

# PARENT HANDBOOK



## Five Seasons Learning Centers

*Managed by*  
Cedar Rapids Community Schools

### CORPORATE SPONSORS

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Cedar Rapids Community School District

Alliant IES Utilities

PMX Industries, Inc.

City of Cedar Rapids

Grant Wood Area Education Agency

Linn County

Rockwell Collins



Welcome! We are pleased you have chosen our center for your child care and preschool needs. Whether it is for toddler and preschool child care or care for your elementary age child, we are here to serve your needs.

Our staff of warm, caring, and well-trained child care professionals maintain a positive and stimulating atmosphere where your child is loved and respected. We want you to feel secure knowing your child is cared for and guided by trustworthy dedicated early childhood educators. You are welcome to stop in at any time to see your child.

Your child is very special, and it is our goal to attend to all of his/her personal and developmental needs. You are an important part of our "Five Seasons Family."

**Vision**  
**Excellence for All**

**Mission**  
**It is our primary mission to serve each family and provide quality programs to enhance the individuality of each child.**

- Goals**
- 1. Provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment for our children.**
  - 2. Support the needs of our families.**
  - 3. Utilize exemplary professional practices to create an efficient and effective team.**

**Guiding Principle**  
**Continuous Improvement**

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## **WELCOME**

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We would like to welcome you to Five Seasons Learning Centers. Our centers are managed by the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

We are non-profit and employer-sponsored, and our mission is to provide a safe, stimulating environment for the children in our care. We are dedicated to maintaining a quality learning atmosphere, and we strive to provide activities which allow optimal developmental progress of each child in social, emotional, intellectual, and physical areas.

Parents are allowed unlimited access to their children and their child's caregiver at any time during the center's hours of operation unless parental contact is prohibited by court order. A copy of this portion of the court order must be supplied to Five Seasons in order for it to be enforced.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

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The basis of our programs centers on the nurturing of each child's self-concept and in enhancing his/her development by providing many successful experiences. We feel that it is vitally important in the early years to provide a variety of experiences which foster brain development, realizing that this is critical for each child to develop to his/her fullest potential.

We believe it is important to introduce your children to areas which will encourage their natural curiosity and exploration of their surroundings. The use of hands-on manipulative activities will enrich concept development and enhance intellectual development. Motor development is an equally important component, and our play equipment and activities are designed to facilitate physical strength, agility, and coordination. Children are provided with many opportunities to learn and practice social skills such as: taking turns, good manners, problem solving, and communication with other children and adults.



Our emphasis is on a well-rounded program for each child which is designed with their developmental needs in mind. We feel each child is special, and this is evident through the individual attention and caring each child receives at our centers.

## **CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS**

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All of our child care professionals are experienced in working with young children. They are dedicated to providing the best care and learning environment for each child. Each caregiver receives ongoing professional growth training through an extensive orientation, staff training opportunities, and early childhood conferences and workshops.

Your child will be grouped with a particular primary caregiver in order to develop a close loving relationship. We strive to be available to share information with you each day and to allow time for concerns and questions.

Each child's developmental level will be determined through ongoing assessment, and activities will be provided to enhance skill development. Parent conferences will be held two times per year for a detailed private progress report and to further communications between us. Additional conferences will always be provided upon request and as needed.

Each month you will receive a newsletter from your child's caregivers outlining the events of the month. Each day you will find a "What We Did Today" board posted in the preschool and toddler rooms. Through a mutually supportive relationship, parents and Five Seasons' staff work together to determine each child's needs and plan for his/her care. Please feel free to call on the caregivers, the director, or the coordinators at any time. Our doors are always open.

## **NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION AND ENROLLMENT**

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Prior to enrollment at our center, we recommend one or more visits to become familiar with our program and to become acquainted with our staff. We feel we can serve you and your children best by establishing good communication from the start. Please feel free to visit our center anytime before or after your child is enrolled.

A tour will include spaces to be used by your children, the parent information area and where to sign in and out, how to locate us throughout the building and our general routine each day (including our opening and closing times). Staff will share the number of children in each group. We will share our parent handbook and policies that addresses: attendance policies, illness policies, philosophy and learning opportunities, discipline procedures and fees. We will give you an opportunity to ask questions during orientation and provide contact information for further communication. Families will spend time in their child's classroom with their child to help him or her to feel comfortable and get to know the staff members.

The Five Seasons Learning Centers are licensed by the State of Iowa Department of Human Services. We comply with all the child care regulations set forth by the DHS. A copy of the Child Day Care Licensing Standards is available upon request. When a family registers their child, they are provided a packet of registration forms: intake, behavior policy, physical/immunization, emergency consent, release of information request, and permanent schedule.

Our center is designed, equipped, and staffed with your child in mind. We feel we have an "extended family" atmosphere of caring and open communication. We know we will provide the best early childhood experiences for your child.

## **DAYS OF OPERATION**

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The Centers are open Monday through Friday year round except the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Day and Christmas Eve. If New Year's Day, Independence Day, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day should fall on a weekend, our centers will be closed either the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday, whichever is closer to the holiday. Hours of operation vary at each location. Centers will also be closed two days during the year for staff development. Notice of planned days off will be posted in advance.

