving later than your normal time. We do ask that parents bring children to school in time for morning activities. We know that from time to time schedules may not permit, but it is for the benefit of your child that he/she comes in time for group activities.

You are required to clock your child in and out at the front desk every day. Your clock out time determines if you are charged late fees. If late fee charges are generated they will be posted to your child's account. **Late fee charges will be billed and drafted from your account on the following tuition draft.** For more information on late fee charges, see section 3.2.3 of this parent handbook.

**FEELC takes your child's attendance in two locations. Attendance is taken in your child's classroom by their teachers and at the front office at the Procure attendance tracker. Parents are required to check their child(ren) in and out each day at the Procure attendance tracker.** If you forget to clock out you do not automatically get a late charge. The families that forget to clock out are clocked out for 5:30, unless the closer notifies us that it is after 5:35.

## 4.3 Arrival & Departure

Arrivals and departures are transitional times for children and need to be handled delicately. Your child may cling to you in the morning or cry when it is time for him/her to leave in the evening. Do not take tears as a personal rejection or the clinging as a sign of dislike for the center. This reaction is normal for a young child. We can work together to make these difficult times a little easier for you and your child.

**\*\* Please note:** You will be required to clock your child in and out at the front desk every day.

Accompany your child to his/her classroom, wash hands appropriately, and ensure that your child's teacher is aware of his/her arrival. Children should never be left unaccompanied in the parking lot, dropped off at the front entrance, left in the lobby, playground, or halls.

Inform the staff of any special instructions or information that might be needed for that day. We request that you say goodbye to your child rather than merely disappear. Your child may cry briefly, but ultimately will trust you more.

Please enter your child's classroom quietly so as not to disturb the activity in progress. We ask that you remember to be courteous to all of our children. A smile and a friendly greeting are always appropriate.

When picking up your child, we ask that you come into the Center through the front entrance of the building. If your child is outside on the playground, we ask that you let your child's teacher know you are picking him/her up. Children may not be picked up from an outside entrance or over the fence. It is for the safety and security of your child(ren) that we have established these policies.

Since children will not know when they will be leaving, they may be involved in an individual or group activity. Allow your child to "shift gears" by giving him/her a warning period, i.e. "we will be leaving in two minutes" or "after you finish that picture, we will leave." If you need to rush, please call us in advance so that we can help prepare your child prior to your arrival. Please remember to collect any artwork, soiled clothing, and outerwear in the cubby area on your way out.

In addition to security and employee issues, it is very difficult for young children to understand why they are being picked up late. Parents are strongly encouraged to arrive for pickup prior to center closing. A \$15.00 fine will be assessed for every fifteen-minute period or portion thereof that a parent is picking up their child late. Please refer to 3.2.3 for policies on pickup after 5:30.

If a parent is more than 15 minutes late and has not contacted the center, the front office will attempt to locate the parent. Emergency contact persons will be called to pick up the child as soon as possible. If after one hour, there has been no contact with a parent and no emergency contact person can be located, the center director may decide to contact the Department of Social Services.

## **4.4 Parking**

### **4.4.1 Parking Hang Tags**

Parking hang tags (up to 2) will be provided to facilitate parent access to the EPA campus. FEELC has a temporary parking lot in front of the child care center. These designated child care parking spaces are for use while dropping off or picking up your child only. If this lot is full, please use the adjacent NCC parking lot. It is necessary that you have the proper identification tag on your car to be able to park in these lots.

### **4.4.2 Parking Lot Safety**

For health, safety and legal reasons, FEELC must insist on the following parking regulations

- Never leave unattended children in your car.
- Park in marked spaces only. This also applies if you are just waiting in the car for someone.
- Do not park along the curb in front of the building. This type of parking can block drivers' and walkers' vision.
- Do not leave the motor running.
- Do not drop children off in the parking lot. Enter the building to drop off and pick up children.
- Children must be properly restrained in appropriate safety seats when on FEELC property.
- During busy drop-off/pickup periods, parents may park in the FEELC Emergency spot. At all other times (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.), this spot is reserved for First Environments' designated vehicles.
- If no parking spots are available, please use the adjacent NCC parking lot.
- Please use the sidewalks when walking into and out of the center and refrain from walking out in the parking lot itself.

## **4.5 Meals & Nap/Rest Time**

### **4.5.1 Meals**

The Center participates in the Child Care Food Program, sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The goals of this program are to provide nutritious and appetizing meals and snacks for children, introduce different types of foods and help teach good eating habits. We will avoid serving overly sweet items and encourage children to appreciate the natural flavors of a variety of wholesome foods. Service will be family style with lots of opportunities for children to develop their skill in feeding and serving themselves. Our weekly menus will be posted for your convenience.

First Environments is a peanut-free center. If your child has a food allergy, please make sure that the staff and Health Coordinator are aware of it. **All food allergies must be documented, posted, and a copy of the documentation must be kept in your child's file as well as in their classroom.**

Children may bring breakfast, lunch and/or snacks from home as long as it meets state nutrition standards. First Environments complies with USDA and the Child and Adult Care Food Program nutritional requirements. **All outside food must be peanut-free.**

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Please bring your infant's breast milk or water in a plastic or glass bottle. **FEELC can accept glass bottles if they have a silicone sleeve. Please do not place glass breast milk bottles in the freezer.** Please label all food items and bottles with your child's first and last name and date.

FEELC does not serve beef, pork, fish, hot dogs, grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, peanut butter, and chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Mini raw carrots are served to children older than 2 when teachers and parents are comfortable with the children's chewing abilities.

Staff cut/break foods into pieces no larger than ¼ inch square for infants and ½ inch squares for toddlers/twos, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability.

The Staff will discard foods that have expired dates.

Your child will receive meals and snacks depending upon the length of his/her stay at the Center. Typically, breakfast is served from 8:45-9:30 a.m., lunch from 11:45 - 12:30 p.m., and afternoon snack from 3:45-4:30 p.m.

## 4.5.2 Nap/Rest Time

In the infant classrooms children nap and rest as needed. Infants are not on a schedule for nap/rest. Each infant has their own individual crib that is labeled. Infant crib mattress sheets are changed and washed at least once a day but sometimes multiple times per day depending on the infant's needs.

For ages Toddler-Pre-K, all classrooms have a scheduled nap/rest time after lunch. The times vary based on the age group. Your child's class schedule will list the nap/rest time. Each child has their own individual labeled nap time mat. The sheets are changed and washed weekly as licensing requires.

