

Kilgore College
Early Childhood Center

FAMILY HANDBOOK



Excellence in Early Childhood Care & Education



Location: 1009 Brook St. Mailing Address: 1100 Broadway
Kilgore, TX 75662
Phone: 903-983-8293

WELCOME TO THE KILGORE COLLEGE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER



While your child is enrolled with us, he/she will be provided a warm, loving environment in which he/she can feel confident and secure. He/she will receive a quality educational program designed to stimulate and enrich physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development.

We use the *High/Scope Approach to Curriculum* which features a variety of enriching experiences to match each child's developmental needs. The High/Scope teacher will create an "active-learning" environment within the classroom. Activities are based upon child development principles as outlined in the "key experiences" as well as the interests and abilities of the child. The "key experiences" are organized into domains of creative representation, language and literacy, social relations and initiative, movement, music, classification, seriation, number, space and time. A total of 54 "key experiences" are addressed within these categories.

The time your child spends at the Early Childhood Center is an important part of his/her life. It is for the benefit of all concerned if we work as a team to provide each child many opportunities to learn.

Depending on each child's social and emotional level of development, we use a variety of guidance methods. Lots of positive methods are used, such as logical consequences and encouragement. For the younger child, redirection and distraction are effective. As the child matures, problem solving is encouraged. Time away from the group is used for all ages – the amount of time is directly related to the age of the child. In extreme cases, the child will visit the office of the center director or a parent may be called.

It is very important to us that your child sense the close relationship between home and school. We want the center to be a resource for you as we work together during these early childhood years. Families are an important part of each child's life and an important part of the Early Childhood Center. You are welcome at any time.

The Kilgore College Early Childhood Center strives to be a model of excellence in early childhood care and education. We serve you and your little one by providing the ideal setting for nurturing and guiding the young child. We also serve the educational community by providing a training laboratory for college students in early childhood care and education.

ENROLLMENT

Applications for enrollment are available at the Center. Applications are considered in the order received as well as according to classroom needs and openings. The following steps must be completed for enrollment to be finalized and before the child may attend the center:

1. Registration Form
2. Enrollment Information – Form 01
3. Enrollment Card
4. Physician's Statement/Immunization Record – Form 02
5. Permission – Form 03
6. Consent for Treatment – Form 04
7. Contract for Care Services – Form 05
8. Payment of Fees
9. Confirmation of receipt and understanding of Discipline and Guidance Policy (See Appendix I for Policy)
10. Allergy Action Plan or Health Issue Action Plan (if applicable)

Should any of the information we've requested change during the year, please notify us immediately (address, home phone, cell phone, work phone or workplace, pickup list, etc.). We will send home a new enrollment card at the beginning of each semester. If there are any changes to Center policy, you will be notified.

Admission will be made without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex or other factors, which cannot lawfully be the basis for admission.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition for the full-day preschool program is payable two weeks at a time and is due in advance. The registration fee is due for each child upon registration. A supply fee is due at the beginning of each semester.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Early Childhood Center is normally open Monday through Friday, 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. during the Fall and Spring Semesters. Please consult our center calendar for specific days and hours of operation. Should KILGORE COLLEGE cancel classes due to inclement weather or other special circumstance, the center will be closed. Announcements to that effect will be made over local radio and television stations. In the event of a closing due to these circumstances, center staff will also attempt to notify each family by phone.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

During arrival and departure you may park in the Parent Parking area of our parking lot. Our lot is designated for Families, Staff and Lab Students only. Please use extreme caution in this area - many families, students and little ones may be walking to and from vehicles. PLEASE DO NOT leave ANY child in the car with the keys or with the car running. This is very dangerous for the child in the car as well as other children who may be around the vehicle or on our playground. **You should never leave children unattended in your car.**

We maintain a sign-in /sign-out area in the foyer. An authorized adult (18 years or older) must sign your child in and out each day at arrival and departure. It is important that this is done each day. For safety and security we must have an accurate record of children who are in the building. Parents will be required to fill out a **Release Form** when a child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent.

It is important that you escort your child **ALL THE WAY** to his or her classroom, the playroom, or the playground (which ever applies) **EACH DAY**. Your child must stay with you until a teacher or other supervising staff has greeted him or her. This is for the safety of your child. Do not allow your child or his/her siblings to wander through the building unattended at any time.

Children will be received as early as 7:15 a.m., but **NOT prior** to that time. All children are encouraged to arrive by 8:00 a.m.* Children must be picked up **before** 5:30 p.m. There is a **late charge** of \$1.00 for every minute after 5:30 p.m.

*** All children need to arrive no later than 9:00 a.m.** If you cannot have your child at the center by 9:00 a.m., please make alternate arrangements for his/her care that day. The exception to this would be if you bring documentation of a doctor's appointment.