## **CONSISTENT DAILY SCHEDULE**

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Your child's needs will be met by providing a daily schedule which includes established routines, yet is flexible enough to encourage spontaneity and take advantage of any new learning experiences.

**SAMPLE SCHEDULE** (Each room has a posted schedule.)

### **Morning**

- Free choice activities as children arrive and are separated into age groups in their own rooms.
- Breakfast is served.
- Large group gathering on the carpet for cognitive and language skills.
- Learning centers in small groups with projects, stories, puzzles, blocks, manipulatives, games, science center, and role playing areas.
- Large group gathering on carpet for finger plays, songs, creative dramatics, or story.
- □□ Use restroom, then large motor experiences either outside on the playground or inside games and large motor room.
- Prepare for lunch, use restroom and eat a well-balanced lunch.

### **Afternoon**

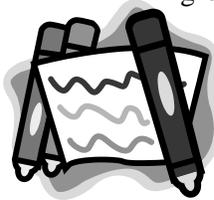
- Large group gathering on the carpet for finger plays, puppets, songs, games, and stories.
- Prepare for naps, use restroom, and rest time on cots.
- Wake up, use restroom and learning centers.
- Clean up, use restroom, and eat snack.
- Large motor experiences outside on the playground or inside games and large motor room.
- The children are all gathered together to play in the large motor room or in one of the classrooms to do puzzles, read stories, participate in art activities, or play in the role playing area.

## TWO YEAR OLD PROGRAM

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Freedom to run, play and assert his/her newly acquired independence is a big part of the two year old's day. Within this well-supervised play, our staff will provide situations which develop self-control, cooperation, and communication through positive interactions with peers. Through *The Creative Curriculum* interest centers your child will begin to learn about numbers, colors and shapes, work puzzles, play with blocks, string beads, and play with play dough, sand and water, and use paints and crayons and markers. We will introduce new concepts and language skills to each child as he/she is ready. Twos enjoy music through songs, finger plays, marching and playing games.

Our consistent daily routine will help these young children become familiar with their surroundings. Our day consists of group time when we have a story, talk about the weather and other topics. Next, we break into small groups for learning centers. We then stretch our muscles with a large motor activity either inside or outside, if the weather permits. Interest center time allows the children to freely explore a variety of activities. After this, we eat lunch and nap on cots. Our afternoons are filled with snack time, reading stories, singing songs, large motor play, and, of course, time for free play.



When signs of readiness for toilet learning are shown, we will provide patient guidance using appropriately sized facilities to help establish proper toileting habits.

We provide a relaxed, happy and loving atmosphere for our little ones. They feel well-cared for, safe and confident in the Toddler Room.

## PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

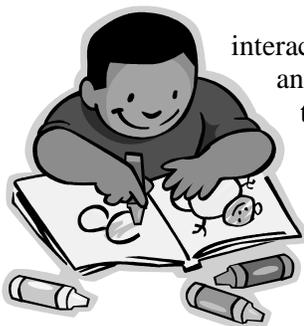
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Our preschoolers are provided with many opportunities for self-expression and exploration of their environment since our program is based on *The Creative Curriculum*, which defines our interest areas, environment and interactions. The children are eager to learn, and our program is designed to give them numerous positive opportunities to discover their world. Using a variety of hands-on activities these children will learn the wonders of nature and science and begin to understand numbers and quantities. They will be allowed to show their creativity through music, art and role-playing.

We will also provide developmentally appropriate activities centered on cognitive and language skills. Our preschoolers will be learning to master manipulative skills and be exposed to shapes, colors, letters and numbers by using sensory experiences and our *Handwriting without Tears* curriculum.

They will become more adept at verbalizing their emotions and the emotions of others through books, songs, dramatic play, and puppetry as the teachers use *Doing Our PARRT* and *Second Step* curriculums. We encourage cooperative play while fostering independence and responsibility. The children will develop self-care skills such as dressing, using a tissue, going to the restroom and cleaning up play areas.

An abundance of meaningful language and literacy experiences are provided for the children in a variety of way. We use the *Read It Again* curriculum, which concentrates on increasing vocabulary, letter sounds and shapes, and retelling stories. Some of activities include listening to and reading stories and poems, taking field trips or listening to speakers, dictating stories and retelling events, seeing classroom charts and other print, participating in dramatic play and other communication experiences, and experimenting with writing by drawing and copying.



The children are encouraged to seek solutions to concrete problems through interaction with people and real objects. Learning about math, science, social studies, and health and hygiene are all integrated through meaningful activities such as those when children build with blocks, measure sand, and water or cooking ingredients, observe changes in the environment, work with tools, sort objects, explore plants, animals, water, and draw, paint and work with clay.

Our preschoolers will have many opportunities to exercise their growing bodies with indoor and outdoor large motor games and equipment. We have a very well-rounded program designed to foster your child's growth as he/she enjoys learning.