## 4.6 Personal Belongings & Infant Safe Sleep Policy

### 4.6.1 Infant Personal Belongings & Safe Sleep Policy

Diapers and wipes are provided by the Center, so you do not need to bring anything except several changes of clothing for your child.

The Center provides formula for infants. Parents are required to bring bottles with water to be mixed at the Center. Breast milk will be stored in the classroom refrigerator for the day. Any unused breast milk will be sent home with the family or discarded at the end of each day. Also, frozen breast milk can be stored in the freezer for seven days. Please include the child's first, last name, date received and date to be used within that seven day period.

Parents who prefer a type or brand of diaper, formula, or baby food not provided by the Center may bring such items at their own expense.

#### *4.6.1.1 Infant Safe Sleep Policy*

A copy of the Infant Safe Sleep Policy is in every infant folder upon enrollment. **For a copy of the Infant Safe Sleep Policy, please see Appendix III.**

## 4.6.2 Toddler/Middler/Preschooler Personal Belongings

Dress your child in clothing that is washable and comfortable. When children are hard at work and play, they do get dirty. We view this as a part of healthy growth and development. Some of the “most fun” and best learning activity materials are sand, water, mud, paint and play dough. These will be available to your child regularly.

During toilet training time, we request you send your child in clothing that he/she can manage by his/herself. Toddlers and preschoolers need an extra set of clothes, and appropriate seasonal clothing for active outdoor play (mittens, boots, bathing suit, etc.). Appropriate shoes for running, climbing and playing are needed (flip-flops and thong sandals are inappropriate).

Toys belonging to your child may be damaged or misplaced at the Center, so we ask that your child leave these items at home. We will provide enough materials for all the children. We do encourage children to share nature, books, and special interest items with us. Children may choose to bring a special interest item for show and tell; however, guns and weapons of any sort are not appropriate and will not be allowed in the Center.

If your child has a “special” blanket or “comfort” item that he/she likes to use at rest time or bedtime, please feel free to bring it. It is most important that you plainly label all your child’s clothing and personal items in permanent ink. The Center cannot be responsible for items not labeled.

## 4.7 Birthday Celebrations

*FEELC believes that birthday celebrations are an important part of your child’s life. Over the years, we have seen an increase in the amount of children with food allergies and the severity of allergic reactions. Therefore, FEELC asks that all parents abide by the allergy policy below.*

### **FEELC Food Allergy Policy**

Due to food allergies, FEELC will not allow parents to bring outside food to be shared with other children at our school:

- NO potlucks during school operating hours
- NO outside food (homemade or store bought) allowed for sharing at FEELC
- NO homemade birthday cakes

For classroom and school luncheons, dinners and celebrations, the Center will order what is needed, and when appropriate, collect funds to reimburse the cost.

There is one exception, which are children's birthdays. Cakes or cupcakes, with the appropriate peanut-free label attached, or fruit popsicles, yogurt in the sealed original container, or whole fresh fruit may be purchased and brought in. All fresh fruit will be washed and cut in the FEELC kitchen to ensure no cross contamination with allergens. Food is limited to snack time.

Currently, we only know of one store that guarantees that their cakes and cupcakes are made in a peanut-free facility, and that is Super Walmart. However, please let us know if you find another vendor.

Parents can contribute non-food items for classroom events. Ask your child's teacher for a list of suggested items. All items must be checked in at the front desk, and an administrator will be happy to deliver it to your child's classroom.

Please remember that gift bags or balloons are not allowed at our school. A non-food treat such as a sticker or stamp is fine. FEELC wants every child to feel special on their birthday, but we do not want some children to feel left out with one child's birthday being a big celebration while another child may only have a simple snack. Please have these special gifts and treats at home or wherever you choose to have your child's birthday.

## **4.8 Toilet Training**

There is no definite age when a child is ready to potty train, and many toddlers and two-year olds alternate between periods of cooperative and negative behavior. It is our experience that toilet training is best started sometime between 24- and 36-months of age. First Environment's staff can be a great resource in helping make the decision as to whether or not your child is ready. Your child may be ready to potty train if he or she:

- Is staying dry for several hours
- Is able to communicate the need to use the toilet
- Appears to be aware of wet or soiled diapers

Both the parent and staff should use the same procedures for training so that they do not confuse the child. If there is too much anxiety or stress, then it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time. During potty training, it is very important to dress your child in uncomplicated clothing that the child can easily manage on his/her own and to provide many clothing changes.

Please note that toilet training in a group affects individual children differently and can actually accelerate or slow your child's training while at the Center.

## 4.9 Outdoor Play

Outdoor play spaces have been designed with the concept of “continuous” play in mind. A variety of challenging activities will stimulate creative and social play. The equipment and designated play areas will provide gross motor activity, which is very important to healthy growth and development. On days when weather or poor air quality will not permit outdoor activity, our multipurpose room will be converted to a gross motor play area. North Carolina Child Care law requires each child to play outside daily, unless there is active precipitation.

Outdoor activity will be restricted when:

- **Adverse weather conditions exist**
- **Adverse Air Quality Conditions exist**

The Air Quality Index (AQI) tracks five major air pollutants and reports them daily at: <http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.fcsummary&stateid=38>

Based on AQI reports, FEELC will adhere to the following guidelines:

### **OZONE**

**Code Orange** – Outdoor activities will be limited to morning/early afternoon times of the day.

**Code Red** – Outdoor activities will be limited to morning only.

### **PARTICULATE MATTER**

**Code Yellow** – Outdoor activities will be restricted.

**Code Orange** – No outdoor activities permitted.

**Parents Please Note:** Children that fall in a sensitive group should consult their health care professional and notify the FEELC Administration.

**For more information about the AQI Categories, please see Appendix IV.**

## 4.10 Health and Safety Policies for Illness

If your child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the facility, FEELC follows guidelines set by the NC Licensing Authorities for Childcare facilities and the standard set by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRC) for Inclusion/Exclusion/Dismissal of Children (standard 3.065 stated in Health Promotion and Protection in Child Care).

Symptoms requiring exclusion include:

- Temperatures of 100°F (measured axillary) or above. (Children’s temperatures are taken a second time in the front office for confirmation.)
- Significant bodily secretions, including vomiting, diarrhea and persistent discharge from eyes.

Once it has been determined that a child will need to go home, parents will be notified. The sick child will then be brought to the front office to wait for their parents. The child will be given a resting mat and will be supervised by an administrative staff or will be held until the parent arrives. For infants and young toddlers that require the comfort of their teachers arrangements are made in the classroom for support.