If your child is unable to attend school, we request that you call the Early Childhood Center by noon at (903) 983-8293. If the secretary is unable to take your call, please leave a voice mail message. Your child's teacher will be notified.

DRESS CODE

Please dress your child appropriately for a busy day. Clothing should be selected for washability, appropriate for weather conditions, as well as suitable for climbing and romping.

We recommend shoes with rubber soles, such as simple tennis shoes. **NO open toed or healed shoes – such as sandals, flip-flops, clogs, etc. Also, NO cowboy boots.**

We also ask that each child keep a change of clothes at the center in his/her designated cubbie. Wet or soiled clothes will be hanging in a plastic bag on your child's hook. Be sure that all articles of clothing (coats, hats, gloves and mitten included) are clearly labeled with your child's name.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Please **DO NOT** allow your child to bring food or toys from home, as these items often create problems. On special occasions, teachers may make exceptions. (Pajama party, etc.) If your child naps with a favorite doll or stuffed toy, these items are welcomed. These can be a comfort, and we recognize the need. Any items brought from home **must be clearly labeled with your child's name and stay in his/her cubbie until naptime.** We encourage your child to have his or her own blanket and pillow (if desired) for naptime.

FIELD TRIPS/RESOURCE VISITORS/PETS

Kilgore College has many wonderful departments for us to visit. Resource people - including fire fighters, pilots, musicians, and nurses may visit the classroom. Families are encouraged to share their time, talents, occupations, and hobbies with the children and staff at the center.

Pets may be present in the classrooms. Teachers will ensure that animals do not create unsafe or unsanitary conditions. Teachers will also ensure that teachers and children practice good hygiene and hand washing after handling or coming in contact with an animal or items used by the animal. Animals that children will not have contact with include: chickens; ducks; reptiles, such as snakes, lizards, or iguanas; and amphibians, such as frogs and toads.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND CENTER

We want to share with you the many happy experiences of your child's stay with us. The teacher will keep you posted on day-to-day events and happenings through "Notes Home" as needed. The teacher will meet with you twice a year for conferences. You may request a special conference with your child's teacher during his/her conference/planning time. We strongly encourage you to participate in our Parent Involvement Committee. This is a great way for you to contribute to the ECC, help us plan family events, and give us feedback about the program.

Be sure to watch **DAILY** for notices in the Sign-in/out area, as well as in your Parent Mailbox (or child's clip in the 2's classroom).

Our bulletin board and postings on the glass wall in the entryway will inform you of any information that we feel might be of interest to you. Each week, you will receive a calendar with the menu for that week and noteworthy center activities.

Additionally, our monthly newsletter, "*Parent Pages*", will keep you informed about child and center happenings.

Our program has a variety of techniques that ensure that staff and parents have an effective way of negotiating difficulties and differences that arise in their interactions. These include special conferences requested by the family or staff member and individual meetings with a teacher, the director, or the department chair.

LUNCH and SNACKS

Please feel free to visit the center anytime. We hope you will come eat lunch with your child when you can. There will be a charge of \$2.00. Check the class schedule for lunch times. Menus are posted near the sign-in sheet. There will be no need for you to send a sack lunch, as our menu is planned to meet 50% of your child's dietary needs.

Children with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs will need to submit an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and the physician/health specialists involved in the child's care. With your permission, we will post food allergies/special needs in the kitchen, as well as the child's classroom.

We celebrate birthdays during our afternoon snack period. If you would like to bring a special snack, please make ***advance*** arrangements with our staff. We ask that you not bring any party favors or gifts. In order to protect the health of children, all foods brought from home for sharing among children must either be whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

This is a special time that we delight in sharing with your child. Your child's teacher will include special stories, songs, etc. to add to the festivity.

HEALTH, MEDICATION, ILLNESS

A staff member will greet your child every morning. During this greeting, the teacher will look for any signs that your little one is not feeling up to par. Should signs of illness be detected, your child will need to return home with you.

A child who is ill must NOT be brought to school under any circumstances. Your child CANNOT come to school if any of the following symptoms exist:

1. Severe sore throat
2. Fever (oral 100.4 or greater, armpit 99.4 or greater)
3. Diarrhea
4. Vomiting

Your child must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. This means fever free without the aide of a fever relief medication.

If your child becomes ill while at the center, we will isolate him/her from the group and notify you to pick him/her up immediately. Please contact the center if your child contracts a communicable disease. In like manner, if your child is exposed to a communicable disease at school, parents will be notified immediately.

In an effort to maintain your child's health, frequent hand washing is implemented at the center. This applies to staff and children. Children will be taught and/or assisted with proper hand washing upon arriving for the day. Please see that your child washes his or her hands (or you assist) when you arrive each morning.