Free choice time allows the children to initiate their own play experiences with a variety of fine motor activities as well as role-playing areas. This time also allows much individual interaction between the children and the staff.

Each child is viewed as a unique individual with his/her own pattern of growth and development. We design all our activities to develop the children's positive self-esteem and positive feelings toward learning.

### **SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM**

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Our school age program for elementary children offers an exciting program with enjoyable activities in a safe, supervised environment. Activities for our school age children center on their interests, such as computer activities, sports, arts and crafts, board games, and hobbies. A daily afternoon snack will be provided at the center after school.



In order to provide a safe, enjoyable experience for all the children in our care, we are requesting that the children observe the same rules as during school and use courteous manners at all times. Some of our school age programs join together during in services, school breaks, and during the summer. This allows for greater flexibility in planning projects and field trips. Ask your center's director for more information.

### **SCHOOL AGE CARE OPTIONS**

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#### **Before and/or After School Care with Vacations and In Service Days**

Before and after school care is provided, as well as full day care when school is not in session – in service days, winter and spring breaks, and full or partial days off due to inclement weather. A discounted rate is available for those families wishing care for before OR after school to include care on days off from school.

#### **Before OR After School Care WITHOUT Care for Vacations and In Service Days**

Our centers also offer school age care for before OR after school care without care during early dismissals, in service, and vacations from school at a discounted weekly rate.

- This rate includes guaranteed care provided at no additional charge for late school starts or early outs due to inclement weather (additional charges will apply in the event of a full day off due to inclement weather).
- No charges will be incurred during full week (Monday-Friday) school vacations (Thanksgiving break, winter break (full-weeks only), and spring break).
- Drop in care is offered for early dismissals, in-service and school vacations, if space allows, for an additional charge.
- A change to before and after school or before OR after school with vacations may be made only once during the school year with a three working day notice in writing. Families wanting to switch to this care option must give notice at least one week prior to the beginning of the school year. This care option is only open during the fall registration period until the week prior to the beginning of the school year (or upon initial enrollment for those who enroll after school begins). The option to return to the discounted before OR after school rate will no longer be available until the next fall registration period.

### **SUMMER DAY CAMP PROGRAM FOR YOUR SCHOOL AGE CHILD**

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Welcome to our Summer Day Camp! We have many fun and interesting activities planned for your children and their friends. We know summer is when they want to spend their time doing those things they like best.

So how about bowling, skating, swimming, soccer, softball, aerobics, crafts, reading and computer games! Or maybe trips to the nature center, museums, parks, library, and swimming pools. We want to know what your children like to do because we want to make their summer special.

## **SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN**

In January, an informative letter outlining the summer registration process and dates of availability will be given to parents who wish to continue care for their school age children during the summer. A date (in late February or early March) will be given in which a non-refundable registration fee must be paid and summer forms will need to be completed. Completion of the proper forms and payment of the registration fee on that date will guarantee your child's placement in the summer camp program. All summer camp programs will be closed for a one day in-service for our staff at the end of summer. This date will be announced during summer camp registration.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

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Throughout the school year, we offer multiple opportunities for our school age and preschool children to explore their world through field trips. You will be notified in advance of each field trip with the date, time, destination, and travel arrangements. Our primary method of travel is contracted school buses or city buses. You must initial your approval for your child to attend each field trip. We will not ask for advance permission to go on neighborhood walks or playing on park grounds that are adjacent to our buildings.

## **DROP-IN CARE**

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Five Seasons Learning Centers may provide "drop-in" child care services when all enrollment information is on file and up to date. The following policies apply to those enrolled in the drop-in program:

- All drop-in services are contingent upon our being able to meet The Department of Human Services' required staffing ratios. If our ratios cannot be met, your child will not be able to attend.
- No more than one week advance notice will be accepted for drop-in service.
- In order for care to be provided, all payments for child care must be made in advance of service rendered as outlined under "Policy for Account Payments and Collection".
- If you schedule your child to drop-in, and your child does not attend, you will be charged based on your schedule, if a three working day notice was not given.

If your schedule becomes more consistent, you may wish to enroll in our regular program rather than utilize drop-in care to assure placement within the day care center when care is needed.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

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Siblings from families with children currently enrolled receive the first priority in enrollment. Children whose parents are employed by one of the corporate sponsors will receive second priority for enrollment. If space is still available and neither first nor second priority families are on the waiting list, then those outside the sponsoring companies will be accepted for enrollment.

Enrollment is only guaranteed when available AND when the registration fee along with first week's tuition is accepted. Families on the waiting list are not guaranteed enrollment simply because they are from one of the priority categories.

In order to be fiscally responsible, all open spaces will be filled as they become available.

Enrollment is contingent upon having the following information on file and updated annually:

- Intake form
- Emergency consent and travel authorization forms
- Enrollment card with emergency phone numbers (two emergency contacts, in addition to parents/guardians must be listed)
- Signed, current physical and immunization cards
- Permanent Schedule Form

If any of this information changes, you must notify us immediately.

## **ANNUAL FALL REGISTRATION FEE**

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A **non-refundable** annual fall registration fee will be collected from each family in late February or early March.

## **ENROLLMENT REGISTRATION FEE AND DEPOSIT**

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A **non-refundable** registration fee and **non-refundable** one week's tuition deposit are required to guarantee a child's learning center placement. One week's tuition will be credited to your account and may be used toward your child's first week of care. The enrollment fee and deposit are accepted only after space for your child has been confirmed. Your child's placement will only be reserved for up to two weeks after your scheduled starting date. At that time your name will go to the bottom of the waiting list. The enrollment fee and the deposit will not be charged to drop-in families unless they decide to become regularly enrolled.

## **PARENT/CENTER AGREEMENT**

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Upon enrollment, each family must sign the parent/center agreement to establish that they have read and understand all of Five Seasons Learning Centers' policies. We will ask you to sign this form on a yearly basis to assure accuracy of information and communication.



## **AUTHORIZING INDIVIDUALS TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD**

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On the emergency consent and enrollment card, you will find a line asking for the names of individuals who will be authorized to pick up your child. You may authorize as many individuals as you wish in writing on the card. You must leave a written note in the morning or tell a staff member if such a situation arises. We will not allow your child to leave with an unauthorized person, and are sure you will understand that this is completely for the protection and safety of your child. Please remember to keep this form updated and to correct the card if your phone number or address should change.

## **ARRIVING AND LEAVING THE CENTER**

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It is required that all children be brought inside the center and to their caregiver. Each child care room is supplied with sign-in sheets, which we require you to use when you arrive at the center with your child and when your child is picked up. Please notify your child's caregiver when picking up your child. We would appreciate your notifying the center when your child will be absent.

## **AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL OR DENTAL CARE**

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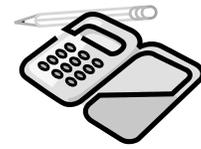
Parents are required to complete an authorization form that would give medical or dental personnel the authority to treat children in an emergency situation. Five Seasons will notify parents or guardians in the event of any kind of emergency involving their child as soon as it is possible after emergency personnel are notified. If a parent or guardian is unable to be reached, we will try to notify the emergency contacts provided by parents. It is each parent's responsibility to keep this information current at all times. Parents will be asked to complete new authorization forms annually.

## **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **CHARGES**

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All charges are based upon your permanent schedule. In calculating the hours you attend, we count the time your child actually attended OR your scheduled time in or out whichever is earliest for drop offs and whichever is later for pickups.



We anticipate your children attending at the times given to us in your schedule. We schedule staff, order meals and snacks, plan activities and so on based on the times you tell us your children will attend. This is why we use your permanent schedule to calculate your fees.

School age charges for the school year are billed on a basis of attendance before and/or after school. To receive the before OR after school age rate, a child must only attend before school all week or after school all week (Monday through Friday). If the child would attend before school one day and after school the following days, the charge assessed for the week would be the before AND after school rate.

### **PERMANENT SCHEDULE AND SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Upon enrollment, all families will be required to provide a permanent schedule of attendance. This form may be updated annually during registration. If your actual hours go outside the perimeter of the hours given to us in the permanent schedule, those hours will be added to your total hours for the day.

Schedule changes must be received in writing three working days prior to the change and given directly to your site director (or her designee in her absence), or you will be charged and scheduled according to your permanent schedule. In order to change your hours (both arriving earlier and picking up later), you are required to speak to the director or acting director in advance. They will determine if we can accommodate this change. This is to ensure the appropriate number of staff members are present.

### **ILLNESS AND VACATION POLICY**

- **A 50 percent reduction in fees will be granted for a maximum of four weeks per calendar year based on the following criteria:**
  - If your child will be absent on an otherwise scheduled day, full charges will be assessed.
  - If your child will be absent a full week due to vacation (Monday - Friday), there will be a 50 percent reduction in your normal charges if a three working day notice has been given in writing.
  - If your child is absent for a full week (Monday - Friday) due to the child's illness, a death in the family, or other emergency situation, and we are notified immediately of the circumstance, you may be given a discount of one-half of your normal child care fees for that week.
- Regardless of holidays, sickness, or weather-related closings, scheduled charges will be assessed. **Keep in mind, you are billed according to your permanent schedule on every holiday. You must add your permanently scheduled hours on the holiday to your total hours for the week.**

### **RESERVING PLACEMENT IN THE CENTER**

If you wish to be absent for the **FULL** summer (**allowed between the last day of the school year to the first day of the next school year**) a non-refundable reservation fee per week is charged to guarantee your child's placement within the center. *A two-week notice must be given in writing to your director if you should decide to leave on reservation or you will be billed one-half of your normal childcare fees for two weeks.* Payments for reservation must be made on the **last day of care in full**. If payment is not made, a five working day grace period will be given. If payment is still not received after the grace period your child's placement is no longer guaranteed. **If drop-in care is desired during the summer, families must follow the drop-in policies and space is not reserved nor guaranteed.**