Any of these symptoms require the child to be excluded from FEELC for 24hrs, which effectively means the next school day.

Do NOT send a child to FEELC if they have any of these symptoms.

If your child does not have these symptoms, but you have administered a fever reducing medication (e.g. Tylenol), do NOT send your child to FEELC. These medications may mask important symptoms.

If your child has been prescribed an antibiotic, the first dose must be administered at home. Please allow a minimum of two hours before coming to the center after the initial dose of the antibiotic. This allows the parents to monitor the child for possible allergic reactions.

Please remember that exclusion of a child for illness is critical to minimize the impact it may have on the child population as a whole.

Parents will also be notified if their child is lethargic or exhibits unusual behavior.

## **4.11 Medication and Medication Forms**

All medication (prescription or over the counter) needs to be checked in at the front desk by an administrative staff. (Including diaper creams, sunscreen, and etc.) The Administrative staff can help you fill out the correct medication form and understand the policies for each type of medication.

No medication (prescription or over the counter) will be administered without specific instructions from a physician or the child's parent or guardian. A Medication Form must be completed and dated for each day the medicine is to be dispensed. The parent must sign and date the form. When the medicine is dispensed, the hour is noted on the form and the staff member who administers the medicine must initial it.

All medications must be in their original box or bottle and contain the child's name and the appropriate dosage for his/her age and weight. Any sunscreens or diaper creams must also have all of the above.

Pain relievers can only be administered for immunizations, teething, and earaches without fever. Medication is not to be mixed with formula, juice, or food.

**For additional information about the Medication and Medication forms, please see Appendix V.**

## 4.11.1 AIDS Policy

Children infected with the HIV virus will be eligible for enrollment at the center. The Director, parent and child's physician will determine whether the child will be able to receive proper care at the center, and whether the child poses a threat of HIV transmission to others. Note: most infected children, particularly those under 18 months of age, do not pose a risk to others. Only persistent biting behavior or the presence of exudative skin lesions would be a reason for exclusion. (Reference: The American Academy of Pediatrics).

It will be the Center's policy that the child's and family's rights to privacy are respected. All records of the child's HIV status will be kept strictly confidential. The number of personnel aware of the child's condition will be restricted to those needed to ensure proper care of the child and to detect situations in which the potential for transmission may change.

Day care practices, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics concerning universal blood and body precautions and procedures, will be routinely followed by all employees.

## 4.12 Emergencies

In case of a medical or dental emergency, the staff will follow specific procedures:

Minor Accident:

Classroom teacher will administer first aid

An accident report will be prepared. One copy will go to the administrative staff in the front office and the other will be given to the parent.

Serious Accident:

If a child has an emergency inside the Center or on the playground, a staff member will bring the child to the Center office to be assessed by the administrative staff. If the child is not able to be moved, then an administrative staff member will be called to the scene of the accident immediately. The following procedures will be followed:

If the child has sustained a head, neck, or spinal cord injury or obvious leg fracture, the staff must call 911.

- If the child has none of the above and is able to be moved, the parents will be responsible for transporting the child to the hospital of their choice. If a parent cannot be located and the Executive Director or Administrative staff determines that the child should be treated by a physician, the emergency contact person will be called to transport the child or the hospital of choice will be called for ambulance transportation.

The Executive Director or administrative staff will be responsible for the following:

- Assuring that authorization for medical treatment is taken with the ill or injured person to the hospital.

- Accompanying the ill or injured person to the hospital. (Remember that ratios must be maintained.)
- Notifying the parents.
- Notifying the emergency contact person in case of staff illness or injury requiring transportation to a medical facility.
- Notifying the medical facility about the person to be treated.

Obtaining substitute staff if needed

Emergency contact information must be kept current at all times. Please notify the Center of any change.

## 4.13 Fire Drills

North Carolina law requires that the Center hold fire drills monthly. During the fire drills, the staff will evacuate all the children. Please do not be alarmed if you hear the drill or happen to be in the Center at a time when a fire drill is taking place.

## 4.14 Inclement Weather Policy

**First Environments makes decisions on whether the Center will operate during inclement weather separate from NIEHS and the EPA.** The Board President and the Director take into consideration the road conditions, travel advisories and area schools & business openings/closings. If the Center will be closed or have a delayed opening due to inclement weather, information will be available as soon as possible through the following:

- E-mail updates
- FEELC website at <http://www.firstenvironments.org/parents/inclement-weather-policy-updates>
- First Environments inclement weather hotline (919) 541-KIDZ (5439),
- FEELC [Facebook page](#)

## 4.15 FEELC Emergency Response Plan

FEELC has developed an emergency plan to cover situations ranging from severe weather conditions to a widespread RTP area threat. A copy of the FEELC Emergency Response Plan is available from the Center office upon request. **For more information about the FEELC Emergency Response Plan, please see Appendix VI.**

## 4.16 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

All staff will comply with the provisions of the Child Abuse Reporting Act by reporting suspected cases of abuse and neglect and bringing it to the attention of the Director.

## 4.17 Behavior Management Policy

It is the policy of the Center and the laws of the State of North Carolina to neither spank nor physically punish a child. A constructive technique for managing behavior and maintaining a child's self-worth will be applied. The Director and administrative team will provide guidance in these skills. The goal of behavior management is to teach the child self-control and self-correcting techniques. Employees are required to sign a statement stating they will follow the FEELC guidelines for child behavior management.

While each child and each behavioral situation is unique, we shall use a few basic management strategies to help the child learn to manage his/her own behavior. For example, we shall focus our attention on positive behavior while guiding the child through challenging moments. In addition, when negative behavior arises, we shall redirect the child to another activity or give them options for quiet self-soothing activities. When conflicts arise, problem solving and addressing of feelings will occur. Room arrangement shall be inviting and classroom activities shall be stimulating in order to reduce behavioral problems. Directions or suggestions are stated simply and positively. Actions of the child, not the child's personality, are the focus. Corrective action will be immediate. Consistency will be maintained. Children will not be isolated, denied food, sleep, or bathroom use due to negative behavior.

Under certain situations, First Environments may require a parent to pick up their child due to aggressive or uncontrollable behavior. Persistent uncontrollable behavior and/or serious hurtful behaviors are not compatible with group care for a number of reasons. First, the safety and well-being of the other children and teachers need to be protected. Second, this behavior requires a significant amount of one-on-one attention from the classroom's primary teachers, and therefore effectively puts the classroom out of ratio. This puts a stress on the whole classroom, as teachers are not able to provide the other children with the attention that is essential for quality care.