For the safety of the entire group, we must say that if your child is "well enough" to come to school, he/she is "well enough" to go outdoors with the rest of the class. We cannot send a group outside with inadequate staff while a needed teacher is left in the room with one child.

Should your child require medication while in our care we ask that you abide by the following procedure:

1. The first dose of any and all medication must be given by the family at home. This will allow you to monitor your child for signs of a possible reaction to the medication.
2. All medication must be in the original container.
3. The medication must be labeled with the child's name and date, along with the physician's instructions and physician's name.**
4. Enclose the bottle and medication dispenser (spoon, syringe, etc.) in a zip-lock bag.
5. Complete a medication administration request form, sign and date it. The original goes to your child's teacher and the yellow copy goes to Ms. Polk-Faggett's kitchen with the medication. (These forms are found near the sign-in sheet.)

Please note that a physician's instructions for dosage and frequency are required for both **prescription as well as **non-prescription** medications. Your pharmacist may be able to obtain these instructions from your physician or you may need to call your physician directly. According to the *Texas State Minimum Standards for Child Care*, insect repellent is considered medication.

All children must remain current on immunizations required by the Texas Department of Health. If you would like a copy of the required immunizations, you may obtain a copy from the Center Director or Secretary. In addition, all four and five year old children are required by the State to have a vision and hearing screening.

For children with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health provider must give the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. An "**Allergy Action Plan**" or "**Health Issue Action Plan**" will be kept on file for children with specific allergies or health issues, such as asthma.

All staff members are trained in First Aide and CPR. Simple first aid will be administered by the teacher or director. In case of a more serious injury, parents will be contacted immediately. If we are unable to reach you, the physician designated on the current information sheet will be contacted or emergency services will be summoned, whichever is deemed appropriate by the center staff.

All children will brush their teeth after morning snack. Children in the four year old classroom will also brush their teeth after lunch. Your child will be provided with his or her own labeled toothbrush. Toothbrushes will be sanitized on a regular basis and replaced as needed in the event of illness.

Families will be asked to apply sunscreen to their child before bringing him/her to the center. If re-application during the day is necessary, families may fill out a form requesting that sunscreen be re-applied.

TOILET TRAINING

Our program bases our toilet training practices on the philosophy that learning to use the toilet is an important self-help skill for a child. We consider toilet training to be a *process* that will help children gradually master toileting as a self-help skill.

We want toilet training to be a non-stressful experience that is appropriate to each child's individual development and involves the child, family, and ECC staff. We believe that when children are in group care, parents and staff must work as *partners* so children can be comfortable, confident, and successful while they learn toileting skills.

BEHAVIOR

Hurtful behavior is not allowed. Children should be made aware that hurtful behaviors of any kind are not allowed at our center. Any incident of hurtful behavior should result in immediate attention of the teacher. Teachers will work to involve children in the process of conflict resolution so that children will learn to express their anger or frustration appropriately. If a child continues to demonstrate hurtful behavior, that child will be removed to the alone area or taken to the office. If, over time, a child exhibits an unusual amount of hurtful behavior and/or does not seem to respond to actions of the teacher or director, we may recommend a referral be made to the appropriate mental health agency. Staff will work closely with the child's family to ensure as much consistency as possible between home and school.

Children will be taught to interact with adults and peers in non-hurtful ways as well as to use materials and equipment safely. Children will be taught through the use of positive guidance and discipline techniques such as redirection and logical consequences.

CENTER EVALUATIONS

ECC staff welcomes constructive comments and suggestions at any time. At least once a year, the Center as a whole will be formally evaluated by staff and parents. Families will be given a questionnaire to complete. Results of the questionnaire will be shared with families. All Center staff will also be evaluated at least annually.

WITHDRAWAL

Should you need to withdraw your child from the center, we ask that you give us at least two weeks notice. In the event that families give the center less than two weeks notice, two weeks payment will be due.

We are pleased that you have chosen us to care for your child. You are encouraged to come to the center at any time – no need for advance notice! Feel free to call us if we may be of any assistance, or if you have any questions.

Kilgore College is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative/Action/ADA Employer. All qualified applications receive equal consideration without regard to gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or veteran status.

A copy of the Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child Care Centers is available for your review in the center office and at www.txchildcaresearch.org. The local Licensing Office can be reached at 903-757-0588.

You may access the Accreditation Standards and Criteria of the National Association for the Education of Young Children by visiting www.naeyc.org.

The Child Abuse Hotline phone number is 1-800-242-5400.

Discipline and Guidance Policy for _____

Name of Operation

Discipline must be:

- (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
- (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance