

# Forest Hill Presbyterian Child Care Center

## Discipline Policy

All children arrive at our program with a unique background and set of experiences. They each have their own timeline for social and emotional development. At FHPC CCC, one of our goals is for children to learn to consider and respect others and the environment around them. Clear and consistent age-appropriate limits will be set, and with these limits, each child will gently learn what appropriate behavior is. Children are encouraged to solve as many of their own problems as possible under the guidance of a staff member. Children are encouraged to use words to handle their differences and are coached on how to stop others from interfering with their activities.

When a teacher must intervene, age appropriate and constructive methods of discipline are used, starting with a verbal intervention, redirection and the removal of a child from the situation if necessary.

Physical or emotional danger will be grounds for a teacher to intervene immediately. We include parents in this discipline process so children can see that both parents and teachers reinforce limit setting. Parents are notified verbally or in writing regarding disciplinary action taken by the teacher, to better aid the child in improving their behavior.

We believe that all children benefit from high quality, diverse and inclusive Early Childhood Education. In rare circumstances, it may be necessary to exclude a child from the program for a specified period of time or to terminate a child's enrollment. We will exhaust all options before asking a family to leave our center. Research has shown that expulsion of children is detrimental, depriving young children of the benefit of early childhood education and may leave unaddressed mental health issues that lead to challenging behaviors.

Our expulsion policy comes from research-based data, from sources such as The Center Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, March 2017 Policy Report Information and Resources to Assist States in Developing Policy on Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion.

The following points help guide our policies:

- High-quality child care centers lays the foundation for a child's educational career.

- Child Care is where children are learning how to self-regulate, make friends, communicate, and express their wants and needs while preparing for their educational career within the K-12 system.
- If children do not have the behavioral and social-emotional skills needed to effectively participate in child care programs, they are missing critical opportunities to grow and learn.
- Teachers and parents are often the “first responders” to address challenging behaviors and need knowledge, resources and support to nurture positive social-emotional development as a foundation of learning.

## Behavior Guidance

Staff shall provide each child with guidance that helps the child acquire a positive self-concept and self-control. Behavior guidance used by each caregiver will be constructive, positive, and suited to the age of the child at all times.

The following rules and standards apply.

1. To prevent unacceptable behavior from occurring the staff will:
  - Model appropriate behavior.
  - Arrange the classroom environment to enhance the learning of acceptable behaviors
  - Use descriptive phrase praise when appropriate occurs, i.e., “Look how high you are building the blocks! Let’s count them.”
2. When unacceptable behavior occurs or is about to occur, staff will use:
  - redirection—substitute a positive activity for a negative one
  - distraction –change the focus of the activity or behavior
  - active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior
  - holding and rocking a child will be done when needed
  - removal from the group is used only as a last resort, when less intrusive methods have been tried and the behavior of the child is dangerous to themselves and/or others. In the event a removal occurs, the child will be removed from the group and supported by a staff member until calm and ready to return to the group.

As a Center and as staff, we will comply with all federal and State, and local laws prohibiting corporal or abusive punishment in child care settings. Staff is expressly prohibited from using unproductive or shaming methods of punishment.

Parents and childcare staff will always work together to deal with persistent behavioral issues such as biting, or unusual or dangerous physical and emotional aggression to self or others. If a child appears unusually stressed or anxious, or otherwise motivated to engage in negative behaviors, it is the duty of the child care staff to consult with the parents.

## Children who endanger other children

At FHPC CCC one of our primary goals is to provide a safe, nurturing, and pleasant environment for all of the children we serve. We recognize that one of our jobs is to help children learn appropriate ways to handle conflicts. We work on this as conflicts arise, helping children find satisfactory solutions. We understand that many students may use misguided behavior because they have not yet learned what it is acceptable behavior. However, at times a child's behavior may endanger others. We want to ensure parents that we will address such behavior immediately following these guidelines:

- A first incident will be reported to the parent.
- A second incident will result in a parent-teacher conference to discuss the behavior and establish a plan of action.
- A third incident will result in the parent being called, and another conference will be set up with the teacher(s) and the director to continue the discussion to understand what might be causing the problem. Referral for outside advice will be suggested. In rare circumstances, it may be necessary to exclude a child from the program for a specified period of time or to terminate a child's enrollment, or if we feel that any of following conditions exists:
  1. The school cannot meet the child's needs.
  2. The parents are not able to work with the school to find an acceptable solution.

Other reasons which may result in the termination of a specific care arrangement include:

- Non-payment for child care services and/or lack of adherence to our tuition payment policies.
- Lack of cooperation by the parents with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
- Abusive behavior and/or verbal threats by parents toward program staff will not be tolerated. This will result in immediate termination.

## Disagreements between FHPC CCC and parents

FHPC CCC is committed to high quality education. We hope that enrollment is a pleasant experience for the staff and families. Sometimes, however, conflicts will arise between the staff and a parent. We have found that through open communication, most conflicts can be resolved promptly and to everyone's satisfaction. We encourage open dialogue and respectful sharing of our concerns. The director and/or the chair of the advisory board should be informed of any conflict and will assist with a resolution if required.

Please sign and return:

I have received a copy of the Forest Hill Presbyterian Church Child Care Center's Discipline Policy and agree to abide by the policies and procedures therein.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_