



**EARLY LEARNING CENTER
AT
RIVER RIDGE ELEMENTARY
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PARENT HANDBOOK

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www.childreninc.org

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Our Welcome to You

Congratulations! You have enrolled your child in an early education and care center that offers the highest rating in quality preschool education and prepares your child to succeed in school. We partner with the school system to offer the other half of the school day, wrap-around care before and after school, snow day care, and care during the holidays and summer when school is not in session.

This Center is nationally accredited by the National Accreditation Commission (NAC) for Early Care and Education Programs and holds a 5 STAR quality rating awarded by Kentucky's All STARS quality rating system.

In addition to a well-equipped, learning-rich environment, there are 8 major quality initiatives that are implemented on a daily basis. These initiatives include: Literacy; Health; Arts; Social-Emotional; Assessments; Family Partnerships; Professional Development; and STARS/ Quality Ratings. Curriculum is based on the High Scope method and integrates the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards that flow into the K-12 Program of Studies used in Elementary, Junior High and High School. Children are assessed formally and informally on an on-going basis by teachers to determine children's individual needs and progress.

Teachers receive on-going professional development and training in these areas and more. Our goal is to prepare your child to succeed in school, recognize and honor your child's unique gifts and strengths and make learning fun. Teachers and assistants have strong backgrounds in providing a positive learning environment where opportunities abound for children. Staff guide and respond in a unique way to each child's various needs and developmental stages. An environment is created where a love for learning is promoted through a child's natural curiosity, exploration, and ability to master skills.

Parents are supported in their role as primary teacher of their child and the individual needs of each family are recognized. Parents are invited to be actively involved in the center's activities and support the efforts of the director and teachers as they strive for excellence.

We welcome you and your child to our program. We look forward to being a part of your child's life as he or she grows and blossoms. We depend on a strong partnership with you to help provide the highest quality of care and excellence in early childhood education.

Statement of Philosophy

Children, Inc. Vision Statement

All families and children have what they need to do well and be well.

Children, Inc. Mission Statement

We provide innovative programs to grow knowledge, skills and strengths that allow families, children and communities to flourish.

Our Beliefs

We believe in children. We believe that children of all backgrounds and abilities have great worth and unique gifts.

Therefore we,

Respect the child's worth in each and every interaction.

Create learning environments that nurture each child's gifts.

We believe in families. We believe that all families have a great capacity to nurture their children.

Therefore we,

Listen and communicate respectfully with each family.

Commit to programming that values the diversity of our families.

Support and enhance our families' role as primary teacher.

We believe in our community. We believe that Northern Kentucky can provide the support families need to successfully nurture their children.

Therefore we,

Share information about the community's many resources with our families.

Partner with other members of the community to develop needed services.

Encourage more members of our community to be involved in the support of families and children.

We believe in ourselves. We believe that the employees of Children, Inc. have a great opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of children and their families.

Therefore we,

Recruit and retain a board and staff dedicated to and skillful in implementing the organization's mission.

Support staff through high quality training, strong team development, and creating environments where all staff feel valued and respected.

Pilot innovative best practices in family-centered child care.

Seek new opportunities to provide high quality services.

Advocate for all young children and their families at regional, state, and national levels.

Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics is a companion to Children, Inc.'s Vision, Mission and Beliefs. One of our four core Beliefs, *We Believe in Ourselves*, highlights the fact that we are entrusted with great opportunities to make a real difference in the lives of children and their families.

The purpose of Children, Inc.'s Code of Ethics is three-fold:

- To summarize the standards and principles that guide our day-to-day work and interactions
- To provide guidance for responsible behavior on ethical decision-making
- To provide standards to which we hold ourselves accountable

Strength-Based Practices: We acknowledge and build upon strengths and competencies of children, families, colleagues and community partners.

We will understand and share our personal strengths as individuals and as an organization to promote our vision, mission, and values.

We will participate in practices that do not harm or discriminate against children, families, colleagues or community partners.

We will strive for continuous improvement.

We will seek out partnerships when others' missions complement our own.

We will act in the best interest of children, families, colleagues and community partners.

We will engage in practices that are respectful, supportive, and aligned with our Code of Ethics.

Integrity: We value and practice respect and honesty.

We will develop relationships of mutual trust, courtesy and cooperation with children, families, colleagues and community partners.

We will conduct ourselves with integrity. We will communicate openly and truthfully. Decisions and policies will be transparent.

We will maintain clear, appropriate and professional boundaries with our colleagues and those we serve.

We will respect the environments in which we work.

We will maintain confidentiality and respect each individual's right to privacy within the limits of legal mandates and best practices.

We will listen open-mindedly to better understand and improve communication.

Excellence: We maintain high quality programs.

We will provide the community with high quality programs every day and seek a high level of internal and external evaluation by experts in the field.

We will seek opportunities to provide children and families with optimal experiences.

We will seek out new opportunities to better serve.

We will maintain a high level of competence in our services.

We will support our colleagues in their professional development and professional needs.

We will acknowledge and celebrate our progress and achievements.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES & GOALS FOR CHILDREN

The Early Learning Center at River Ridge Elementary opened in August 2008 as a collaborative partnership between Kenton County School District and Children, Inc., to offer full day preschool with extended care to three and four year old children who reside within the boundaries of the River Ridge, Ft. Wright, and some children at Hinsdale and Caywood Elementary Schools. The Center remains open year round and during most of the school year breaks. The goal for children is to prepare them to succeed in school and to offer working parents the option of before and after school care wrapped around a full school day program.

AGENCY ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

This Center is operated and managed by Children, Inc., a private, non-profit, non-denominational agency that has provided early education and care in Northern Kentucky since 1977. Children, Inc. is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports to the Board and is responsible for carrying out the policies of the agency, the implementation of all agency services and ensuring that all state licensing and regulatory standards are met. In addition to this Center, Children, Inc. operates many other Early Education and Care Centers, in Kentucky and Ohio. Programs include a variety of school-based programs such as In-School Preschools, Extended Education for kindergarteners, Before and After School programs and SummerCare; Service Learning that assists schools with community service projects; Navigo that helps students explore career goals ; Leadership Scholars that work with families to explore post secondary education opportunities; Family Child Care with a network of certified providers in five counties ; Young Families Program that provides home visitation to families prenatally with children up to age three; Advocacy through Kentucky's Voice for Early Childhood; a full Professional Development Department that offers training in early care and education, Montessori Certification and the Devereux Center; and an Innovation Lab that develops innovative initiatives to promote social emotional health, including music products through the Growing Sound Division

ADMISSION POLICY

The diversity of children within our community is celebrated and three and four, and five year old children are welcome. To qualify for admission, children must live in the geographic boundaries of the school district. Priority is given to those children enrolled in the school. The Center does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, age, disability, national origin, or ability level.

Children with Special Needs

The spirit and intent of the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Title III is honored by making reasonable accommodations in the program for the inclusion and participation of children with special needs. Inclusion is evaluated on an individual basis, taking into consideration the following:

-strengths as well as limitations	-focus on the best interest of the child
-adaptive skills	-psychological and emotional issues
-physical health/safety issues	-environmental considerations

Evaluation and assessment is a collaborative process involving the parent(s)/guardian(s), administration/teacher(s), and the director.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Central to our core belief in children and families is the utmost respect for their privacy. Mindful that our staff will have access to very private and personal information about the children and families whom they serve, they will hold such information in strictest confidence. Therefore, staff are not permitted to discuss or disclose to other families any issues that may arise and compromise confidentiality regarding other children or families enrolled in the Center.

PERMISSION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

As part of programming, there are times when it is necessary to share information between the Center and Kenton County Schools about assessment, testing, medical information, immunization certificates, transportation, attendance, and other important areas.

Information may be shared in the form of verbal reports, written reports or actual records. Enrollment in the Center includes permission to share information between partners that have a genuine interest in the well-being of a child enrolled in the Center.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The Center is open from 7 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and operates year round with the exception of specified holidays, or severe inclement weather or an unanticipated emergency. Although the Center offers extended hours to accommodate families, it is recommended that a child not attend in excess of 9 hours per day.