## **SUMMER EXCEPTIONS FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN**

Children that are *school age* (must have completed kindergarten to qualify) will not be required to pay the reservation fee for a **FULL** summer absence with reserved placement for fall. This means reservation must be taken from the last day of school to the first day of school. **If drop-in care is desired during the summer, families must follow the drop-in policies and space is not reserved nor guaranteed.**

## **FALL REGISTRATION FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN LEAVING DURING THE SUMMER**

Registration for our fall school age programming will be held sometime in March. At that time, any families wishing to be off for the full summer will be required to pay a non-refundable registration fee per child and a non-refundable first week's deposit. Receipt of the first week's deposit and registration fee will guarantee your child's placement in the fall program. *However, if your child should leave our program prior to the beginning of the summer program, the registration and first week's deposit will be forfeited and care will not be guaranteed in the fall program.*

## **AFTER HOURS FEE**

An overtime fee will be added for every 15 minutes per family for any children left at the center beyond the center's established closing time (varying closing times at each center). The overtime charge is incurred the first minute after the center is closed with an additional fee after the first 15 minutes have elapsed. This cycle will continue until the children have been picked up. Please consult the site director as to what clock is in use at your center for monitoring pick up times.

After the third time a child is left at the center beyond the established closing time, the family will be required to meet with Five Seasons' administrative team and may be excluded from returning to the center.

All children must have at least two authorized persons listed on their enrollment cards who are available to pick up the child in the event of a late pick-up from the center. Every attempt will be made to contact those persons on your children's enrollment cards in the event that the child has not been picked up at closing time.

## **OVER 10 HOURS FEE**

An extra charge will be added to your account any time a child is scheduled over 10 hours or attends over 10 hours. This fee also pertains to school age children during the summer, in-service days and vacation days.

## **TWO WEEK NOTICE**

A two-week notice, in writing, must be given if you are leaving the center permanently, for an extended period of time (over three weeks and paying the reservation fee), or if you wish to go from a regular schedule to a drop-in schedule. If a notice is not given as described, you will be charged one half of your normal child care rate for two weeks.

## **REGULAR ATTENDANCE STATUS**

Regular status means your child maintains a reserved space at all times whether or not the schedule varies from week to week. If an enrolled family does not attend on a regularly scheduled time, the director will attempt to contact the family. If the family is unable to be reached within one week, the center reserves the right to exclude the family so that waiting families may be enrolled. The same rules for a two-week notice still apply; charges will be assessed if no notice is given.

In the event there is hazardous weather or emergency conditions that affects Five Seasons Learning Centers, you will be notified by the School Messenger system. We ask each family to supply an email and phone number in case we need to contact you to announce the program closing. Five Seasons Learning Centers reserves the right to close the centers under conditions that are determined to be threatening to the children and staff. Regardless of weather-related or emergency closings, normal charges will apply.

## **DISTRICT-WIDE CLOSURE POLICY**

### **DISTRICT CLOSURES**

1. There will be **no programming** allowed in the Cedar Rapids Community School District buildings when the Superintendent closes all the **District** buildings due to inclement weather or other natural disasters.
2. If the Superintendent would close the **District** buildings due to extreme cold weather, and there are no difficulties driving, Five Seasons Learning Centers (FSLC) will be **open** but operating on modified hours. Our sites will be open **7:00AM-4:00PM**.
3. If the **District** has an **early dismissal** due to inclement weather or other natural disaster, you will be notified by the School Messenger System that FSLC will close no later than **4:00PM**.

### **SCHOOL CLASSES ONLY CLOSURES**

1. If the decision is made to cancel **classes only**, FSLC will be open, but we will determine if FSLC will close earlier for staff and family safety. You will be notified by **School Messenger** if we close early.
2. If there is an **early dismissal for classes only**, we will determine if FSLC will close earlier for staff and family safety. You will be notified by **School Messenger** if we close early.

### **LATE STARTS**

If there is a late start due to inclement weather, our FSLC staff will attempt to arrive at their regularly scheduled start time. If this is not possible, families will be notified by **School Messenger**. If your child/children remain at the center after the specified closing time, after hours charges will apply.

## **POLICY FOR ACCOUNT PAYMENTS AND COLLECTION**

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*Purpose:* To establish guidelines

1. For payments of services
2. For handling payments and delinquency
3. For collection and bad debt.

*Policies:*

1. Payments must be made on the Monday before service is provided for all children in the regularly enrolled program.
2. Payments for the week must also be paid in advance (before service is rendered) if your child is in the drop-in program.  
  
If there are additional charges incurred after payment is received, the remainder is to be paid on your child's last day of care for the week. If you are unsure about your charges, please speak with your site director.
3. If payment is not received on Monday, as required, a late payment fee will be assessed to your account. The fee will be assessed each week payment is not received in full. If you are not scheduled for Monday, you may avoid late payment fees by paying your fee on the last day of your care for the next week.
4. A charge will be added to your account for a returned check or due to insufficient funds for an electronic funds transfer or account closure in which Five Seasons was not notified prior to electronic submission. After having either a returned check, regardless of the payee, or electronic return as noted above, you will be required to remit all following payments with cash or money orders.

