

# **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc.  
Located on the SUNY Morrisville Campus

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We welcome you and your child/ren to The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc. This handbook was designed to communicate the policies of The Center and help you feel more comfortable when your child is in our care.

All other fiscal and program policies, whether written or oral, are declared null and void, ceasing to have any effect whatsoever by the publication and dissemination of this Family Handbook. This current Family Handbook supersedes all prior Parent/Family Handbooks.

## **MISSION**

The Children's Center, located on the SUNY Morrisville campus, is an Early Care and Learning Program setting the example of quality in Madison County. Licensed and nationally accredited, the center offers programming that stimulates the minds of young children while building a foundation of learning through play.

## **VISION**

The Children's Center strives to provide a learning environment that welcomes families and children into a safe, caring community that promotes a healthy lifestyle. Fostering an environment of respect and continuity, the program works closely with each child's family to provide individualized care. Collaborations and connections with community agencies expand the opportunities offered to families and children.

## **HISTORY OF THE CHILDREN'S CENTER**

In the fall of 1991 the president of Morrisville State College, Dr. Frederick Woodward, formed a committee to study the possibility of establishing a childcare center at the college.

The committee later became the first Board of Directors of The Children's Center at SUNY Morrisville, Inc., under the leadership of Carol Woodward. Seven subcommittees worked for more than two years with the New York State Labor/Management Child Care Advisory Committee (Family Benefits Committee) to develop The Center. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on December 3, 1993, and the facility opened in August 1994.

The three-quarter million-dollar facility was designed by Bell & Spina Architects. The project was funded by SUNY Morrisville, a Federal Block grant through the State University of New York, the State University Construction Fund, the Morrisville Auxiliary Corporation and the New York State Labor/Management Child Care Advisory Committee (Family Benefits Committee) through a cooperative joint labor/management effort among the Governor's Office of Employee Relations, the Civil Service Employees Association, the Public Employees Federation, Council 82 AFSCME, United University Professions, District Council 3, and Graduate

Student Employees' Union.

The Center is located on the ground floor of Bailey Hall on Route 20 in Morrisville. It is licensed through the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to accommodate 66 children from six weeks through five years old. Dr. and Mrs. Woodward were key players in creating a safe, secure place for the children of SUNY Morrisville students, faculty, staff, and, as space allows the surrounding communities.

The School Age program is located at 55 Eaton Street Along with the Morrisville-Eaton Central School, the Board of Directors established a school age program before and after school, and during the summer at Edward R. Andrews Elementary School. During the school year the school age program before and after school care is available only to MECS students' kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade. When MECS is not in session, the program is open to both MECS families and surrounding communities for children kindergarten-5th grade (additionally children ages 4-12 years old).

Ongoing support comes from SUNY Morrisville, the Work Life Services through the GOER (Governor's Office of Employee Relations), and a Federal Block Grant through the State University of New York.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Parents are expected to communicate, on a daily basis, any pertinent information about their child/ren that may be helpful to us in providing the best possible care. Daily communication between parent and staff is vital to the success of your child's experience at The Children's Center. Communication is expected to be professional and courteous from both parents and staff. Any parental concerns about a classroom or staff member should be first discussed with the Lead Teacher of group and then brought to the Program Director's attention. Parents are asked to refrain from using their cell phones during drop off and pick up.

The Center uses Brightwheel, an app, to track attendance, communicate with families, document details about each child's day and send reminders, alerts, and messages to families. Periodically, emails, newsletters, and announcements will be sent to parents to keep them informed of upcoming events and plans. At The Center, there is a bulletin board in the front office area full of helpful information for families, including but not limited to regulations governing childcare and The Children's Center's license with a compliance letter listing any violations cited in the past two years. Similar information is posted at the School Age Program outside the classroom door.

Parent/Teacher conferences are offered to families twice a year (typically in December and May). In addition, conferences can be requested at any time by a parent or guardian, teacher, or the Program Director.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Children's Center believes in every family's right to confidentiality in regard to personal information and the development of enrolled children. Information collected at the time of enrollment will be kept in the office area secured with limited access to the administrative staff. Teachers will be given copies of forms that are necessary in providing care. All teachers, volunteers and observers are required to sign a confidentiality statement and follow the policy noted in the Employee Handbook. Information will only be shared with outside agencies with parental/guardian permission. Parents requesting to see their child's file should submit a request in writing to the Director.

## **WEBSITE**

The Center has a website, and it can be found at [www.morrisville.edu/childrenscenter](http://www.morrisville.edu/childrenscenter). The site offers contact information, hours of operation, special announcements, the Family Handbook, and Program Descriptions. Families can also follow The Center's Facebook page for special announcements.

## **CURRICULUM**

The Children's Center's curriculum is guided by Early Childhood research and best practice and framed by Program Descriptions (on pages 10-14). Teachers consider developmental stages, children's interests and individual needs when planning themes and activities. Weekly lesson plans are reviewed by the Program Director. Many resources (i.e. Creative Curriculum, RIE Philosophy, Zero to Three; Caring for Infant and Toddlers in Groups) are used to ensure that the experiences and learning opportunities are developmentally appropriate and aligned with the assessment and progress of each child.

## **SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT**

Children enrolled in The Center are screened for any developmental delays within three months of their start date (using the K.I.D.S Guidelines). Beyond the initial screening children are assessed twice a year. Checklists and assessment tools recommended by CDC are used to evaluate development. Parents are offered a Parent-Teacher conference twice a year. During the conferences parents are presented with a portfolio containing supporting evidence of the child's growth and development and a written report.

Teachers with any developmental concerns regarding a child will notify the Program Director and parents. Outside resources are available to assist the staff in using additional resources such as CDC developmental milestones and/or Ages and Stages. With parental consent, the family will be referred to Early Intervention or to their home school district to request an evaluation by an outside agency.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parental involvement is essential to the continuing success of the program. You are encouraged to share your time and talent, attend special events, and visit your child's classroom. The staff welcomes and invites your suggestions and participation in events and activities.

Apart from the classroom involvement, parents are asked to evaluate the program annually. The Center designates a time and place during the spring semester to provide parents with the opportunity to complete a digital Family Survey. Results are compiled and assessed by the Program Committee of the Board of Directors. A report on the findings is issued to all families.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Center strives to achieve a homelike environment, an environment that is characterized by pleasant conversation, spontaneous laughter, and exclamations of excitement. Staff members assist children to be comfortable, relaxed, and involved in play or other activities.

Each staff member is responsible for interaction between children and staff that provides opportunities for children to develop an understanding of themselves and others. Interactions will be characterized by warmth, personal respect for individuality, positive support and responsiveness. All are responsible for facilitating interactions among children to provide opportunities for development of social skills and intellectual growth.

The developmentally appropriate discipline techniques employed provide children with opportunities to develop self-control. The Center has developed, consistently implements and communicates positive discipline guidelines to all staff and parents. These guidelines and appropriate limits offer children protection, provide opportunities for problem solving, and foster growth of internal controls. Techniques include but are not limited to:

- Redirecting the child(ren) to an alternative activity.
- Anticipating potential problems to minimize conflict.
- Giving positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism.
- Encouraging children to talk about their experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- Listening to each other with attention and respect.

- Fostering cooperation and other prosocial behaviors among children.
- Designing classroom environments to minimize the need for discipline. These environments allow children opportunities to work individually, together in small groups, or in a larger group.

### **ADMISSION PRIORITIES**

The Center's enrollment priorities are as follows:

1. SUNY Students
2. Faculty/Staff of SUNY Morrisville & NYS Employees (union members of UUP, CSEA, PEF, M/C)
3. MAC employees, Research Foundation Employees & SUNY Morrisville Alumni
4. Community Residents

The Center will prioritize applications for siblings of children already enrolled. Center staff will also be given preference should they apply for childcare.

Community residents seeking childcare will be admitted to The Center on a space available basis. Full-time care needs take priority over part-time care needs.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

A one-page application form is available in the front office and can be mailed or emailed to families. The application is valid for one year from the date received. The application places children on The Center's waiting list but does not guarantee a space is available for your child. Once a space becomes available, families will be contacted, and a registration appointment will be scheduled.

### **DEFINITION OF SUNY MORRISVILLE STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

A student is defined as a person who is matriculated or taking courses leading to matriculation at SUNY Morrisville.

### **SUMMER AND INTERSESSION POLICY** (SUNY Morrisville Faculty/Students Only)

All children enrolled in The Center are expected to attend continuously through the year. Children of SUNY Morrisville Faculty and Students may be withdrawn for the summer

months and winter break. However, to retain your child's place, a letter of intent stating a fall and spring return date must be submitted with the hold fee while the security deposit remains with The Center. You must notify the Director, in writing, by August 1<sup>st</sup> or January 1<sup>st</sup> if you do not plan to return to The Center. At this time, your security deposit will be returned. If your child does not return in the fall or spring, and you have failed to notify the Director by the deadline, your security deposit will be forfeited.

Community residents that withdraw their children for any period risk losing their childcare slot. Slots will not be held during summer or winter semester breaks. Community families that foresee a lap in attendance or a schedule change are urged to see the director immediately.

### **FISCAL POLICIES**

#### *Registration Fee*

There is an initial registration fee of \$100 and an annual non-refundable registration fee of \$75 per child. This fee will serve as an agreement between the parents and The Center that an opening exists and that the parents wish to enroll their child in The Center or the School Age Program. This fee is due before the enrollment process starts. If your child transfers from The Center to the School Age Program, a second registration fee is waived. This fee is due before the enrollment process starts and every August following.

#### *Security Deposit*

A security deposit equal to two weeks' tuition is required when the child is enrolled. This reserves your child's space in the program. This deposit is refundable with a two-week written notice of withdrawal.

#### *Tuition Payment*

Tuition must be paid in advance on a weekly basis, by check, cash, money order, or electronically via the Brightwheel app. Parents are responsible for regular tuition payments, regardless of the number of days attended due to illness, vacations, holidays, etc.

#### *SUNY Scholarship*

Tuition assistance is available for students who qualify financially. Assistance is based on the gross household income and family size. Please see the Director if you need an application. An official class schedule must be presented for care to be provided for class time. Funding is subject to change and is only available when money is allocated to The Children's Center. Specific guidelines are available with the application.

#### *Sibling Reduction*

Parents who enroll more than one child will receive a 10% discount on the tuition rate for the oldest child residing in the same household. An effort will be made to give priority enrollment to siblings. This 10 % discount applies when all/both children are enrolled at the campus center. Families with children at both locations will receive the sibling discount

available at the School Age Program. The sibling discount does not apply to families receiving subsidy funding to reduce their family share (i.e. SUNY Scholarship, DSS ...).

#### *Late Payments*

Weekly tuition is due on Thursday for the following week. Late fees will be calculated at the end of each month. There will be a finance charge of \$5.00 per week for each week that the account is behind. Copies of the account will be issued showing the late fee charge. Childcare services may be suspended until the balance is paid in full. Accounts that are not paid will be sent to a Collection Agency.

#### *Late Pick-up (Note late fees are charged per child not per family)*

A late fee of \$10.00 for 1-5 minutes, \$20.00 for 6-10 minutes, and \$30.00 for 11-15 minutes according to The Center office clock, will be charged if your child/children are not picked up by the program closing time. You will receive a copy of the late fee slip at the time you pick up your child/children. This late fee will be added to your tuition account.

#### *Returned Checks*

There is a \$30 fee for checks that are returned for insufficient funds. This will be in addition to the \$5 per week late payment fee. Thereafter, the program will require payment of tuition by certified check, cash, or money order.

#### *Full-time Attendance*

Full-time attendance is enrollment Monday through Friday. Fees are established using The Center's fee schedule. Security deposits and tuition payments are required in advance for all in attendance. All scheduled days, regardless of illness or vacation, must be paid to maintain a child's enrollment.

#### *Part-time Attendance*

A minimum of two days per week is required for part-time enrollment. Part-time enrollment options include M, W, F or T, TH. Security deposits and tuition payments are required in advance for all in attendance. All scheduled days, regardless of illness or vacation, must be paid to maintain a child's enrollment. Exceptions may be made by the Children's Center Director for SUNY Morrisville students based on their class schedules.

The Center does allow half-day enrollment opposite the MECS PreK program. See the Director for more information. Tuition rates can be found in the fee schedule.

#### *Summer Hold Fee*

Students and faculty who are not enrolled or scheduled to teach summer classes may choose to withdraw their child/ren during the summer break. A signed letter of intent and payment of the summer hold fee of \$100 per month per child, will guarantee a slot for the following semester. The fee is non-refundable should you decide not to return; with proper notice the two-week security fee will be returned.



### *Winter Hold Fee*

Students and faculty may choose to withdraw their child/ren during the winter break. A signed letter of intent and payment of the winter hold fee of \$100 per month per child, will guarantee a slot for the following semester. The fee is non-refundable should you decide not to return; with proper notice the two-week security fee will be returned.

### *Fundraising*

Each family is expected to participate in our fundraising activities throughout the year. Families choosing not to participate in fundraising will be billed a \$50 fundraising fee (per family).

### *Department of Social Services Requirements*

Parents receiving a child-care-subsidy grant through county funding will be responsible to pay the family share set by DSS and the difference between The Center tuition rates and the reimbursement amount from DSS. The agency will cover 80 absences per year. If the CCA (Child Care Assistance) stops paying for a child's care, families MUST immediately begin paying for childcare if they would like to stay enrolled. If the family cannot pay for tuition, the child/children maybe placed on our waiting list and care may be stopped.

## **SCHEDULES**

Schedules for all children, full-time or part-time, need to be consistent from week to week (i.e., specific days and hours). This consistency is beneficial to your child and helps us schedule appropriate and cost-effective staffing. If a change in schedule is needed, two weeks' notice in writing is expected to allow administration time to try to accommodate your revised needs. The administration gives no guarantee that the change request will be accommodated.

## **THE REGISTRATION PACKET**

Before your child starts in the program, a meeting is scheduled with the Program Director to review your child's registration packet for the following information:

### *Child Physical/Medical Form*

All children entering The Center must furnish a written statement from the child's physician signed by a health care provider stating that the child is able to participate in child day care, currently appears to be free from contagious or communicable diseases and is receiving health care, including appropriate health examinations in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics schedule of such care and examinations. Your child cannot start without this medical documentation. In addition, copies of your child's annual physical and updated immunization record must be submitted following any well-child visit. Under-immunized children will not be permitted to begin care. Lead testing is highly recommended. Results of testing are requested on the medical form.

All medical records are kept in each child's folder in the administrative area. Files are locked and information cannot be given to anyone other than the parent/guardian who enrolled the child.

#### *Written Medication Consent Form and Log of Administration*

Children in need of medication during hours of care provided at The Children's Center will be required to have a Written Medication Consent Form from the Office of Children and Family Services. All medication administered will be documented on a log of administration.

#### *Individual Health Care Plan for a Child with Special Health Care Needs*

Children with special needs are welcome in our programs. Children with a health plan will be cared for by classroom staff according to their individual plan. All the allergies must be documented by the child's physician (two forms from the Office of Children and Family Services). See the section titled "Inclusion of Children with Special Needs" for more information.

#### *Authorization for Pick Up*

This form gives us permission to release your child to the person or persons on this form. Parents/guardians need to list themselves. Emergency contacts must also be listed on this form. The Center will not release any child into the care of a person less than 16 years of age or to anyone that appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If an emergency arises, you may call to authorize a temporary pick-up plan.

#### *Emergency Card (Blue Card)*

This card provides us with immediate access to emergency numbers. This form also acts as a medical release form for your child. A copy of this card is carried with your child's class at all times. Therefore, it must be kept up to date and will be updated annually or as needed. New forms are available from the Program Director or your child's teacher. In the event that you will be at a different number at any time, please be sure to give it to your child's teacher. A current photo must be provided for the *Blue Card*.

#### *Emergency (Yellow Card)*

In addition to the *Blue Card*, a child with a documented allergy must complete a *Yellow Card* to provide additional instructions related to the child's allergy.

#### *Child Information Sheet*

This form provides The Center with some family information and allows our teaching staff a chance to get to know your family. Information about who is living in the home, pets, special words, family celebrations, and previous care arrangements are required on this form.

#### *Non- Patient Specific Epinephrine Auto Injectors*

This Children's Center and School age Program participate in the OCFS voluntary offering of non-patient specific epinephrine auto injectors in the event a child has an allergic reaction while in care. Teachers have all been trained in how to identify the symptoms of anaphylaxis and how to administer the emergency medication.

Children's Weights are updated quarterly and kept with the on-site medication in an emergency bag kept up front hanging by Director's office door. At enrollment parents or guardians are asked to sign that they acknowledge that we are part of this life saving program.

#### *All About Me*

The information requested on this form gives us information to make your child comfortable in our program. Questions about physical development, social skills, feeding/eating schedules and emotional needs are asked on this form. Our staff is better able to meet your child's needs when you provide us with this information.

#### *Family Information Form*

This form helps to identify any extenuating family circumstances. All legal decisions regarding custody issues and parental rights must be documented on this form. Copies of all relevant court documentation are required as well. This form also provides a place to list the address of a non-custodial parent so that information regarding The Center may be shared.

#### *Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Form*

All families are required to fill out the CACFP form in the registration packet. Although you may not qualify for free or reduced meals, NYS Department of Health officials require that all families fill out *and sign* the application form. The Center receives monthly reimbursement from the Department of Health on behalf of *all* families who have children who eat meals at The Center. Please be sure the form is filled out completely. This program helps to keep our food costs down. All information is kept confidential.

#### *Field Trip Permission Slip*

The Center will schedule walking field trips in the immediate area (such as the college campus, the public library, or the firehouse).

If the School Age Program staff plans to go on a bus field trip, parents will receive a permission slip to sign indicating the date, time of departure and return as well as the destination.

#### *Permission to Photograph*

Photographs of the children in Center activities may be included on The Center website, on social media, in accreditation materials, in related publications, and in the news media. Therefore, we have included a permission slip allowing us to release your child's photograph. With your permission, we will release your child's photo and first name only.

If you do not wish to have your child's photograph used, be sure to indicate so on this form.

### *Emergency Transport Permission Form*

Parents are asked to provide The Center with emergency information including medical coverage. This form is helpful if a child needs to be transported during a medical emergency.