### **For example:**

- A child repeatedly refuses to participate in necessary routines and/or activities (hand washing, resting/napping, toileting, meals, or staying within sight and sound of the group) and they require one to one teacher assistance.
- A child becomes dependent on direct teacher assistance in order to cope with their typical emotional needs or to prevent unacceptable behaviors.
- A child displays age inappropriate tantrums that last longer than twenty-minutes

and/or occurs more than three times in one day.

- A child needs to be separated from the group more than two times in one day.
- Persistent hurtful behavior and/or lack of self-control

### **Recurrent Uncontrollable Behavior:**

It is the goal of FEELC to work proactively and constructively on behavioral issues with each child and family using the strategies described above. However, if a child displays persistent uncontrollable behavior, we will notify the parents and work closely with them to develop a plan to help the child gain self-control and a positive attitude toward their peers and teachers. Should the child's continued negative behavior put themselves, their peers or teachers at risk of physical harm, we reserve the right to ask the parents to withdraw the child from the Center.

The Center's behavior management policy does not allow threats or physical punishment by staff. Parents must abide by the same policy when in the Center. Children are subject to suspension for a period of two weeks should parents violate Center policy. Fees will be required during the two-week suspension to ensure the child's slot is available at the end of the suspended period.

Parents are required to sign the Enrollment Agreement which states:

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ALL OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT AND THOSE OF THE PARENT'S HANDBOOK. THE PARENT HANDBOOK IS ACCESSABLE ON THE FEELC WEB-SITE: <http://www.firstenvironments.org>

For more information about the Enrollment Agreement, please see Appendix II.

## **5.0 Parent Involvement**

### **5.1 Home Center Communication**

Parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. We strive to create mutual respect between parents and the center staff; a partnership for the benefit of the child. Our doors are open to parents at all times.

During the year, the Center sponsors events that all parents are encouraged to participate in, such as afternoon festivals, graduation, and luncheons. Suggestions and volunteers are always appreciated.

Calendars are provided on a monthly basis with upcoming events for each classroom. In addition, room parents are encouraged to work with the teachers to distribute classroom specific information.

## 5.2 Parent Teacher Communication

Communication between the parent, child, and teacher is important to ensure a good working relationship. We encourage daily communication between parents and teachers. Parents will receive daily information about their infant's and toddler's progress. For older children, teachers will communicate through daily discussion with parents as well as information boards. Parents are encouraged to visit the classrooms and speak with the teachers as often as possible.

### 5.2.1 Parent Teacher Conferences

Our responsibility is to communicate with the parents regarding their children's progress. Our primary method of communication is daily information shared between the staff and parents. The preschool staff are required to hold two Parent Teacher Conferences annually. If a child has problem areas, they will be brought to the parents' attention along with the teacher's strategy to correct the problems. It is our experience that when parents and teachers are able to work and plan together for the child's educational progress, the child benefits great

### 5.2.2 Assessments

#### **Assessment Description**

FEELC complete formal assessments twice a year for children ages Infants to Pre-K. Parents have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher to review the assessments. During the conference parents and teacher discuss the child's progress and set up future goals. FEELC also has many informal assessments that are conducted throughout the year.

As a part of new employee orientation staff are made aware of assessment tools used by FEELC. Ongoing support from the program facilitator and the program coordinators are available to assist staff when needed during assessments.

Assessments are used to involve the child's family in his or her educational process, include their goals for their child, and to keep the family apprised of achievements, milestones, and challenges a child may be facing. We use them also to track children's emerging interests and specific needs. In addition, assessment is necessary to examine (and continually Monitor) the quality and relevance of the classroom environment, curriculum, and overall program effectiveness.

Informal assessments take place every day. Assessments are observed in the natural environment of the outdoors and the classroom. Assessments can be done while children are in groups or one on one with their teacher or a program coordinator. The process addresses all aspects of the child's learning and development. These methods may include anecdotal notes, checklists, and observations. These observations and assessments are tools teachers use to help each child reach their maximum potential. The assessment (as

with all children's records) is kept confidential. Teachers keep children's personal assessments in files in their classrooms.

A child's assessment document will contain specific information from the formalized assessment tools. For Infants to 3 years we use - Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3), Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social -Emotional, and for children 3 to 5 years we use - Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment. In addition we include samples of the child's work, photos of particular skills demonstrated, checklists, and observational records.

The most important factor in the assessment process is the people involved in the process. It is essential to include family input so as to include the family's cultural perspective, understanding of their child, and goals for their child. Upon parents request information about specific assessment tools will be made available.

FEELC will locate a translator whenever necessary, to make parents comfortable, and to assure clear, two-way communication. If parents have any questions or concerns we will work with parents to procure appropriate feedback.

## 5.2.3 Early Intervention

Early intervention is important to help young children with delays reach their full potential. Through play, teachers have the opportunity to observe children. Observations and assessments are tools teachers use to identify a possible developmental concern. Teachers will share their concerns with an FEELC administrator and the child's family as a first step in a referral process towards early intervention. When one of our staff suspects that a child has a developmental delay or special need they will schedule a meeting with the family. The meeting will be confidential and take place in one of the administrative offices. The staff will provide documentation and explanation for their concerns. This is an opportunity for the parents to ask questions and help collaborate with the teachers. Together both parents and teachers will form goals for the child's development and future milestones. FEELC can assist in gathering information about local resources, websites and contact information about early intervention services in our area. If children require on-site support from outside sources we provide space for that work to take place. With parent permission, teachers will work with early intervention specialists to make sure the child's developmental goals are being addressed within the program.

### **Local Resources**

Durham County Network of Care

<http://durham.nc.networkofcare.org/mh/services/subcategory.aspx?tax=LR-1700>

Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.bearly.nc.gov/>

Early Childhood Outreach (EChO)

<http://www.exchangefamilycenter.org/#!early-childhood-outreach-echo/cuyw>

Community Partnerships

<http://www.communitypartnerships.org/>

## 5.2.4 Children's Records

All records kept on your child are confidential. Your child's records include enrollment information, medical information, accident reports, and assessment/progress reports. You have a right to view your child's records. We ask that you call the Center office in advance, if you would like to see the records.

## 5.3 Parent Visitation

The open-door policy at the Center welcomes parents at any time they wish to visit. Parents are encouraged to visit and to share as many experiences with their children as considered feasible and desirable. It is important for the parent to understand that all may not go smoothly at first. Children may not understand the coming and going of parents and at the beginning may be confused or upset by visits especially when the parents leave. Our staff is trained to understand the children's need for special attention and reassurance during this time. Once the children are well adjusted to the routine at the Center and to the parents going back to work, visits by the parents can become a truly wonderful experience. This means parents can be more involved with their children's daily lives and activities and can participate more fully in their early learning experiences

Parents are encouraged to call ahead, if possible, so staff can prepare your child for your visit.

Whenever there is a question or a problem regarding visiting the Center or participating with the children, parents are encouraged to confer with the Director or staff.

## 5.4 First Environments Parents' Organization

The Center encourages parent support and participation, which enriches the program. Parents may work with the classroom teachers, the Director, or Board members to determine areas where volunteers are needed within the Center. One specific volunteer role is that of room parent. Individuals who serve in this capacity serve as a liaison between the teachers, the Board, and the parents.

### 5.4.1 Required Parent Hours

Each family with a child enrolled in the Center is required to contribute a minimum of six hours per year to the Center. Work projects that qualify for parent hours will be communicated by classroom staff and the Center. It is expected that each family will contribute some of its six hours by participating in such classroom activities as art, music, cooking projects, or sharing special talents. It is parents' responsibility to document their

hours and can be done so at the front desk. Families who fail to complete their hours by the end of the year will pay a fee of \$50 for each hour not met. For purposes of computing hours, the year starts September 1 and ends August 31. Families will owe 0.5 (1/2) hour for every calendar month or fraction of a month that your child is enrolled in the center. Parent participation can enhance the quality of the Center without adding to the cost. It is also a wonderful way to keep in touch with what is going on in your child's life and to provide support for the staff that are creating a nurturing environment for the children. Please contribute of your time as generously as you can.

## **5.5 Parent Meetings**

All parents of children who attend the center will be invited to attend the biannual Parent Organization meetings. These meetings are held in July and November. Next year's budget will be discussed at the July meeting and the November meeting provides a time for updates and discussion on any issues that concern the entire Center.

## **5.6 Volunteers**

Whenever possible, parents are invited to share their time and talents with the children. Please check with your child's teacher, as she/he will know the best time to set up a visit and may suggest materials for you to bring. If you would like to spend time in your child's classroom, or assist with a classroom or center event, contact your child's teacher.

At times, volunteers from the community may be brought in to work with the children. Volunteers provide the center with additional adults, lowering our teacher/child ratio so that children are able to receive more individual attention.

## **5.7 Parent Conduct**

Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. The relationship between parents and teachers impacts the wellbeing of all our children and should serve as a role model for healthy, adult interactions. While issues with teachers should not be discussed in front of children, parents should feel that they can communicate their concerns and complaints directly to the caregiver of their child provided it is done in a civilized and considerate manner. Parents may also talk directly to the Director. Displays of anger or hostility are not appropriate. Neither the Director or teachers have the authority to change center policy; issues of policy should be brought before the Board of Directors.

Certain actions are so serious that they will lead to immediate disciplinary action. Such actions include but are not limited to:

- Comments of a sexual nature
- Racial, ethnic or religious slurs
- Violence or inappropriate language
- Smoking or drinking on school property
- Disrespect of the staff, children or other parents

## 5.7.1 Disciplinary Action

If a parent is in violation of Center Policy, this violation will be brought to the attention of the parent. First time violations or minor incidences may be discussed verbally with the parent by an individual Board member. The Board member, however, shall make it clear to the parent that this is a formal verbal warning and a written record will be kept in the Board minutes. More serious violations or repeated minor violations will result in a written warning from the Board of Directors to the parent. The parent will be asked to formally acknowledge the warning and corrective actions may be required. As a last resort, the Board may ask a family to leave the center. Timing of the departure will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors. A parent who disagrees with any disciplinary action may submit a written complaint as directed below.

## 5.7.2 Complaint Resolution and Grievance Policy

In cases where problems or misunderstandings arise, the parent should attempt to resolve the issue through discussions with the teacher involved and the Director. If the parent is unable to resolve the issue in this manner, she/he should contact a Board member and may submit a formal complaint as directed below.

When a parent disagrees with the Director or Board, she/he shall submit the complaint in writing to the Board of Directors. The Board will investigate the situation and determine a resolution. The decision by the Board will be binding and will end all further discussion of the issue.

Any parent who continues to discuss the issue after the Board has determined the resolution will be in a state of non-compliance and subjected to disciplinary action.

## 5.8 Solicitations Policy

It is our policy at First Environments Early Learning Center that neither parents nor staff may solicit either parents or staff for funds, services, or products that are not specifically related to fund-raising activities for the Center. If a parent or staff member is participating in a fundraiser for another non-profit organization, he/she may request permission from the Board to post notices at the Center. The Board will approve or disapprove such requests on a case-by-case basis

## Appendix I: Classroom Staff to Child Ratio

<b>Age of Youngest Child Enrolled in this Classroom</b>	<b>Center's Ratio: Staff to Children</b>	<b>Maximum Number of Children Allowed</b>
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**Minimum Requirements**

Age of Children	State Minimum Requirements Ratio: Staff/Children	Maximum Group Size Permitted
0 to 12 months	1/5	10
12 to 24 months	1/6	12
2 to 3 years	1/10	20
3 to 4 years	1/15	25
4 to 5 years	1/20	25
5 years and older	1/25	25

**Voluntary Enhanced Requirements**

Age of Children	Voluntary Enhanced Ratio: Staff/Child	Voluntary Enhanced Maximum Group Size
0 to 12 months	1/5	10
12 to 24 months	1/6	12
2 to 3 years	1/9	18
3 to 4 years	1/10	20
4 to 5 years	1/13	25
5 to 6 years	1/15	25
6 years and older	1/20	25

**Highest Voluntary Enhanced Requirements**

Age of Children	Highest Voluntary Enhanced Ratio: Staff/Children	Maximum Group Size Permitted
0 to 12 months	1/4	8
12 to 24 months	1/5	10
2 to 3 years	1/8	16
3 to 4 years	1/9	18
4 to 5 years	1/12	24
5 to 6 years	1/14	25
6 years and older	1/19	25

*\* Children younger than two years old may be cared for in groups with older children at the beginning and end of the operating day provided the staff/child ratio for the youngest child in the group is maintained.*