5. All cash payments **MUST** be given to your site director or their designee (in the case of an absence), and a receipt will be given to you. Five Seasons Learning Centers will not be held responsible for cash payments not given directly to the director or designated staff member.
6. Five Seasons Learning Centers must be notified when state funding is being sought as payment on an account. Approval of state funding by the Department of Human Services is **NOT** a guarantee of care at any of our locations even when a child may be in attendance currently.
7. Five Seasons Learning Centers will not accept any post-dated checks.

*Collection Procedures:*

1. If payment is not received on Monday when payment is due, a reminder notice will be given to the parent informing them of their balance due.
2. If payment is not received after the reminder notice, a call from the accountant is made in which a payment plan must be made. If no payment plan can be made, there will be immediate refusal of child care. (Step 4 follows denied care)
3. If payment is not received according to the payment plan, child care will immediately be denied.
4. After child care is denied, a certified letter is sent to the parent outlining their charges and a time frame is given in which payment must be made.
5. If no response is made as indicated in the certified letter, the account is given to our collection agency for bad debt collection. Child care services at ALL Five Seasons Learning Centers and Rockwell Child Development Center will no longer be available.
6. If a pattern of late payments persists, we will schedule a meeting to discuss the continuation of our services.

**TAX REPORTING INFORMATION**

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A copy of each parent's account will be available to be picked up at your center at the end of each calendar year. Please keep the copy you received from the learning center as your proof of care for tax reporting purposes.

Individual receipts are also available for payments made at all centers.

Five Seasons Learning Centers tax identification number is **42-6023551**.

**PARENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

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The purpose of this procedure is to provide a means for parents to present a complaint regarding matters within the scope of the Five Seasons Learning Centers. This procedure also shall be used to process complaints regarding prohibited discrimination concerning sex, race, disability, age, national origin, or religion that is alleged to have occurred in connection with Center programs, policies, or procedures. The complaint shall be presented first to the staff person involved whenever practicable. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily at this level or if there is no caregiver involved, the complaint may be appealed or presented to the on-site director. In cases involving discrimination, the complaint may also be presented to the Cedar Rapids Community School District Equity Coordinator.

If the complaint is not resolved by the appeal to the on-site director, the complainant may request a meeting with the appropriate director or managing partner administrator or parent advisory council member. All complaints shall be handled in a timely manner.

**POLICY FOR MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY**

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Information concerning a child or viewing a child's file may only occur contingent upon written permission from the parent/legal guardian. The following exceptions do not require prior permission:

1. Center administrators when viewing records directly related to their job functions.
2. Authorized representatives of the Department of Human Services.
3. Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.
4. Center staff when needing access to the file for emergency information.
5. Center staff when needing information concerning a child's development.

## **HEALTH**

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### **State Health Requirements:**

There are two medical forms which Iowa law requires on file for your child. These forms are intended to protect your child, and we will appreciate your cooperation in keeping them current.

The medical examination form must be signed and dated by your doctor. That date must be within the last twelve months to be considered current for preschool children. The Iowa State Certificate of Immunization must also be completed, up to date, and signed by both your physician and yourself.

### **Illness Reporting:**

Exposure to communicable diseases and any infectious illness should be promptly reported so that the Center may be alerted to early symptoms. By the same token, the Center will notify parents when a child has been exposed to an infectious disease.

### **Medication Policy:**

Only medication prescribed or ordered by a physician or dentist will be administered during the time the child is at our center. Written authorization and instruction will be provided by the parent or legal guardian. Five Seasons Learning Centers may contact the prescribing doctor's office to confirm or clarify medication instructions as necessary. All medication shall be supplied to the day care in the original container, properly labeled, and will be administered only by authorized personnel. The parent/guardian must complete the Medication Permission Form before the child will be allowed to be given the medication at the center. The authorization form must be updated when the prescription expires. Over-the-counter medication may only be given upon a written physician order with instructions for administration including dosage and durations. Medication will be kept in an inaccessible area or refrigerated as required.

## **EXCLUSION POLICIES**

Parents or other authorized guardians will be notified when their child has a sign or symptom that requires exclusion from care. Examples are described below:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in regular activities;
2. The illness results in greater need of care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children; or the child has any of the following conditions:

**Fever** - A child with an axillary temperature fever over 100° F plus behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness. This child will be excluded until symptoms subside or a health care provider finds the child able to return.

**Severe Illness** - A child with signs/symptoms of possible severe illness may include:

- Lethargy
- Uncontrolled coughing
- Inexplicable irritability/crying
- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Other signs unusual for the child

This child will be excluded until symptoms subside or a health care provider finds the child able to return.

**Diarrhea** - A child having uncontrolled watery or loose stools, not associated with change in diet, and increased frequency not contained by the diaper or use of the toilet will be excluded. He/she may return once the diarrhea resolves.