CENTER CLOSINGS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Center follows the closing or delay schedule for Kenton County Schools for inclement weather or emergencies. Check TV/radio/internet for Kenton County Schools and proceed as follows: If Kenton County Schools are on a delay, the Center opens at 9 a.m. If Kenton County Schools close, the Center closes. For parents who need care for their child when the center is closed due to weather, please talk to your child's teacher about the option to pre-register to attend another Children, Inc. center for that day.

ABSENCES, WITHDRAWAL, AND REFUNDS

If a child is going to be absent from school due to a vacation or planned absence, advance notice is requested. Please inform the teacher or the director. For illness or unexpected absence, please call the Center as early as possible to inform the director or teacher of the absence and illness. All confidentiality will be maintained, however, it is especially important if other children have been exposed to a contagious disease and best practices need to be observed to prevent the spread of a communicable disease.

A two-week withdrawal notice is requested. Failure to provide proper notice may result in additional tuition fees. Refunds will be issued for any overpayments upon withdrawal.

HOLIDAYS AND BIRTHDAYS

The Center typically closes for the following observed holidays, however the Center follows the school schedule and is open or closed in alignment with the school:

New Year's Day	July 4
Martin Luther King Day	Labor Day
President's Day	Thanksgiving and the day after
Good Friday	Christmas Eve
Memorial Day	Christmas Day

The holidays listed as well as other diverse celebrations are recognized as part of the curriculum. This is a way to learn and appreciate various cultures. The meaning of the holiday is explained, followed by opportunities to explore with crafts, songs and other activities related to the holiday. Parents/guardians should notify the teaching staff if they do not want their child to participate in any holiday celebration. Parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the celebrations.

Birthdays are special occasions and the Center tries to recognize each child's birthday. If a parent/guardian prefers that his or her child's birthday not be recognized, please notify the teaching staff.

PUBLICITY RELEASES

From time to time, there are different organizations, newspapers, TV stations, non-profit agencies or internal needs to take photos, film the agency or activities and children or to visit or publicize the program and/or activities of the Center. Under the Parent Handbook Policy Agreement (last page of this document), there is a signed consent statement to indicate whether a parent grants or denies permission for his or her child to participate in such activities. It is important for a parent/guardian to complete this form. Failure to submit this form within one week after enrollment gives automatic permission authorized by attendance at the Center.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival

Full School Day Only

Children attending the morning session at the Center should arrive by the start of the preschool day established by the school and may be bussed from home, depending on the transportation arrangements made by Kenton County Schools, or the parent. Children attending the afternoon session at the Center report directly from the morning session of preschool program provided by Kenton County Schools, facilitated by the District's teachers who sign the children in to Children, Inc. staff.

Extended Care Beyond the Full School Day

For working parents, the Center opens at 7:00 a.m. Parents or other designated adults may drop their child off anytime after 7 a.m., and prior to the start of the morning school session.

The parent or designated adult dropping off a child at the Center must sign a child in on the sign-in sheet and note the time of arrival. In addition, it is very important that the adult verbally let the teacher know the child has arrived so that proper supervision can begin and the staff member can welcome the child to the Center.

Departure

Full School Day Only

Students in Children, Inc.'s morning sessions transfer to the school's afternoon session around lunchtime. Children, Inc. staff are responsible for facilitating the student exchange to River Ridge teachers or bus personnel who may be transporting.

At the end of the day, children may be picked up at their respective programs by a parent or be transported home from school by the school, depending on the transportation arrangements made between the parent and Kenton County Schools.

For working parents who need care beyond the full school day

If a child is in extended care, he or she stays at the Center (if in Children, Inc.'s afternoon session) or returns to the Center (if in River Ridge's afternoon session) and may be picked up at the Center anytime before 6.00 p.m. The adult must sign him or her out and record the time and adult's name. A photo ID may be required if staff are not familiar with the adult.

If a child's parent or any other person cannot pickup or have access to a child under a court order, the Center needs a copy of the order for the child's file.

FEE PAYMENT

Full school day preschool

Tuition assistance is available for individuals through state or limited United Way funding for qualifying individuals or through other subsidized funding. A full school day is provided as follows: A half day is spent at the Center and the other half day is spent with the Kenton County program. Most families can attend the half-day at the Center at minimal or no cost with tuition assistance. State and United Way co-payments for state child care assistance must be paid by the family. Tuition is based on income and family size and a schedule of tuition fees and attendance incentives is posted in the Center or available from the Center Director.

Extended care beyond the full school day

For working parents, state or limited United Way assistance is available to qualifying families and is based on income and family size. Enrollment is limited to full time Monday through Friday care between the hours of 7 a.m. to 6:00. It is possible that a family may qualify to attend without a fee, however, the family is responsible to pay any co-payment assigned by a tuition assistance program. Any fees are payable on line or by check or money order to Children, Inc. ELC at River Ridge Elementary.

Tuition fees or co-payments are due on the Monday of the current week of school. It is preferred that payment be made by check or money order. Payments can also be made on-line by going to the website at www.childreninc.org Payments not made by the end of the week are considered past due and are subject to a late fee. There is no reduction in fees for missed days, holidays or vacation time. Repeated failure to make tuition payments on a timely basis will jeopardize a child's enrollment in the Center.

For more information about tuition assistance or fees, please speak with the Center Director.

Late Fee

A late fee of \$3 for every five minutes may be assessed for children who are picked up after the closing time of 6:00 p.m.

If a child has not been picked up by closing time and no notification has been received and emergency contacts cannot be reached, proper authorities may be notified for the safe-keeping of the child.

ORIENTATION TO THE CENTER

The first few weeks at a new center can be an anxious time for parents/guardians and children, especially when a child is young and has been with the parent most of the time. Children may react in a variety of ways. Some begin to explore the environment and do not have a problem with their parent leaving. Others may cry, cling, or beg not to be left. The response is generally related to the child's temperament, age, and other factors. Usually, in a very short time after the parent departs, a child becomes interested in the activities and other children. Here are a few guidelines for parents/guardians to follow to make the experience a positive one:

- Become familiar with the Center and its routines. Get to know staff. Be open to building a partnership with your child's teacher and other Center staff.
- Visit the Center with your child before the first day of enrollment. This helps you and your child have time to meet staff, feel more at home, and get used to the new environment.
- Give yourself some extra time the first week. Try to arrange your schedule so you can spend some time helping your child get involved and adjusted.
- Children take their cues from their parents. If you act confident, a child feels safer. If you have a problem or concern, please find a private place to talk with staff. It is best to refrain from discussing issues in front of your child. It can cause upset and uneasiness.
- Say good-bye when you leave and don't try to sneak away. It is best to give a quick kiss and hug and assure your child you will return. Although your child may cry, it will help to build trust as they realize you leave and you return. Good-byes are not made easier by prolonging them.
- You may call the Center once you get to work to ease your mind and know everything is okay.
- During the adjustment period, return a little early and spend some time with your child at the Center.
- Sometimes children burst into tears when they see their parent at the end of the day. This display of emotion does not necessarily mean they have had a bad day. They are glad to see you and may be releasing feelings from all of the excitement of the day's activities.
- If there seems to be ongoing problems with arrival or departure, a conference can be arranged to discuss how you and staff can work together to help your child with adjustment difficulties.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Center encourages parents/guardians to be actively involved in a variety of ways and maintains an “open door” policy. They are invited to volunteer in a variety of ways, chaperone field trips, and/or help with special events. Bridging the classroom activities to home is another important way that parents/guardians can be involved in their child's education. Ask your child's teacher or the director how you can help bridge the learning from the school day to home.

At enrollment time or each fall when the school year begins, teachers will review what is called a “Partnership Agreement” between the teacher and family. It outlines some of what you can expect from teachers and their “ask” of you to facilitate enriched care and learning.

A Wish List is available for individuals who want to contribute items to the Center. All contributions, whether of time, talent, or material gifts are greatly appreciated.

Communication

Children benefit when communication between staff and families is open, respectful and frequent. Parents/guardians are encouraged to call to arrange a meeting with their child's teacher at any time or write a short note. Arrival and departure are good opportunities to chat briefly, but any in-depth conversations will necessitate a separate meeting time since the staff's primary responsibility is to be fully present to the children. Please read the bulletin boards, parent information areas, and other printed correspondence for important information and notices at the Center or sent home. Be sure to check out information that is sent home periodically.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences are held twice a year and assessment information gathered on a child is shared at that time. Input from both the teacher and the parent/guardian about how to maximize a child's skill development and learning is most beneficial.