### *Medication Distribution Packet*

The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc. is registered to administer medication. A health plan has been submitted to the Office of Children and Family Services and meets all guidelines set by the regulations that govern early childhood programs. The Center has registered MAT (Medication Administration Trained) staff on site ready to administer medications to children with permission from their physician and parent/guardian. (See forms Appendix I.) Only MAT-trained staff will administer all prescription ointments and medications. Trained staff members will keep documentation and a distribution log for each medication. All staff members will be able to apply over-the-counter topical ointment, diaper ointments, and sunscreen. In the event that a MAT staff member is not available, medication cannot be given. (Appendix I)

Information regarding any individual child will remain strictly confidential. Only appropriate Children's Center staff and/or authorized state agencies will have access to this information. In the event that a family would like information released to another party, The Center requires a written request from the family for each instance.

(See Appendix A for Child's Checklist.)

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

A well-qualified director will supervise, administer, and direct The Center. Under his/her leadership, teachers and staff are trained to express warmth, understanding, and sensitivity to the needs of each child in the program. Children are grouped according to age and developmental maturity and offered daily activities that challenge their growth and stimulate their learning.

Our curriculum supports and is consistent with the knowledge bases and best practices as set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Zero to Three, and the Academy of Pediatrics. The curriculum provides opportunities for the development of social and emotional skills, gross and fine motor skills, and perceptual and cognitive readiness, with sound health and good nutritional practices. It is also implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family's home values, beliefs, experiences, and language. Through positive teacher/child interaction, children learn language and problem-solving skills. Children are offered a program rich in assorted activities to give them the opportunity to make choices. Choices of activities alternate between quiet and active play, both indoors and outdoors. The Center's Guiding Principles can be found in Appendix E.

## **INFANT PROGRAM**

Our infant program offers a nurturing, safe environment for children during their first year and a half of life. We strive to create a home-like environment for each child that mirrors home as closely as possible. In this environment the child will be able to grow and develop by being provided with opportunities to learn, explore and experiment. Our program is based on the individual needs of each infant, especially when it comes to their daily routines. Our teachers are aware of the daily schedules and keep up with the changes that occur each day. Children are introduced to activities that are age appropriate to stimulate the following four areas of development: social-emotional, language, motor, and cognitive skills.

***Social-emotional development*** is explored and expanded through group/peer and adult interactions. The teachers show understanding and respect to help the children develop a sense of respect of their own. Stranger anxiety is a sensitive stage. Our teachers deal with this matter at each child's level. They are reassuring and supportive to both the children and the parents.

Mealtime is a wonderful time for social interaction. Older infants eat family style with their peers and teachers. Younger infants are held by their caregivers and given eye to eye contact and attention. Child-level tables and chairs are used to make mealtimes comfortable. Feeding charts are updated frequently and in partnership with families.

***Language development*** starts in this program with help and encouragement from the teachers and other children. Most language begins with babbling and cooing, later forming vocabulary words from birth on, it is important for adults to talk and listen to babies and children. Our teachers converse at the changing table, lunch table, on the floor playing, and during bottle feeding times. It is important for infants to hear the voices of others as a model for future speaking. For older infants, repeating proper enunciation is vital so that they hear the words correctly to promote correct usage. Singing, talking, finger-plays, stories, and music are many types of verbal interactions between infants and teachers. Signing is also introduced with language to give infants the opportunity to communicate when language skills haven't developed.

***Motor development*** skills both large and fine are developed at this early stage of life. The children have low furniture, access to the gym, and large carpeted areas. For many of the infants, rolling, crawling, walking, sitting, and running is large motor work. Outdoor play time is available. Fine motor projects such as finger-painting, playdough, and other sensory activities are planned daily. Younger infants are still working on the pincer grasp and holding objects. Self-feeding is encouraged and is a fine motor task.

***Cognitive development*** is an ongoing process for a child. In the first year of life, they learn a tremendous amount of information. Our infants learn so much through their senses and sensory activities that allow them to grow. All our activities are age appropriate. Many of our activities are targeted for a small group of children because of their age difference. Cause and effect activities such as musical instruments and pot and pan play are appropriate for older

infants. Peek-a-boo, hide and seek, and pat-a-cake helps the infants to develop their first thought processes.

The last important part of our infant program is our parent partnerships. Each morning the parents are greeted by the morning teacher. Infant parents are asked to send a Brightwheel message each morning to help communicate to the teachers how their child's night was and how they are doing now. Many times, this includes the last feeding, how much the child ate, and what was eaten, sleeping patterns, and their social mood prior to arrival. In return, the teacher will document the details that occur during the day to inform the parents about their child's day while in our care. Beyond the Brightwheel notes and messages, conversations in the classrooms allow for open communication. We encourage parents to visit any time and families are invited to use the breastfeeding room when needed.

### ***TODDLER PROGRAM***

Our toddler room at The Center offers a wide range of age-appropriate activities for children ages 18-36 months. Beyond activities, we offer a loving, nurturing atmosphere for the children. Areas of development include social emotional, motor, language, and cognitive skills. We allow our children to grow and learn in these areas through their play, activities, adult interaction, peer interaction, and books.

***Social-Emotional development*** is often the focus of this room. Our toddler room setting allows a group of peers to interact through social play and activities. The teachers encourage group play by getting involved and modeling desired behavior. Mealtime is a social part of their day. Children and teachers eat together in a family-style setting. Adults model eating behavior as well as encourage the children to try new foods. The classrooms use mealtimes as an opportunity to slow things down, converse about the meal components and enjoy each other's company. Small and large group play is offered, as well as free choice play. We promote self-help skills and independence by encouraging children to do things on their own or with as little help from adults as possible. Our sensory table and rug areas are great places for a few children to come together and play.

We offer several different opportunities for our toddlers to expand their ***motor skills***. The Center has a large motor gym where the children can climb on equipment or run out their energy. We have a private outdoor playground with large play structures and bike paths. The children ride bikes, play ball, climb steps, and run. Fine motor skills are incorporated into our program through hands-on projects. Our toddlers get involved with easel painting, coloring, playing with playdough (and other sensory activities), stringing large beads (and many other manipulative toys), building with blocks, and puzzles.

***Language development*** is an ongoing learning process. The staff give the children many chances to converse among themselves and with the adults. As role models, we model appropriate language and word order. Children in the program who are exposed to other

verbal toddlers often develop stronger communication skills. Added activities, such as sing-alongs, story times (with open invitations to help read along from memory), and finger-plays, help promote language development.

Enhancing ***cognitive development*** comes on an individual basis. Each child's cognitive level varies and is met differently. Activities are introduced and carried out with teacher guidance. Themes such as colors, numbers, letters and animals are introduced and incorporated into curriculum planning. Children are encouraged to ask questions. With creative curriculum planning, teachers prompt responses and engage children in the excitement of learning.

### ***PRESCHOOL PROGRAM***

The goals of the Preschool curriculum are to increase problem solving, thinking, reasoning, and creative skills. Children are given opportunities for physical, social, cognitive and emotional growth and stimulation. They are encouraged to be explorers, creators, communicators, questioners, problem solvers, and thinkers through reasoning, interacting, and socializing.

Preschoolers are stimulated, guided and encouraged in carefully planned activities that allow each to develop at their own pace. Knowing that preschoolers learn best in settings that allow them to be active participants, our teachers provide the props, experiences, and interactions that allow children to use all their senses to interact with their environment. We believe children's learning can benefit from a planned curriculum of activities focused on a particular theme or concept. Therefore, our activities are planned around themes. These themes often emerge from the current interests of the children and allow for adaptations and modifications to ensure children's best experience. Community resources offer immediate access to real life experiences and include use of the public library, the fire department, Crouse Community Nursing Home, post office, and local businesses.

The Preschool rooms are set up with learning centers. These centers and developmental goals for each area are listed below:

#### ***Block Center***

The Block Area contains building materials such as wooden blocks, people, cars/trucks and Legos. This area encourages creativity by allowing children to take apart, fill and empty, sort and stack, assemble, design, measure and build various structures. It also promotes language, math, fine motor and coordination skills.

#### ***Circle Time***

This area provides opportunities for large group activities, such as sharing, talking about the calendar, discussing weather themes and listening to stories. It gives the children a sense of community. Children learn about where they are from, their family members names

and what is planned for the day. Depending on the activity, it encourages musical expression, talking, listening, cognitive, motor, or other skills. The classrooms use a social-emotional curriculum called Second Step as a guide during discussions with children. It offers props and language to help express emotions with young children.

### ***Sensory Table***

The Sensory Table has something different in it each week. Some examples are water, sand, bird seed, paper scraps, macaroni, snow, and tissue paper. It provides tactile-sensory stimulation, encourages the use of senses for exploration, develops problem-solving skills, and promotes verbal expression, socialization, and emotional relaxation.

Often S.T.E.M. activities are incorporated into sensory activities or as an alternate activity at the table. Science experiments are always a favorite among children.

### ***Table Toys***

Manipulatives such as pegs and pegboards, puzzles and pattern blocks are found here. It helps to develop eye-hand coordination, visual perception skills, and fine motor skills and to enhance problem solving, classification and discrimination skills. Children make their own playdough and it's available for use every day.