*\*In any multi-age group situation, the staff/child ratio for the youngest child in the group shall be maintained for the entire group.*

*\*Centers may choose to meet lower ratios than what the state requires.*

*\* Please check the appropriate box of the staff child ratio your program is required to meet based on your license type.*

## Appendix II: FEELC Enrollment Agreement



Page 1 of 2

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT  
IN RETURN FOR DAY CARE SERVICES ACCORDED TO  
BY THE CORPORATION OF  
FIRST ENVIRONMENTS EARLY LEARNING CENTER  
I AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS AND FEES:**

1. That the Center will provide day care services between the hours of 7:30 am and 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. A fee of \$15 will be charged for each fifteen minutes or fraction thereof past 5:30 pm for late pickup.
2. That the center will be closed on all federal holidays and in addition one day each for Fall Break (day after Thanksgiving) and Winter Break (usually day before December 25).
3. To deposit an amount of \$420 to cover any unpaid charges due at the time of departure from the Center. The deposit will be refunded within 30 days of last day. Any money due will be remitted by the Center within 30 days. Those deposits will not be refunded in cases of dismissal due to violation of Center policies or failure to provide a 30-day notice of withdrawal.
4. To pay a biweekly tuition of \_\_\_\_\_. That payment is automatically drafted from your bank account biweekly. That all fees for non-sufficient funds will be paid by the parents. I agree to pay all subsequent tuition and fee increases as they are instituted.
5. To pay full tuition payments which are required whether or not the child is in attendance. Tuition payments will not be adjusted for vacation, sickness, holiday, inclement weather closure, and when there is an Executive Order by the President for Closings of the Federal Government. Tuition payments are due for all periods of absence regardless of reason. The full tuition and fees are due for all periods where the Center is open but the federal government is in furlough or shutdown. The Board may be petitioned in cases of lengthy absences due to illness.
6. To comply with the regulations of the Department of Health of Durham County, which requires physical examinations and immunizations for every child as specified by the State of North Carolina. Immunization records will be updated regularly and on request by the Center.

7. To refrain from bringing children with symptoms of illness, infection or fever to the Center and to adhere to and cooperate with all Center policies regarding illness.
8. To provide a change of clothing to be left at the Center for each child. To mark all clothing and to agree that the Center is not responsible for lost clothing.
9. To consult with the care giver in all cases involving bringing personal items (toys, etc.) to the Center.
10. That parents may provide lunch for their children only if the nutrition guidelines followed by the Center are adhered to. Those parents must provide food for children unable to eat the lunch provided by the Center.
11. To comply with all policies relating to food items brought into the Center with respect to allergies.
12. That a parent must accompany their children into the Center and see that proper supervision is established before leaving. That a parent must enter the Center to pick up their children.
13. To cooperate with and agree to the Center policy and State law regarding afternoon rest period/nap time for each child.
14. That the Center has my permission to administer First Aid and/or obtain medical treatment in the event of an emergency. That I agree to pay all expenses incurred by such an emergency.
15. To donate 6 hours per year (per family) in service to the Center as described in the Parent Handbook. That a fee of \$50 will be charged for each hour not provided, and I will pay that fee according to Center guidelines.
16. That this enrollment agreement is subject to change with a two-week notice.
17. That this agreement may be terminated:
  - a) Thirty days following written notice from me of intent to withdraw from the center.
  - b) Fourteen days following notification by the Center of non-payment of fees.
  - c) Thirty days following notification by the Center due to violation of Center policies.
  - d) Immediately upon notification by the Center due to abusive or disruptive language or actions directed towards any staff member or Board member of First Environments.

**I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ALL OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT AND THOSE OF THE FEELC PARENT HANDBOOK, WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE ON THE FEELC WEBSITE AT <http://www.firstenvironments.org/parents>.**

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PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE

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DATE

---

DIRECTOR/ADMINISTRATOR SIGNATURE

---

DATE

## Appendix III: FEELC Infant Safe Sleep Policy

FEELC is committed to providing infants with a safe place to grow and learn. For this reason, FEELC has created a policy on safe sleep practices for infants up to 1-year-old. We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide a safe sleep environment and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at FEELC follow the recommendations for safe sleep from the AAP and meet or exceed the NC Child Care Regulations for safe sleep.

### **Sleep Position:**

- Infants will be placed flat on their backs (supine position) to sleep unless the infant has a Health Care Professional Waiver that allows for an alternate sleep position completed, signed, and placed in their file. If a Health Care Professional Waiver is on file the teachers will place a note on the infant's crib stating that a waiver is on file.
- Infants will not be placed on their side for sleep.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used since such devices are not proven to reduce the risk of SIDS and can be hazardous.
- Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed to sleep. If the pacifier falls out of the infant's mouth during their nap the FEELC staff will either replace it in the infant's mouth or allow it to remain in the crib for the infant to access it.
- Pacifiers will be cleaned between each use, checked for tears, and will not be coated in any sweet or other solution.
- Parents are asked to provide replacement and age appropriate pacifiers on a regular basis.
- While infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep, when an infant can easily turn over from back to front and front to back, they can remain in whatever position they prefer to sleep. FEELC staff will make a note of the infant meeting this developmental milestone and inform parents and the other staff.

### **Sleep Environment:**

- Our program will use Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines for safety-approved cribs and firm mattresses.
- Infants will not be placed to sleep on any soft surfaces.
- Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib. Siblings, including twins and triplets, will be placed in separate cribs.
- The crib will have a firm tight fitting mattress covered by a fitted sheet and will be free from loose bedding, toys, and other soft objects (i.e., pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, etc.)
- FEELC will allow pacifiers, Please NO soft toy, ties or strings attached to pacifier. Bibs and pacifiers will not be tied around an infant's neck or clipped on to an infant's clothing during sleep.
- If a light blanket is used, the child's feet will be placed to the foot of the crib/mat a light blanket will be tightly tucked in along the sides and foot of the mattress, or under the mat. The blanket will not come up higher than the infant's chest. Sleep clothing; such as sleepers or sleep sacks (appropriate size) may be used as alternatives to blankets if parents choose to provide them. Please make sure they are lightweight.
- Smoking will not be allowed in or near FEELC.

- To avoid overheating, the temperature of the rooms where infants sleep will be checked and will be kept at a level that is comfortable, which is between 68-75F degrees.