**Blood in Child's Stools** - A child should be excluded if blood is present in his/her stools which is not explainable by dietary change, medication or hard stools. Because of the potentially serious nature of this condition, the child will be excluded until a health care provider finds that he/she is able to return.

**Vomiting** - A child acting ill and who has vomited 2 or more times within 24 hours will be excluded. If the vomiting is accompanied by other signs or symptoms of illness, the center may exclude the child after one vomiting episode. He/she may return when vomiting resolves.

**Abdominal Pain** – A child with persistent abdominal pain (more than 2 hours) along with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness is excluded until symptoms resolve.

**Mouth Sores** – A child with mouth sores and who is drooling will be excluded unless a health care provider determines the child is noninfectious.

**Rash** – A child with a rash and a fever OR a child with a rash and behavior changes will be excluded until a health care provider determines the child is not communicable.

**Scabies** – A child with scabies will be excluded until after treatment has been completed.

**Impetigo** – A child with impetigo will be excluded until 24 hours after treatment.

**Conjunctivitis** – A child with non-purulent pink eye will not be excluded unless determined by health care provider; however purulent pink eye will be cause for exclusion until after the first treatment.

**Head Lice** – A child with head lice will be excluded only at the normal departure time until after the first treatment.

**Ringworm** – A child with a ringworm-like rash should be evaluated by a health care provider. If ringworm is confirmed, the child will be excluded until medical treatment is started.

**Strep Throat** – A child with strep throat will be excluded until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.

**Chickenpox** – A child with chickenpox will be sent home when lesions are detected. He/she may return when all lesions have dried and crusted.

**Pertussis (Whooping Cough)** – A child diagnosed with pertussis will be excluded until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.

**Mumps** – A child diagnosed with mumps will be excluded until 9 days after onset of gland swelling.

**Measles** – A child diagnosed with measles will be excluded until 4 days after onset of rash.

**Rubella**- A child diagnosed with rubella will be excluded until 6 days after onset of rash.

**Under-Immunized Children** – Occasionally, an enrolled child may be under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or due to family religious beliefs. In these circumstances, if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, any child who is under-immunized for this disease will be promptly excluded until the outbreak is over and a medical authority authorizes the child to return to the center.

**Other Illnesses Or Conditions** - Other illnesses or conditions that require treatment by a physician will be managed as directed by the physician.

- This Summary of Health Exclusion Policies is based upon the following reference sources, which should be used to provide further guidance on unresolved questions.
- Reference: Caring For Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out of Home Child Care Programs. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2002.
- Reference: Managing Infectious Disease in Child Care and Schools, American Academy of Pediatrics, Edited by Susan Aronson MD and Timothy Shope MD. 2005.

## **RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF BITING**

Biting is not the right thing to do, but it's unfortunately not unexpected. Biting may be a natural occurrence among children under age three, and blame should not be placed on teachers, parents, or the child. Incidences of biting may be unavoidable in group care. It is usually short-lived and young children outgrow this stage and continue on their path of development. Children bite for many reasons. Biting demands caring and understanding on the part of adults. We focus on techniques that address the reason for biting.

Each situation will be handled on an individual basis, and each child and family will be treated with respect. We will communicate with parents thoughtfully, closely observe the child who is biting, and observe and reflect on the classroom environment and staff. Each time a bite occurs, there will be an incident report completed for the child bitten. If there are ongoing instances, both the parent of the child who bit and the child who was bitten will receive this form. Names of children involved will be kept confidential. We will not name the child who bit in the parent report. We will share this information privately. The report will be signed by the teacher, parent, and administrator. One copy will be kept in the office; the other copy will be given to the parent. Observation and documentation of the biting occurrences will occur including time of day, activity, child's development, and look for patterns. After reflecting on what has been observed, a plan will be developed by staff that will include ways to keep children safe and specific techniques, strategies, and timelines established.

When a bite occurs, staff will attend to the child/person bitten and thoroughly clean the area with soap and water and follow appropriate procedures if the skin is broken. The blood exposure policy will be followed. An ice pack or wet paper towel may be used to soothe the mark. The child will be removed from the group and an adult will say in a firm voice, "Biting hurts, you hurt \_\_\_\_\_ when you bit him, and teeth are for chewing food and not biting." Our staff will express strong disapproval of biting. Attention will be given to the child bitten.

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### **CLOTHING AND BLANKETS**

It is important for children of all ages to have a change of clothing at school, since even those beyond the stage of "accidents" will occasionally spill juice, milk, or paint. We ask that you please clearly mark all items and send them in a bag also marked with your child's name. Please dress your child appropriately for the environment and for the weather since we feel it is important for children to get out and get exercise and fresh air each day. Children attending during nap time are required to bring two blankets. The blankets should be clearly labeled. If your child is wearing diapers, you are required to provide disposable diapers and baby wipes. We have adequate storage for large quantities of diapers which will be marked with your child's name.

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### **TOYS**

Our center has more than an adequate amount of toys and learning materials. Please do not send toys from home as they may be lost or broken. Books or tapes a child wishes to share with the class should be marked with the child's name and given to the caregiver. If your child's class has "sharing days," you will be notified.