### ***Art and Writing***

Children are provided with a large variety of art supplies and opportunities to explore various media in different ways. This encourages individual creativity and expression, enhances fine motor and visual perception skills, and allows children to develop a sense of personal accomplishment. The focus is on process art versus project art. Children are engaged in discussion about their creations with open-ended statements, such as, "Tell me about your project."

A large table with a selection of writing tools is available to the children. Stencils, wooden letters, letter blocks, journals and letter magnets are just a few of the tools available to children. Children are offered the opportunity to sign themselves in when they arrive, write notes to each other, and even author their own books any time they wish.

### ***Reading Center***

This center helps the Preschool Room focus on pre-reading skills. A soft area with an assortment of books is always open to children. Books are in all areas of the classroom to encourage children to read. The books follow the weekly theme. Teachers read aloud to children in small and large groups to model reading and share literature. Children can be found "reading" to their peer's familiar stories that become the classroom's favorites. Flannel board story pieces are used to retell stories along with the illustrations from the books.

### ***Dramatic Play Center***

In this area children are encouraged to act out real-life scenarios. The area is equipped with kitchen furniture and accessories and dress up clothes. Puppets, dolls and theme-based items are added to this area to allow children to act out their imagination. The space is often



set up to mirror different community agencies (i.e. post office, doctor's office, zoo, restaurant and fire station) that follow the theme of the week. Children are encouraged to express themselves and interact with peers.

### ***SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM (SAP)***

The SAP is located at the Edward R. Andrews Elementary School in Morrisville. It offers a quality and safe alternative for children K-5<sup>th</sup> grade for working families during the hours before school, after school, and during vacation periods. SAP has a summer program that is offered first to the MECS students and then open to other community children as well.

Children are provided with activities inside the classroom and outdoors, crafts, science experiments and sensory fun as well as nutrition and fitness discussions. The program provides a large variety of art supplies and many opportunities to explore the use of their imagination. Room arrangements allow for small and/or large group play. Students may choose to lounge in our quiet area or get involved in playing with others at one of the large tables or floor space.

The SAP has access to the gymnasium and playground. Outdoor play is a part of the daily routine, weather permitting. The curriculum is derived from the current interests of the children enrolled. Children are also offered the opportunity to do schoolwork with assistance from our staff.

The SAP allows children the chance to interact with their peers in an environment that fosters self-esteem and develops problem solving through conflict resolution with supervision and guidance from the teachers. Socialization and independence are encouraged for all ages.

The program strives to make sure that the classroom is a safe and happy place for students where they know they feel comforted, supported, and encouraged. The children are often enrolled:

#### ***Before School***

The Before School Program offers care to children before the start of the school day. Children are offered a variety of activities which include a half hour of playtime in the gym. Breakfast is served to all children enrolled at 8:30. See the "Hours of Operation" section for more information about start times.

#### ***After School***

The After School Program offers care immediately upon dismissal. The afternoon is filled with activity choices, outdoor play (weather permitting), gym time (when available), and much more. An afternoon snack is served. See the "Hours of Operation" section for more information about ending times.

#### ***Holiday/Vacation Program***

The School Age Program offers care according to the yearly SAP calendar. The program is not available on snow days.

### **OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

The Children's Center is licensed to provide childcare on SUNY campus and School Age program operates at Edward R. Andrews (MECS elementary school) through the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). OCFS requires all licensed childcare centers and School age programs to renew their license every two years, which includes an on-site visit and review of records. In addition to the renewal visits, programs are randomly visited throughout the year. State regulations and definitions can be found on their website by going to [www.dfa.state.ny.us](http://www.dfa.state.ny.us).

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) administers the nation's largest and most widely recognized accreditation system for child-care centers, preschools, kindergartens, and other early childhood education programs.

Since it was created in 1985, this voluntary accreditation system has helped thousands of programs improve and has helped millions of young children and their families benefit from high-quality early education. Today, NAEYC accreditation is the mark of quality for programs serving young children. More information can be found at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

### **QUALITY STARS**

The Center participates in Quality Stars, New York State's quality rating and improvement system for early childhood programs. Quality Stars focuses on evidence-based practices to ensure families can trust the level of quality in the programs they choose. Information about our current rating can be found on The Center's front bulletin board and at [www.qualitystarsny.org](http://www.qualitystarsny.org).

### **STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc., employs professional caregivers who promote the physical, intellectual, social, cultural, and emotional well-being of each child. Staff members are qualified by training and experience to carry out their respective functions in the administration, operation and maintenance of The Center. The staff members are mature, in good physical and mental health, of good character, and possess suitable personal qualifications. Each staff member's background is reviewed and evaluated by the Director.

When The Center is in operation an adequate number of qualified staff must be on duty to ensure the health and safety of the children in care. The Center will provide adequate staff

supervision which meets the requirements of the Office of Child and Family Services. Floating staff will ensure that staff/child ratios are met.

The Center will provide adequate coverage for an absent staff member. Center staffing will be shifted to provide children with familiar adults for continuity of care.

### **MANDATED REPORTERS OF CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT**

All employees hired by The Children's Center are mandated reporters of child abuse and maltreatment. This is a regulation set forth by the Office of Children and Family Services. Employees are trained in how to identify the signs of child abuse and maltreatment and New York State reporting requirements.

Any employee that suspects that a child enrolled in The Center has been abused or maltreated must report it to the State Central Registry (SCR). If a teacher suspects that a fellow staff member, including the director, is involved in the suspicion it must be reported to the Registry and the Office of Children and Family Services. Any staff member involved in an active SCR report or investigation may not be left alone with children and may be suspended.

All reports involving a staff member should be reported to the Program Director immediately. The individual that suspects abuse or neglect is mandated to report it. There is no third-party reporting. Reports are kept confidential. There will be no disciplinary action towards an employee who makes a report in good faith.

### **TRANSITION POLICY**

Children moving from one age group to another because of age or developmental level are given a transition period. The period spans from one to two weeks and allows for flexibility. Parents are given a written schedule of the visits, they are introduced to the new teachers, and they are given a letter from the new classroom welcoming them that includes important information. Whenever possible, a teacher will move up to the next classroom with groups of children who are transitioning, this provides continuity for parents and children.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Unless it is raining, bitterly cold, or unreasonably hot, children will go outside daily, even if just for a walk around campus. Opportunities for developmentally appropriate, structured, and unstructured, moderate to vigorous physical activity (both inside and outside) is planned daily. The indoor gym is an alternate play area for physical activities. All children will be expected to take part in outdoor activities unless staff is otherwise instructed by a note from the child's physician.

If you question your child's health or ability to function with the rest of the group, it is

recommended that your child remain at home until he/she feels better.

### **DRESS CODE**

Please dress children appropriately for current weather conditions. During the winter months boots, hats, and mittens should be sent. Snow pants and extra clothes are also necessary. Safe and appropriate shoes such as sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are needed all year. No open-toed shoes (such as flip-flops or sandals) are allowed.

### **SUNY MORRISVILLE STUDENTS**

From time-to-time SUNY Morrisville students are a part of The Center. Occasionally degree programs request students observe children in a natural play setting. Students completing an internship for an academic purpose are always under the direct supervision of a center teacher.

Any student who is provided with direct access to the children enrolled are given strict instructions about the confidentiality policy and signed in as visitors on the visitor's log.

### **STAFF/CHILD RATIOS AND SUPERVISION**

<b>Minimum Staff/Child Ratios Based on Group Size</b>								
<b>AGES</b>	<b>GROUP SIZE(*)</b>							
	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>6wk - 18 mos</u>	<b>1:4</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<u>12mo-24 mo</u>	<b>1:4</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<u>18mo - 36mo</u>	<b>1:5</b>	<b>1:5</b>	<b>1:4</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<u>3 years</u>	<b>1:7</b>	<b>1:7</b>	<b>1:7</b>	<b>1:7</b>	<b>1:6</b>	<b>1:6</b>	X	X
<u>4 years</u>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>	<b>1:8</b>
(*) This term refers to the number of children cared for together as a unit. Group size is used to determine the minimum staff/child ratio based upon age of the children in the group. "X" means this group is not permitted.								

Children must always be within a teacher's range of vision. (Teachers position themselves to see as many children as possible at one time.) Infants, Waddlers and Toddlers are

supervised by sight and sound even when sleeping. Older children, who use the bathroom independently, may be supervised primarily by sound for brief periods of time.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The Children's Center encourages teachers to plan for classroom field trips. Trips are always reviewed by the director to ensure there is a safety plan in place and that ratios and supervision are adequate. Younger children may take short walks on campus or take a ride in the buggy. Older children may visit the post office, library, or nursing home (other locations as requested). These trips are all within walking distance. The School Age Program may request off-site field trips that require transportation provided by the Morrisville Eaton Elementary School as approved by the Program Director.

All trips must have an itinerary and have a learning objective that relates to the lesson plan. It can simply provide an opportunity for physical development, but it can also provide a cognitive learning component. When groups are away from the facility, they must be prepared to meet all licensing and accreditation standards. At least one person must be certified in First Aid and CPR. Places visited must be scanned for any safety hazard. The Center will make necessary changes to the space to ensure children's safety.