**Supervision:**

- When infants are in their cribs, they will be within sight and hearing of staff at all times.
- A staff member will visibly check on the sleeping infants every 20 minutes. They will record this on an Infant/Toddler Sleep Chart. The Infant/Toddler Sleep Charts will be kept for one month.
- When an infant is awake and alert, they will have supervised “tummy time.” This will help babies strengthen their muscles and develop normally.
- Infants will promptly be removed from car seats at drop off.
- Infants that fall asleep in a swing or bouncer/infant seat will promptly be removed and placed in their crib on their back.
- Once infants are awake they will be spend less than 5 minutes in their cribs before being removed to have supervised tummy time on the floor.

**Training:**

- All infant and toddler staff, administration staff, rotating staff, and volunteers at FEELC will be trained on safe sleep policies and practices every 3 years by attending an ITS-SIDS training workshop.
- Every September all of FEELC staff, administration staff, rotating staff, and volunteers will review FEELCs Infant and Toddler Safe Sleep Policy.
- Documentation that staff, administration staffs, rotating staff and volunteers have read and understand these policies will be kept in each individuals file.
- Before they are allowed to care for infants, all staff, administration staff, rotating staff and volunteers at FEELC will be trained every 3 years in First Aid and every 1-2 year(s) in CPR so they know how to respond to an unresponsive infant/toddler.
- FEELC will complete “How to Respond to an Unresponsive Infant” practice drills every six months. These will take place in June and December of each year. Each infant classroom will maintain a log of the drills.

**When The Policy Applies:**

This policy applies to all staff, administration staff, rotating staff, parents, and volunteers when they care for infants at FEELC.

**Communication Plan for Staff and Parents:**

Parents will read and discuss this policy with FEELC’s administrator when they are enrolling their child in FEELC. There will also be a copy provided in the parent handbook. Parents are asked to follow this same policy when the infant is at home. These policies will be posted in prominent places. Information regarding safe sleep practices, safe sleep environments, reducing the risk of SIDS in child care as well as other program health and safety practices will be shared with families and all FEELC staff 14 days before any changes go into effect. All FEELC staff has reviewed, discussed, and signed a copy of the SIDS policy. The policy will also be provided in the FEELC staff handbook.

**Any individual who has questions about the FEELC Infant/Toddler Safe Sleep Policy may contact:**

FEELC Director: Beth Lake by email at [blake@firstenvironments.org](mailto:blake@firstenvironments.org) or phone at (919) 541-1461.

## Appendix IV: AQI Categories

Each category corresponds to a different level of health concern. The six levels of health concern and what they mean are:

- **“Good”** The AQI value for your community is between 0 and 50. Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk. **(Green)**
- **“Moderate”** The AQI for your community is between 51 and 100. Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people. For example, people who are unusually sensitive to ozone may experience respiratory symptoms. **(Yellow)**
- **“Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups”** When AQI values are between 101 and 150, members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. This means they are likely to be affected at lower levels than the general public. For example, people with lung disease are at greater risk from exposure to ozone, while people with either lung disease or heart disease are at greater risk from exposure to particle pollution. The general public is not likely to be affected when the AQI is in this range. **(Orange)**
- **“Unhealthy”** Everyone may begin to experience health effects when AQI values are between 151 and 200. Members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects. **(Red)**
- **“Very Unhealthy”** AQI values between 201 and 300 trigger a health alert, meaning everyone may experience more serious health effects. **(Purple)**
- **“Hazardous”** AQI values over 300 trigger health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected. **(Maroon)**

Additional information can be found on the Air Quality Index (AQI) Basics website <http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=aqibasics.aqi>.

## Appendix V: Medication and Medication Forms

The following provisions apply to the administration of medication in child care centers:

(1) No prescription or over-the-counter medication and no topical, non-medical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream or powder shall be administered to any child:

- (a) without written authorization from the child's parent;
- (b) without written instructions from the child's parent, physician or other health professional;
- (c) in any manner not authorized by the child's parent, physician or other health professional;
- (d) after its expiration date; or
- (e) for non-medical reasons, such as to induce sleep.

(2) Prescribed medications:

(a) shall be stored in the original containers in which they were dispensed with the pharmacy labels specifying:

- (i) the child's name;
- (ii) the name of the medication or the prescription number;
- (iii) the amount and frequency of dosage;
- (iv) the name of the prescribing physician or other health professional; and
- (v) the date the prescription was filled; or

(b) if pharmaceutical samples, shall be stored in the manufacturer's original packaging, shall be labeled with the child's name, and shall be accompanied by written instructions specifying:

- (i) the child's name;
- (ii) the names of the medication;
- (iii) the amount and frequency of dosage;
- (iv) the signature of the prescribing physician or other health professional; and
- (v) the date the instructions were signed by the physician or other health professional; and

(c) shall be administered only to the child for whom they were prescribed.

(3) A parent's written authorization for the administration of a prescription medication described in Item (2) of this Rule shall be valid for the length of time the medication is prescribed to be taken.

(4) Over-the-counter medications, such as cough syrup, decongestant, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, topical antibiotic cream for abrasions, or medication for intestinal disorders shall be stored in the manufacturer's original packaging on which the child's name is written or labeled and shall be accompanied by written instructions specifying:

- (a) the child's name;
- (b) the names of the authorized over-the-counter medication;
- (c) the amount and frequency of the dosages;

- (d) the signature of the parent, physician or other health professional; and
- (e) the date the instructions were signed by the parent, physician or other health professional.

The permission to administer over-the-counter medications is valid for up to 30 days at a time, except as allowed in Items (6), (7), (8) and (9) of this Rule. Over-the-counter medications shall not be administered on an "as needed" basis, other than as allowed in Items (6), (7), (8) and (9) of this Rule.

(5) When questions arise concerning whether any medication should be administered to a child, the caregiver may decline to administer that medication without signed, written dosage instructions from a licensed physician or authorized health professional.

(6) A parent may give a caregiver standing authorization for up to six months to administer prescription or over-the-counter medication to a child, when needed, for chronic medical conditions and for allergic reactions. The authorization shall be in writing and shall contain:

- (a) the child's name;
- (b) the subject medical conditions or allergic reactions;
- (c) the names of the authorized over-the-counter medications;
- (d) the criteria for the administration of the medication;
- (e) the amount and frequency of the dosages;
- (f) the manner in which the medication shall be administered;
- (g) the signature of the parent;
- (h) the date the authorization was signed by the parent; and
- (i) the length of time the authorization is valid, if less than six months.