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### **FIRE AND NATURAL DISASTER**

Our center has established special procedures to deal with such emergencies as fire and natural disaster. The Center is inspected on a regular basis by the City Fire Inspector. Fire and tornado drills are held regularly. During severe weather, a constant check is kept for emergency information.

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### **HAZARDOUS WEATHER AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS PROTOCOLS**

Each classroom has established locations for taking shelter in the building and for evacuation outside the building. These are posted on the wall near each doorway.

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### **MEALS AND SNACKS**

Please see posted menus that list our nutritious meals and snacks. Menus are located on the Parent Information Boards. We require that all children be served these meals and snacks unless medical authorization is provided in writing, stating the reason these food should be excluded from their diets.

School age children may bring their own meals as long we are notified in advance. A sign-up sheet is available, and parents will need to bring food in daily. You are welcome to join your child for lunch anytime, at an additional cost. Please notify us in advance so we can add you to our lunch count.



Breakfast will only be served to school-age children when school is not in session. Breakfast can be purchased through the school food program.

Children will only be served meals and snacks according to our scheduled times. This ensures we are meeting the safety and sanitation regulations along with USDA guidelines.

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## **PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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A Parent Advisory Council provides input and recommendations to the Center Director. This committee is composed of parents of children enrolled in the center. The Center Director shall serve in an ex-officio capacity. An Advisory Council will be established for each site.

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## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

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We use positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirection, and setting clear limits. "Time out" is used when necessary with one minute per year of age used as the maximum time away from the regular activities. Children feel comfortable and confident knowing their child care assistant's expectations match their developing capabilities.

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## **DISCHARGE POLICY**

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In the event it is determined that your child is not yet ready for the group experience or if his/her needs are not best met in the group setting, we may ask for a confidential conference with you to discuss possible options. We do not believe a child should remain at the center unless he/she derives some benefit from the program.

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## **SUPERVISION AND ACCESS POLICY**

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All visitors\* are required to request entry into the buildings. In order to monitor\*\* all visitors' presence, upon entry all visitors must sign in at the main office and state their purpose for visiting. Visitors are required to wear a visitor badge. When leaving the building, visitors are required to sign out and remove the badge. Visitors will always be supervised\*\*\* unless they are only with the child to which they are the parent, guardian, or custodian. Staff members will never allow a visitor to be a part of DHS ratio, nor will they allow the visitor to be charged with the care, supervision, or guidance of children.

\* Visitors shall mean anyone not cleared for involvement with children

\*\*Monitor shall mean maintain awareness of presence by all authorized staff.

\*\*\*Supervised shall mean never be left alone with children.

## **FIVE SEASONS LEARNING CENTERS SITE LIST**

<b>Arthur Site</b> 2630 B Ave. N.E. Cedar Rapids, IA 52402 319-558-2550 <i>School Age – 5-12 year olds (30 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm</i>	<b>Grant Site</b> 254 Outlook Dr. SW Cedar Rapids, IA 52404 319-558-2555 <i>School Age – 5-12 year olds (30 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-5:30pm</i>
<b>Coolidge Site</b> 6225 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave. SW Cedar Rapids, IA 52405 319-558-2567 <i>Preschool - 3-5 year olds (20 children)</i> <i>School Age – 5-12 year olds (45 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm</i>	<b>Nixon Site</b> 200 Nixon Dr. Hiawatha, IA 52233 319-558-2552 <i>School Age – 5-12 years (30 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm</i>
<b>Gibson Site</b> 6101 Gibson Dr. NE Cedar Rapids, IA 52411 319-558-2927 <i>Toddler – 2 year olds (12 children)</i> <i>Preschool – 3-5 year olds(40 children)</i> <i>School Age – 5-12 year olds(75 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm</i>	<b>Grant Wood Site</b> 645 26 <sup>th</sup> St. SE Cedar Rapids, IA 52403 319-558-2825 <i>School Age – 5-12 year olds (30 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm</i>
<b>Wright Site</b> 1524 Hollywood Blvd. NE Cedar Rapids, IA 52402 319-558-2572 <i>School Age – 5-12 year olds (45 children)</i> <i>Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm</i>	<b>Administrative Office – ELSC</b> 2500 Edgewood Rd. NW Cedar Rapids, IA 52405 319-558-2549

### **CIVIL RIGHTS NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

“In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through Federal Relay Services at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

It is the policy of the Cedar Rapids Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (employment only), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status (students/program only) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. District employees with questions or a grievance related to this policy should contact Jill Cirivello, Director of Human Resources, 319-558-2421; [jcirivello@cr.k12.ia.us](mailto:jcirivello@cr.k12.ia.us). Students and others should contact Ken Morris, Manager of Student Equity, 319-558-1504; [kmorris@cr.k12.ia.us](mailto:kmorris@cr.k12.ia.us). The District mailing address is 2500 Edgewood Rd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405-1015.

If assistance is needed in accessing the parent handbook or if special circumstances apply to your family (services for translation), please see the site director for assistance.