### **BUILDING SECURITY CODES**

Only those individuals who are authorized to be in The Center have access to the building. All exterior doors are always locked. Access is gained using a keypad security system at The Center. School Age families are given a security access card to be used at the building entrance. All parents/guardians and people authorized to pick up children from our program are issued a five-digit building security code. Photo identification and Director's approval are needed to obtain your security code.

Please be considerate of the safety of all children in The Center and refrain from sharing your security code with others. The security system is in place for the protection of all families using The Center. Sharing codes could result in an unauthorized person being present in The Center.

In addition, we ask that you do not let individuals into our secure building that you do not know. This will help to ensure that we all stay safe.

### **PARKING**

There are five parking spaces behind Bailey Hall in the T Lot that are labeled "Child Care Center Only." These spaces are to be used during pick up and drop off times. The parking lot is very busy; please be cautious. Please display the parent parking card on your dashboard. Parents who use the parking for more than dropping off or picking up may be issued a parking violation ticket and will be fined. Violators may be towed by University Police. (See Appendix B for a campus map.) Children should never be left alone in a vehicle and engines should never be

left idling (except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures).

### **ARRIVAL INFORMATION**

A teacher is required to “sign in” your child at time of arrival. This is done daily in your child's classroom or wherever your child's class is located at the time you drop him /her off (i.e., on the playground, Little Gym, etc.). Children are not to be left in the hall or any unsupervised area. Adults arriving with a child should alert teachers to any important information at drop off. Communication between home and center assists teachers in caring for the children. Please be sure that a teacher recognizes that your child has arrived before leaving the classroom at drop off.

### **SAYING GOODBYE – THE FOUR B’s**

- 1. Be aware** of your own feelings. Don’t pass your anxieties on to your child.
- 2. Be firm!** Say, “Goodbye. I’m leaving now. I love you.” Avoid saying, “Is it okay if I leave not?” (It’s probably *not* okay in your child’s mind.) Do not try to sneak away when the child becomes involved in an activity; this can lead to a sense of distrust.
- 3. Be specific!** Young children have a hazy sense of time. “I’ll see you right after snack” is better than “I’ll be back later.”
- 4. Be there!** Don’t betray your child’s trust. If you’re going to be late, or if someone else will be picking up your child, be sure to let your child know in advance.

### **DEPARTURE INFORMATION**

A teacher will be required to "sign out" your child at the time of pick up. Let your child's teacher know if someone other than the parent will pick up your child. Children will only be released to those people designated on the *Pick-up Authorization Form*, found in the registration packet. It is *vital* that the form is kept up to date. New forms are available at the front desk.

Staff members will ask for identification of people unfamiliar to them. Be sure to tell people you have authorized to pick up your child to bring photo identification with them at pick up time. We will ask for identification until we get to know them. Unfamiliar parents will also be asked for ID. Please do not be offended by this policy. It is for your child's protection.

Children are not permitted to leave their age group without an adult. During your departure, please be sure your child is well-supervised. To protect the health and safety of your

child, please do not allow them to run down the hall to the office area, exit the building or enter the parking area without you. Only adults are permitted to open classroom doors and exit doors.

The Center closes at 5:30 p.m. on campus and at the School Age Program. During periods of reduced hours, The Center closes at 5:00 PM. Children must be picked up no later than the time stated. If a child remains beyond this time, the Center Director will be notified, and staff will begin calling emergency contacts to pick up the child.

IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE GOING TO BE LATE, please call The Center so that we can prepare your child for a change in his or her normal routine, as necessary.

A late charge according to the late fee policy will be given regardless of the reason that a child is picked up late.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Typical hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for The Center and The School Age Program, Monday through Friday, or as dictated by enrollment needs. The Center follows the SUNY Morrisville operational calendar of reduced hours during college breaks, including winter and summer breaks. During these times, The Center and School Age Program are open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A calendar of specific dates is available in the front office.

### **CLOSINGS/HOLIDAYS:**

The Children's Center is Closed on the following dates:

- ***New Year's Day***
- ***Martin Luther King, Jr. Day***
- ***Memorial Day***
- ***Juneteenth***
- ***Independence Day***
- ***Indigenous People Day***
- ***Thanksgiving Day and Day After Thanksgiving***
- ***Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Day After Christmas***

○ ***Winter Break December 29, 30, 31<sup>st</sup> 2005.***

Payment is required for these days if it is a regularly scheduled day for your child.

The Center will close on Labor Day if we do not have 25% of children sign up for care. Payment will be required for this day if we close and it is a regularly scheduled day for your child.

**IN-SERVICE TRAINING DAYS**

Payment is also required for all staff to attend 2 in-service training days when we will be closed. August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and March 20<sup>th</sup> 2026.

There will be two days per year that The Center and School Age Program close for staff training and in-service workshops. Payment is required for these days. These days will be posted in advance. Every effort will be made to schedule these training days during low enrollment times at The Center.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND CLOSINGS**

The Center will be closed at any time the *campus* is closed. The Center reserves the right to close due to inclement weather or other emergencies. The Center and School Age Programs will be closed on all Morrisville Eaton snow days. Parents will be expected to pay for up to two snow days or emergency closings. Emergency closings will be announced on Channel WSTM-3 and WIXT-9, our Facebook page, Brightwheel and on our voicemail. Parents may also subscribe to text alerts through local media outlets.

If The Center chooses to close during the day for weather or an emergency, parents will be charged accordingly. When the decision is made before 12:00 p.m. and parents arrive in a timely fashion, parents will be expected to pay for half a day. Parents will be billed for a full day for any closings after 12:00 p.m. A delay may also occur if Morrisville Eaton Elementary School announces a delay. (A 1-hour delay would delay our opening time to 8:00 am and a 2-hour delay would delay our opening time to 9:00 am.)

An emergency plan exists for The Center and is kept with the first-aid supplies in the front office area. You may request a copy. In the event of an emergency, the plan will be implemented by the person designated in charge.

**FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATIONS**

The Center and School Age Program are required by the Office of Children and Family Services to conduct monthly fire drills. The drills must happen during various times of the day, days of week and evacuation routes. A Fire/Safety Inspection must be completed monthly by



the Program Director or designee.

The Center and School Age Program must also practice a shelter-in-place drill twice a year. Both sites have a supply of food and water on site for an emergency overnight stay.

### **MEDICAL/HEALTH POLICIES**

The health care plan for The Children's Center at Morrisville State College has been developed according to OCFS regulations. The purpose of this plan is to protect the health of the children and maintain the safety of the environment.

All current medical examination forms for staff and children are kept in a confidential file in The Center and are not disclosed to unauthorized persons. Written permission for any disclosure is required.

Parents must provide the required medical documentation found in the Registration Packet. These forms must be updated annually.

The Center's specific health requirements are as follows:

1. Each child must have a medical examination (within the year of enrollment) by a physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner before attending and every year thereafter (children under the age of two may submit updated medical forms based on their well child visits). Please see the office personnel for a medical form.
2. The medical exam assures the child:
  - a. Is free from communicable disease;
  - b. Has received age-appropriate immunizations for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, and HIB. Any child missing one or more of the required immunizations may be admitted if a physician licensed in NY state furnished the program with a signed statement indicating that the immunizations have been scheduled and will be caught up;
  - c. Is receiving age-appropriate health and dental evaluations;
  - d. Is able to participate in day care; and
  - e. Specifies any allergies or special health care plans.
3. Confidential records of each child will include:

- a. Immunization records,
  - b. Recommendations of a physician concerning any health issues,
  - c. Medical care received including when and for what, and
  - d. Staff observations of a child's physical and developmental status.
- 4. Each child must have dental and other health evaluations appropriate to their age and state of health.
  - 5. Classroom staff performs a daily check of each child for any indication of illness, injury, or abuse.

### **ILLNESS CRITERIA**

The criteria for keeping children home or for sending a child home from The Center are described below. *It should be understood that the illness criteria serve as guidelines.* The Center is registered with the OCFS as a program serving well children only. Deviation from these criteria, at the discretion of The Center Program Director, may occur, since each child's illness is dealt with on an individual basis. (See Appendix C for Illness Criteria List.) The book Healthy Young Children (published by NAEYC) and resources published by the American Academy of Pediatrics are used as guides in determining best practice.

#### ***Diarrhea***

If a child has loose/watery stools not contained in the toilet or diaper and poor fluid intake during the course of the day, the child will be excluded from The Center. Children may return 24 hours after the last loose stool, or when bowel movements are normal and fluid intake is good.

#### ***Vomiting***

If a child vomits (not to be confused with an infant's occasional spit-ups), he/she will be sent home and will not be permitted to return for 24 hours. A child who has vomited in the preceding 24 hours, is listless, or has a poor appetite should not be brought to The Center.

#### ***Fever***

A child who has a fever over 99 degrees with an axillary reading and other symptoms of illness may be sent home. Any child with a fever of 100 degrees (axillary) will be sent home immediately. If a child has a fever and it is over 101 degrees and approaching 102, emergency medical assistance (911) may be called. A child who has a fever the night before attendance at The Center should be presumed ill. If the temperature has been lowered with the use of aspirin, acetaminophen, or other fever reducers, the child is still considered to be sick and cannot attend.

***Upper Respiratory Illness (URI)***

Children who have congestion, large amounts of nasal discharge, sneezing, coughing, listlessness, or an inability to keep up with the day's activities should remain at home. Physician-documented allergic reactions and/or asthmatic-related conditions are excluded.