(7) A parent may give a caregiver standing authorization for up to 12 months to apply over-the-counter, topical ointments, topical teething ointment or gel, insect repellents (for children older than two months), lotions, creams, and powders --- such as sunscreen, diapering creams, baby lotion, and baby powder --- to a child, when needed. The authorization shall be in writing and shall contain:

- (a) the child's name;
- (b) the names of the authorized ointments, repellents, lotions, creams, and powders;
- (c) the criteria for the administration of the ointments, repellents, lotions, creams, and powders;
- (d) the manner in which the ointments, repellents, lotions, creams, and powders shall be applied;
- (e) the signature of the parent;
- (f) the date the authorization was signed by the parent; and
- (g) the length of time the authorization is valid, if less than 12 months.

(8) A parent may give a caregiver standing authorization to administer a single weight-appropriate dose of acetaminophen to a child in the event the child has a fever and a parent cannot be reached. The authorization shall be in writing and shall contain:

- (a) the child's name;
- (b) the signature of the parent;
- (c) the date the authorization was signed by the parent;
- (d) the date that the authorization ends or a statement that the authorization is valid until withdrawn by the parent in writing.

(9) A parent may give a caregiver standing authorization to administer an over-the-counter medication as directed by the North Carolina State Health Director or designee, when there is a public health emergency as identified by the North Carolina State Health Director or designee. The authorization shall be in writing, may be valid for as long as the child is enrolled, and shall contain:

- (a) the child's name;
- (b) the signature of the parent;
- (c) the date the authorization was signed by the parent; and
- (d) the date that the authorization ends or a statement that the authorization is valid until withdrawn by the parent in writing.

(10) Pursuant to G.S. 110-102.1A, a caregiver may administer medication to a child without parental authorization in the event of an emergency medical condition when the child's parent is unavailable, providing the medication is administered with the authorization and in accordance with instructions from a bona fide medical care provider.

(11) A parent may withdraw his or her written authorization for the administration of medications at any time in writing.

(12) Any medication remaining after the course of treatment is completed or after authorization is withdrawn shall be returned to the child's parents. Any medication the parent fails to retrieve within 72-hours of completion of treatment, or withdrawal of authorization, shall be discarded.

(13) Any time prescription or over-the-counter medication is administered by center personnel to children receiving care, including any time medication is administered in the event of an emergency medical condition without parental authorization as permitted by G.S. 110-102.1A, the child's name, the date, time, amount and type of medication given, and the name and signature of the person administering the medication shall be recorded. This information shall be noted on a medication permission slip, or on a separate form developed by the provider which includes the required information. This information shall be available for review by a representative of the Division during the time period the medication is being administered and for at least six months after the medication is administered. No documentation shall be required when items listed in Item (7) of this Rule are applied to children.

## Appendix VI: FEELC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

### FEELC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

This is an overview of the First Environments Early Learning Center's (FEELC) Emergency Response Plan on the EPA Campus. An Inclement Weather and Emergency Hotline, **541-KIDZ (5439)**, will be updated by staff to keep parents informed of certain situations at FEELC. Email and the Parent Phone Tree are other options which may also be used.

**The priorities for an emergency response are that the Executive Director makes the response decisions based upon the best interest of the children's safety while ensuring a robust accountability process for all children.**

There are three basic responses to an emergency situation at FEELC; 1) **Shelter in Place**, 2) **Evacuate** (assembly outside the Center), or 3) **Relocate** the children and staff away from the Center.

#### **1. Shelter in Place**

In certain emergency situations (e.g., severe storms, tornadoes, snow, and hazardous materials) the need to Shelter in Place may be determined. This action provides short or long term care for children when normal routines are interrupted. This may be temporary until FEELC can resume normal operations or until all children are picked up by Parents.

#### **2. Evacuation (Assembly)**

In the event of an evacuation, FEELC children and staff will report to nearby evacuation assembly areas located outside of the facility. This evacuation may be temporary until FEELC can resume normal operations or until all children are picked up by parents.

The four designated assembly areas are:

**Infants and One-Year-Old (Toddlers) Classrooms:** evacuate and meet at Assembly Area 1 (grassy island area in front of the facility)

**Multipurpose and Kitchen areas:** evacuate and meet at Assembly Area 2 (grassy area in front of the facility on the far side of the bicycle rack)

**Two-Year-Old (Middlers) Classrooms:** evacuate and meet at Assembly Area 3 (playground area in the back of the facility along the fence but inside the perimeter of the fence)

**Preschool Classrooms:** evacuate and meet at Assembly Area 4 (playground area in the very back of the facility inside the perimeter of the fence)

If the evacuation poses an immediate area threat (i.e., bomb threat, flood, other major building problem, etc.), or if the situation is prolonged or if there is inclement weather, the Executive Director, in conjunction with EPA Security, may elect to relocate the children and staff to the Café on the first floor of EPA's Building C. EPA Security will escort the children and staff from the assembly areas to the Café.

If it becomes necessary for parents to pick up their children from the Café, they will be notified via email, telephone, and/or the Inclement Weather and Emergency Hotline, 541-KIDZ (5439). Parents should drive up to the main EPA visitor's parking lot in front of Building C, park their vehicles, and go into the lobby. FEELC staff will coordinate the pickup of the children in the lobby. The children in the Café will be escorted by staff upstairs to the lobby to meet up with their parents or designee.

### **3. Relocation**

In the event of a more widespread area threat (i.e., sponsor evacuation, chemical spill, widespread fire, etc.) or a mass ordered evacuation (i.e., Code Red Homeland Security Threat), a relocation of FEELC will be necessary. Under such circumstances, children and staff will either be relocated to the Café on the first floor of EPA's Building C or relocated elsewhere. It must be stressed that such actions (to relocate off the EPA Campus) will only be taken under extreme situations where the danger to the children is imminent. At the time of such emergency, the Executive Director, upon consultation with EPA Security, will specify the relocation site in and around RTP. Under these circumstances, the Executive Director will keep parents informed via email, telephone, local media, and the Inclement Weather and Emergency Hotline.

FEELC will continue care of all children until they are picked up by the parents or the authorized individual. Thirty minutes after the center closes during an emergency and the child has not been picked up, the staff will call the parents and the authorized individual. One hour after the center has closed and there is still no contact from the parents or the authorized individual, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will be contacted. If help from DSS is not available, the Executive Director will authorize one of the Administrative Staff or one of the Program Coordinators (lead teachers) or herself to take the child(ren) home with them.