***Undiagnosed Rash***

Unless specifically diagnosed by the child's pediatrician as non-contagious, The Center will send home any child who develops a rash during the day.

Children may return to The Center after all signs of illness and infection have been absent for at least 24 hours. Children placed on antibiotic treatment for the first time may return to The Center *no sooner than 24 hours after* beginning treatment.

These policies are not meant to be an inconvenience to students or working parents. These policies are in place to keep the children and staff in our programs safe and healthy. The Center reserves the right to send a child home for any signs/symptoms of illness that could have a detrimental effect on other children or staff. The Center may ask for a doctor's note clearing a child to return to care following an illness.

It is highly recommended that all families have a pre-arranged plan for care should your child become ill and need to remain home.

**SICK CHILDREN**

Sick children may not attend The Center. The staff will keep parents informed of any signs of impending illness by using a Suspected Illness form. It is expected that parents will inform the teaching staff of any signs of illness seen at home or if the child has been exposed to a contagious condition. You are expected to call The Center, at (315) 684-6400 within one hour of your usual arrival time on days that your child will not be attending. (See Appendix D for a Suspected Illness Form.)

If your child becomes ill while at The Center, you will be notified. Parents must provide up-to-date contact information for emergencies including an alternate contact person. When taking your child to the doctor, please inform the doctor that the child attends childcare so that extra precautions may be used in determining when he/she may return.

Sick children and children with a temperature of 100 degrees (axillary) or more will not be accepted at The Center. However, your child may return to The Center when the fever has been gone for 24 hours *without* the use of fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol, Temptra, Ibuprofen, etc.).

The Center must be informed when your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. Illnesses within a classroom will be posted for families outside the classroom door. Recommendations and symptoms will be available for families.

Children who are not feeling well enough to participate in regularly planned activities should not be in care. Diet and activity level cannot be modified for children returning from illness without documentation from a physician.

### **SLEEP POLICY**

The Children's Center supports the following information found in a policy statement issued by the Office of Children and Family Services, Title 18 of the New York State Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) -416.7(i), 417.7 (i), 418-1.7 (i), 418-2.7 (i) mandate that infants be placed on their backs to sleep unless medical information is presented to the provider by the parent/guardian that shows that arrangement is inappropriate for that child.

This regulation is consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation that placing infants in the supine (back) position to sleep presents the least risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Blankets and toys are not allowed in cribs with children under 12 months of age. Sleep sacks may be provided from home, or children may use from a supply in the classroom. Classroom teachers monitor sleeping infants, who are always visible to staff. More information and handouts are included in each infant registration packet. The Children's Center is committed to this policy and fully supports its recommendation.

For older children, through age five, a quiet rest/sleep period will be offered each day. Older children who do not sleep will be offered a cot for a short rest period not to exceed 30 minutes. Children who do sleep will not be woken by teachers. We understand that sleep is important to a child's growth and development. At the end of rest time (see classroom daily schedule), teachers will return the classroom to regular activities and children will be encouraged to help put away their napping blanket and sheet. Questions or concerns can be discussed with individual classroom teachers.

### **MEDICATION POLICY**

***\*\*For the safety of all our children, NO MEDICATION is to be stored in your child's diaper bag, backpack, or classroom cubby. \*\****

Designated MAT (Medication Administration Trained) employees at The Center will administer medications, prescription or otherwise, under the following conditions:

1. Medicine must be labeled, in its original container, and kept out of the reach of

children yet easily accessible to trained staff. Medicine needing refrigeration is stored in the kitchen refrigerator. Controlled substances must be counted and locked in an area accessible by a trained staff member but not accessible to all staff. Medication may only be accepted by a MAT certified staff member.

2. A written medication consent form (Appendix I) signed by the child's physician stating the type of medicine and dosage to be administered to your child must be included.

3. Parents and authorized staff must complete a portion of the medication consent form.

4. All administrations of medication will be recorded on the daily medical log, with the time, child's name, amount of medication, and signature of the staff member administering medication.

4. Families are expected to give staff specific, detailed, written instructions on the use of any medical equipment necessary to administer your child's medication.

The Center reserves the right to refuse to administer medication if at any time a written medication consent form expires, or the dosages appear to be incorrect. If for any reason a MAT employee is not available, medication will not be administered.

Employees of The Center and SAP have received training regarding the NYS Elijah's Law and anaphylaxis. The Center is approved to stock non-patient specific epinephrine auto-injectors in the case of an allergic reaction emergency. This is part of our Health Care Plan. The Health Care Plan can be found on the parent information board in the front entrance.

### **SUNSCREEN AND INSECT REPELLENT**

Classrooms at The Center and School Age Program spend a lot of time outside. Sunscreen is used to protect children from sun exposure. All teachers can apply or assist your child in applying topical sunscreen with parental permission. Families must provide non-aerosol sunscreen labeled with the child's name and sign the non-medication consent form.

Topical insect repellent may be used during peak mosquito season or as needed. Only repellents containing DEET can be used on children over two months of age. Teachers will follow the recommendations on the label. Like sunscreen, parents must provide repellent labeled with the child's name and complete a parent permission slip.

### **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

Legal guardians will be provided with emergency cards, *Blue Cards*, and an Emergency Transportation Form at the time of registration. It is vital to keep these up to date. Extra *Blue*

*Cards* are available at the front desk or by asking your child's teacher. Children with documented allergies will also need a *Yellow Card* to document specific instructions related to the child's allergy.

The following will take place depending upon the situation:

***Life-threatening situation:***

The Program Director or person designated to be in charge will call an ambulance and contact parents or guardians. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached at the time of the emergency, the emergency contact person identified on the Emergency Card will be notified. Arrangements will be made to meet the ambulance at its destination. The child will be accompanied in the ambulance by a staff member who will take the child's folder containing the child's records and signed emergency blue card.

***Illness/injury requiring medical attention:***

A staff member will call the child's parent or guardian to request that the child be picked up. If they are unable to be reached at the time of the situation, the emergency contact will be notified. The staff member will remain with the child until a parent, guardian, or emergency contact person picks up the child.

An accident report is issued for all injuries received by your child while at The Center. This includes details surrounding the injury and how it was treated by staff. (See Appendix E for a sample Accident Report.) When children leave care in need of medical attention or are seen by a physician for an injury that occurs at The Center, The Center is required to self-report the injury to the Office of Children and Family Services.

**HEALTH MANAGEMENT**

Universal blood and body fluids precautions are observed as follows:

1. Disposable gloves are immediately available and worn whenever there is a possibility for contact with blood and body fluid including, but not limited to:
  - A. Changing diapers.
  - B. Touching body fluids or blood.
  - C. Administering first aid for cuts or injuries when there is drainage of blood or body fluids.
  - D. Wiping surfaces stained with blood or body fluids.
  - E. Any situations where there is potential or actual contact with blood or body fluids (field trips, playground).
2. Disposable gloves are discarded after each use.
3. If blood or body fluid is touched accidentally, the exposed skin is thoroughly cleansed with soap and running water.

4. Clothes contaminated with blood or body fluids are placed in a plastic bag and sent home to be washed in a regular manner by the parents.
5. Surfaces that have been blood stained are wiped with a germicidal solution (bleach and water solution). Any items that come into contact with bodily fluids will be collected and discarded in the biohazard bin.
6. In an emergency, a child's well-being takes priority. A bleeding child is not denied care because gloves are not immediately available.
7. At The Center, any needles used during the administration of medications will be safely discarded in the sharps container located in the conference room. At the School Age Program, any needles used during the administration of medications will be safely discarded in the mobile sharps container.

#### **CLEANING AND DISINFECTING TOYS AND PLAY AREAS**

The Children's Center is provided with cleaning services by the SUNY Morrisville. Cleaning is done at night so as not to disturb the daily routine. Staff in the individual rooms clean classroom toys and surfaces. A disinfectant of bleach and water is used as a universal cleaner. Tables, chairs, play equipment, and shelves are sterilized daily and when soiled.

Changing tables and potty chairs are cleaned after every use. Cots and cribs are cleaned weekly, and sheets and blankets are sent home weekly to be laundered.

#### **HANDWASHING POLICY**

Parents are encouraged to assist their child with hand washing at drop off and pick up. The hand washing policy is posted at every sink. It lists the instructions indicated below:

*Use soap and running water.*

*Rub your hands vigorously for 20 seconds.*

*Wash all surfaces, including:*

- *Backs of hands*
- *Wrists*
- *Between fingers*
- *Under fingernails*

*Rinse well.*

*Dry hands with a paper towel.*

*Turn off the water using a paper towel, not your hands.*

Throughout the day staff will assist children in handwashing. It is built into the curriculum and children are taught the proper steps of handwashing and when they need to wash their hands. For example, children must wash upon arrival, after using the toilet (or following a diaper change), after blowing their nose or coughing into their hands, before and after meals, after reentering the classroom and before and after using the sensory table. When children are too young to follow all the steps independently, a teacher will assist.

When hand washing at a sink with soap and water is not possible children under 24 months may use wet wipes. Children aged 24 months and older may use alcohol-based sanitizers. Sanitizers must be 60-95% alcohol and manufacturer's instructions must be followed.

### **ANIMALS AND PETS**

Classroom pets (not to include reptiles and amphibians) or visiting animals must appear to be in good health and are required to be current with recommended immunizations. Families will be notified in writing prior to adding a pet to a classroom and when an animal will be visiting the classroom. Visiting pets that can be licensed must be licensed. Animals will only be permitted into the classroom when arranged by the teachers and authorized by the Program Director. Teachers will be sensitive to children's allergies while closely supervising visits by any animal.

### **NUTRITION**

The Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are served. All meals and snacks meet the guidelines of the NYS Department of Health & CACFP for portions and the type of food to be served. Foods that are considered a choking risk to children are not served to children. Menus are posted on bulletin boards and copies will be available for home use if requested. Dietary restrictions due to allergies, religious beliefs or intolerances should be shared at the time of enrollment and when anything new develops. Individual Health Care Plans and Individual Allergy and Anaphylaxis Plans must be documented for all allergies.

Meals are eaten family style in a relaxed atmosphere within each classroom. Teaching staff eat with the children and act as role models. Proper table manners are an integral part of our mealtime routine. No child shall be forced to eat or punished because of refusal to eat, nor will food be withheld. Infants unable to sit and self-feed are assisted by teachers. Infants are held during bottle feedings and never put into their crib with a bottle. Toddlers are offered food and drinks at the table. Regular cups are used when a child is ready. When sippy cups are used, children are not allowed to walk or crawl about the room with them.



Infant families may supply daily meals if preferred. The Center will provide jarred baby food, infant cereal, and formula for all infants enrolled. Four weeks of infant menus are posted in the infant room. Our staff will work with infant families to help make a smooth transition to table foods. Specific written feeding instructions must be signed by all infant families. When infants are bottle fed, parents may provide formula (already mixed) or breast milk. They may also choose to have their child's iron-fortified formula provided by The Center. Clean bottles must be provided daily. Details about feedings will be documented and shared for infants and children with special needs or when requested by the family.

Please do not send food, candy, or gum with your child. Parents and families are asked not to send in desserts for birthdays and holidays. Teachers will use classroom cooking experiences to celebrate special occasions. (See Appendix F for CACFP Application for Free or Reduced Price Meals.)

### **SCREEN TIME**

The Center does not allow the use of screen time in the classroom settings. Videos, computers and "screened" devices are not used with children during regular programming. Classroom laptops or tablets may be used to look up a specific item that is relevant to the learning objective in the classroom. Any screen time must be part of the lesson plan and have an educational purpose. There is no "screen time" provided for any age group.

### **FOOD SAFETY POLICY**

All DOH and CACFP guidelines are followed to ensure food is prepared, served and discarded properly. Employees should be aware that DOH guidelines are posted in the kitchen and include handwashing, the use of gloves, proper food handling, logging food temperatures, washing fresh fruits and vegetables and cleaning protocols. Microwaving food is discouraged but when necessary, should be stirred during heating and always done in a microwave safe container. Food that is served and documented to meet serving minimums should never be reserved for children. Leftovers may be served to staff and must be stored properly. Food returned from classroom mealtimes should be discarded immediately. Non-perishable items as well as perishable items should be checked regularly for expiration dates.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM**

Withdrawal from The Center requires written notification no less than two weeks prior to the intended date of withdrawal. Failure to give this notice will result in the loss of the two-week security deposit as agreed upon in the contract.

The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc., reserves the right to require a

child be withdrawn if the child's behavior is determined to be detrimental to the program, or if the health and safety of other children are jeopardized. Only after all appropriate referrals have been made and a review of the child's development has been communicated to the family would The Center consider removing a child from the program.

### **PARENT/FAMILY APPEAL PROCESS/GRIEVANCE POLICY**

If parents have a problem with a classroom or a classroom staff person, they should follow the appropriate procedure:

1. Set up a time to talk privately with the teacher of the classroom.
2. If the problem/concern is still not settled, talk to the Program Director.
3. If no satisfactory solution can be found, the matter in question should be directed, in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors.
4. The Chair will determine whether or not this is a matter to refer to the full Board of Directors. A written response will be made to the family by the Chair of the Board of Directors.
5. If there is still no resolution, the family may make an oral presentation to the full Board. At that time, written materials will also be considered. A final decision will be submitted in writing to the family.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

The Children's Center at Morrisville State College operates on the premise that young children are never "bad." The types of inappropriate behavior most often seen in day care settings (including temper tantrums, refusal to cooperate, hitting other children, biting others and failure to follow directions) are usually the result of the child's level of development. A young child most often simply lacks the social-emotional, cognitive, and physical skills to comply with many adults' requests. For these reasons, The Children's Center staff work closely with families to ensure a consistent path of positive redirection for inappropriate behavior.

### **ROLE OF FAMILY IN GUIDING BEHAVIOR**

One of the many roles of The Children's Center staff is to work with families to help children develop appropriate behaviors. Families are invited and urged to discuss their concerns about their children's behavior with teachers. Together The Center Program Director, teachers, and parents will develop proactive behavior plans as a means of responding consistently to

problem behaviors. In this way, children will always get the same message from the important adults in their lives (parents and teachers) about behaviors that are acceptable and those that are not.

### **INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc., will provide childcare services to all children without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability. Reasonable accommodations will be provided. Any child with special health care needs, including any allergies, must submit an individual health care plan.

When a family with a child who has been identified as having special needs seeks childcare services (whether the child has been evaluated by the Early Intervention Services Program) the following procedures will apply:

1. The Program Director will evaluate the individual needs of the child and determine if the child can be appropriately cared for at The Center. In some cases, the Program Director may require that families request a formal evaluation to remain in care.
2. If space is available, and the child can be cared for safely with reasonable accommodation, then the child will be accepted.
3. If steps necessary to meet the child's individual needs require special equipment or services, or architectural changes requiring a substantial financial burden, the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors will determine the costs and make a recommendation to the full Board.
4. If changes are necessary to policies, practices, and/or procedures that fundamentally alter the nature of the program, these will be addressed by the Program Committee of the Board of Directors.

If a child who is already enrolled in the program is later suspected by the Program Director and staff to have special needs, the Program Director and staff will:

1. Evaluate their own techniques, skills, and interactions with the child.
2. Evaluate the environment to determine if it is hindering the development of the child or having a negative effect on the child's behavior.
3. Seek advice from colleagues and outside resources (such as personnel from the Early Intervention Services Program) to determine if any changes can or should be made in the program or daily schedule.
4. Seek advice from the parents to determine if the parents are observing the same

behaviors or have any concerns similar to staff concerns.

5. Work collaboratively with the family to provide consistency between home and The Center.

Before the Program Director makes a final determination about exclusion, the family will have the option to discuss the matter with the Program Director. Upon completion of this process, the Program Director will make a final determination, within a reasonable time frame.

Each child's case will be evaluated on an individual basis.

### **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY**

The staff of The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc. are trained to handle many aspects of child behavior. Almost all children go through periods of time when behavior is disruptive. The staff expects this type of behavior and will address them in a positive, constructive manner. Parents are responsible for working in partnership and cooperation with staff in making every attempt to help children through these periods for a reasonable length of time.

Disruptive behavior incidents will be documented, and families will be offered the opportunity to schedule a conference with the staff involved and/or the Director. Each situation will be reviewed to see if any contributing factors can be changed or eliminated to prevent recurrence in the future. When agreed upon, referrals for evaluations of a child's development can often help discover a reason behind challenging behavior.

After three Incident Reports, suspension or termination may occur. Following suspension there is a probationary period. The Program Director and Lead Teacher will determine re-admittance to the program. (See Appendix G for a sample Incident Report.) The Center will work with families who are seeking an evaluation with Early Intervention or the Committee for Preschool Special Education.

The Center is unable, however, to care for those children whose needs cannot be met in the confines of our group care program. A child whose behavior continues to endanger children, either physically or psychologically, will not be permitted to remain in the program. (Refer to Appendix H for SAP Disruptive Behavior Policy). The Center will work with families to seek out alternate care options and find resources to assist in the transition of care. All federal and state civil rights laws will be followed.

**Child's Checklist**

**The following items must be provided by parents and labeled with your child's FIRST AND LAST name:**

At least one complete change of clothing including:

- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ Socks
- ☐ Shirt
- ☐ Pants
- ☐ Sweater
- ☐ Shorts
- ☐ Shoes

(Please plan on extra clothing during winter months and when your child is potty training.)

- ☐ Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- ☐ Water cup/water bottle
- ☐ Hairbrush/Comb (personal option)
- ☐ Photographs of all people authorized to pick up your child; be sure to include yourself.  
(Please label the back of photos with first & last names and the relationship to your child.)
- ☐ Blanket and/or
- ☐ Small stuffed animal for rest time. All other home toys should be left at home.
- ☐ Crib sized sheet for cot at rest time. Sheets for infant cribs are provided. A travel size pillow is allowed for children over 18 months.

**Additional Items**

**INFANTS:**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pacifier   | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bottles with prepared formula or breast milk, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sippy cups | <input type="checkbox"/> Diapers & Wipes <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen    |

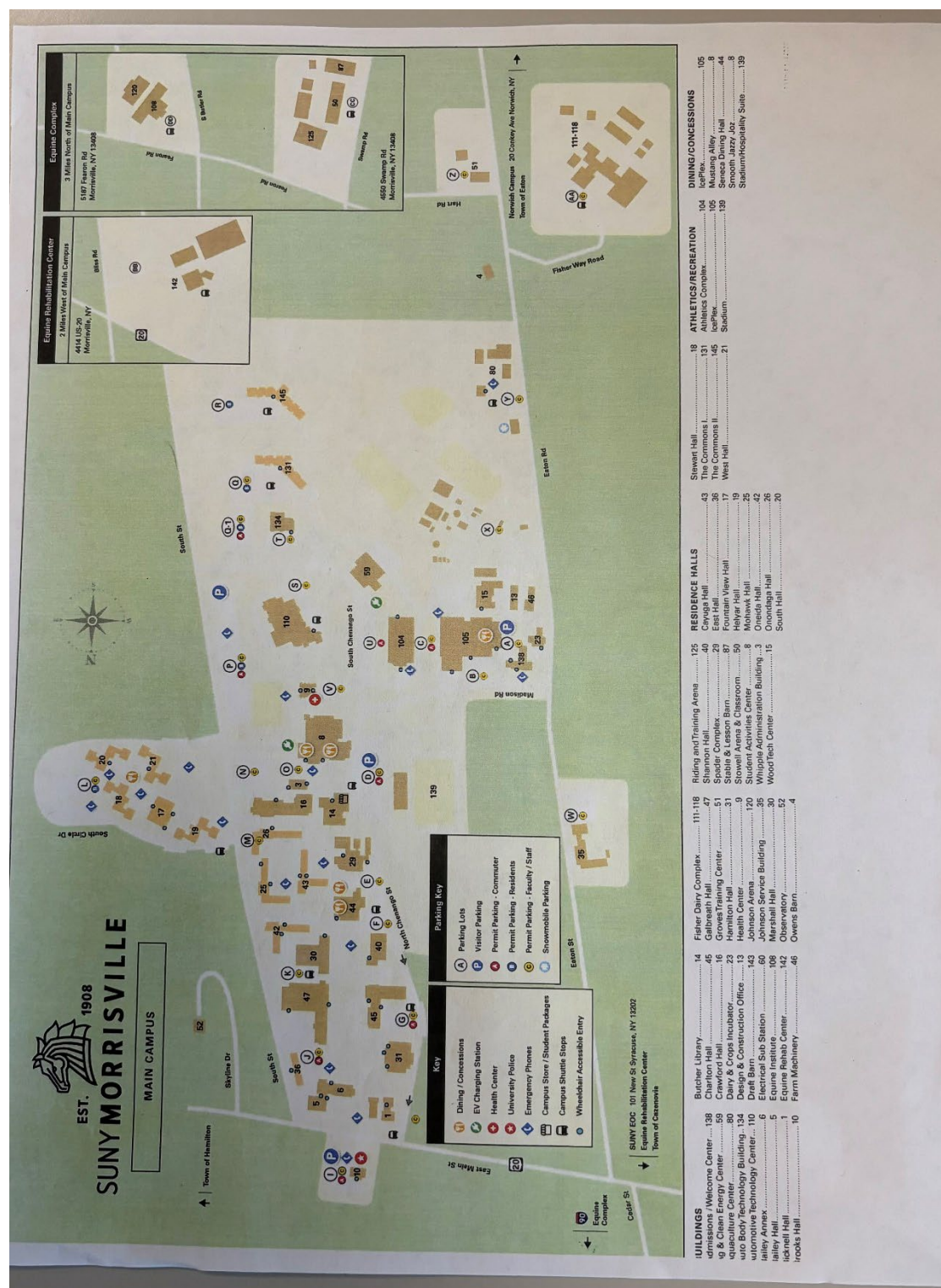
**TODDLERS:**

- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diapers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Wipes        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ointment  | <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen |                                       |

**PRESCHOOL/PRE-K:**

- ☐ Diapering supplies, if needed ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ A school bag of some type is highly recommended to transport personal items  
(i.e., blankie, woobie, stuffed animal, etc.)

## APPENDIX B: CAMPUS MAP



## APPENDIX C

### **THE CHILDREN'S CENTER AT MORRISVILLE STATE COLLEGE, INC. ILLNESS CHART ILLNESS MAY RETURN**

Bacterial (spinal)	When Health Department gives O.K.
Chicken Pox	When most recent lesion has healed over
Conjunctivitis	24 hours after start of treatment, if symptoms have stopped (significant drainage and excessive tearing)
Croup	After illness has subsided
Diarrhea-Gastro	24 hours after last loose stool Enteritis or 1 normal bowel movement
Fever	24 hours after temp is normal, without fever reducer
Hand Foot and Mouth	24 hours after temp is normal, without fever reducer and after any exposed sores have crusted over.
Hepatitis A	At least 7 days after the onset of jaundice
Impetigo	24 hours after treatment has begun
Influenza	24 hours after symptoms have subsided
Lice	24 hours after treatment has begun
Measles	Sixth day after rash onset
Mumps	Tenth day after onset of symptoms
Pinworms	After treatment is completed
Pneumonia or Epiglottitis	Written note from physician. If due to Flu, Health Department must OK
Poison Ivy	After lesions cease to ooze
Roseola	After illness has subsided
Scabies	After eggs and mites are destroyed
Strep Throat	24 hours after the start of antibiotics
Vomiting	24 hours after last incident

***IN ALL CASES, THE CHILDREN'S CENTER AT MORRISVILLE STATE COLLEGE, INC. RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEND A CHILD HOME WITH SUSPICIOUS OR PROLONGED SYMPTOMS. THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.***

**RECORD OF SUSPECTED ILLNESS**

CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**SYMPTOMS NOTICED** (Check all that apply)

Bleeding	Constipation	Sleepy
Flushed Skin	Headache	Glazed Eyes
Crusty Eyes	Head Lice	Runny Nose
Irritable	Listless	Fever (show degree)
Unusual Rash	Stomachache	Severe Cough
Vomiting	Diarrhea	

Action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time Director notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Parent notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Child left center: \_\_\_\_\_

Child may return when: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX E

REPORT OF INJURY

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Address \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

License # 42194 Time Parent/Guardian was notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and place where accident occurred \_\_\_\_\_

Details of Injury (do not include the names of other children)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Injury (ies)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Treatment administered \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did child leave care for medical treatment (include details) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of M.D. \_\_\_\_\_

Group size and teachers supervising the group \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Person completing report and position

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Director was notified (time) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_

OCFS was notified (time) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F: INCOME ELIGIBILITY FORM

See the OCFS website for updated CCA Income Eligibility

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/2024/inf/24-OCFS-INF-05.pdf>

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/ccap/help.php>

APPENDIX G

**THE CHILDREN'S CENTER AT MORRISVILLE STATE COLLEGE, INC.**  
**INCIDENT REPORT**

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

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity Immediately Preceding Incident:

Nature of Incident:

Describe the nature of any injuries received as a result of this incident:

What was employee doing when incident occurred?

How was incident managed by staff?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Person Completing Report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Position

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature/Date

*If you have any questions or would like to set up an appointment to speak with your child's teacher and/or the Program Director regarding this incident, please call The Center at 684-6400.*

## APPENDIX H

### **SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY**

The staff of The Children's Center at Morrisville State College, Inc. is trained in dealing with many aspects of child behavior. Almost all children go through periods of time when behavior is disruptive. The staff expects this type of activity and will deal with children in a positive, constructive manner. Parents are responsible for working in partnership and cooperation with staff in making every attempt to help children through these periods for a reasonable length of time.

We believe in setting guidelines or limits for children to help them distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Our staff uses methods of positive reinforcement and redirection. You will hear our teachers using phrases such as: "I like the way you are...", "You need to use your walking feet", "We need to use our inside voices", "We need to sit at the table", "You need to use your words (rather than hitting)", etc. We hope that through good parent/guardian communication in childcare, you can be consistent by using similar disciplining techniques at home.

Disruptive behavior incidents will be documented, and families will be offered the opportunity to schedule a conference with the staff involved and/or the Program Director. Each situation will be reviewed to see if any contributing factors can be changed or eliminated to prevent recurrence in the future.

The School Age Program is unable, however, to care for those children whose needs cannot be met in the confines of our group care program. A child, whose behavior continues to endanger children, physically or psychologically, will not be permitted to remain in the program.

#### **THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE AT THE SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM:**

- Physically leaving his/her group and the group's teachers (this includes running through the halls and/or outside the building).
- Foul or "inappropriate" language.
- Rough or abusive behaviors toward peers or teachers (fighting).
- Rough or abusive behavior toward materials, activities or school property.
- Throwing food or beverages.
- Disrespectful behavior (including arguing with teachers).

When these behaviors are present, the following will occur:

1. The child is given a verbal warning to stop the behavior and to regain control.
2. If the child is not able to comply, he/she will be asked to sit apart from the group at a quiet activity.
3. If the child refuses and/or physically leaves the teachers/area, a parent or designated adult will be called to pick the child up immediately.

If unacceptable behavior occurs, an Incident Report will be sent home. After three Incident Reports (or

in extreme cases) the child may be dismissed from the program.