Family Involvement and Events

Parent/guardian involvement is encouraged in many ways. Throughout the year, special events are planned for families to attend. Parents/guardians are welcome to participate in any field trips.

Community Support and Activities

Families can find a variety of community activities and resources by checking the parent information areas and bulletin boards located in the classrooms. The Center has a list of community resources available for families to assist with needs outside of the Center's capacity. A parent may also learn about community resources by calling 211, a United Way information helpline. There is no charge for this 211 service.

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

The Center assumes no responsibility for the loss of money or other personal possessions. Please do not let a child wear valuable jewelry or bring money to the Center. It is important to leave toys at home or in the car. A blanket or personal item that provides a sense of security/comfort may be kept in a child's cubby if a naptime is part of the routine and this item is used only during that time.

Please bring a change of clothing that can remain at the Center and used in the event it is needed.

A child's name must be clearly marked inside all coats, sweaters, hats, gloves, boots, and other personal items to ensure a safe return. Since it is important that a child be free to play, paint, and participate in other activities that may result in soiled clothing, please refrain from dressing a child in any apparel that cannot be soiled from play activities. It is requested that sturdy shoes (not sandals or jellies) be worn at all times to minimize the risk of injury due to tripping or other factors.

If there is a book, tape, or other items for curriculum enrichment to be shared with the class, please check it in with staff upon arrival. Violence-oriented materials are not allowed. Play dough, hammering, finger paints, or other tension relieving activities are used instead of materials condoning or exhibiting violent acts or aggression.

RETURNING MISPLACED MATERIALS

Occasionally simple supplies like crayons, markers, puzzle pieces or other school supplies may end up in pockets or a school bag or be taken home by accident. Materials are very expensive to replace. Please return them promptly. Please do not send school supplies with a child unless it is a donation for all children to use.

DISCIPLINE

Physical punishment or harsh verbal reprimands are never used or acceptable as an appropriate means of punishment. Food is never used for reward or punishment. Children feel safe when age appropriate expectations, encouragement and boundaries are in place. Educational activities and play are presented in a warm, safe environment. Discipline is a combination of techniques that helps a child achieve a balance between inner urges and the demands of the immediate world. Appropriate guidance helps a child develop a sense of security and self-control/regulation. Examples of proactive discipline techniques include redirection, one-on-one dialogue, establishing routines, offering choices, and reminding a child of the classroom rules. For every "no" a child hears, there are "yes" suggestions for alternative good choices. A child may be temporarily removed from the group, yet remain with a teacher if there is a significant loss of control by the child or safety concerns. The goal is to keep a child safe and help h/her achieve inner control, self-direction, and a sense of self-worth. If you feel that any of the Center's staff are violating this policy, please discuss these concerns immediately with the Director or designee.

Parents/guardians are expected to be respectful and to observe the discipline policy with their own children while on the premises. Failure to be respectful of this policy may result in disenrollment.

CURRICULUM

Each day the children participate in a variety of learning activities. Staff are trained in a specially designed preschool and kindergarten age curriculum that support the full potential and well-being of each child in the areas of physical, social-emotional, intellectual, and language development. There is a quiet, yet busy atmosphere. The room is functionally arranged for children, enabling them to move and develop freely. The furnishings are proportionate to the age of the children. Children are encouraged to discover through hands-on learning activities. Educational materials are age-appropriate.

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools twice a year to help guide them in their lesson plans, curriculum, and room activities. Lesson plans are posted in each classroom and based on Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards that are aligned with curriculum for grades K-12. A traditional early childhood education program is offered based on "High Scope" curriculum principles. All Children, Inc. centers incorporate eight major learning initiatives into their curriculum. These initiatives include Literacy and Language development; Social-Emotional development; Health; Arts; Assessment; Family Involvement; Professional Development; and Quality Ratings.

Kentucky Early Childhood Standards/Domains of learning include:

For Preschool:

Language Arts: Observing, Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing

Mathematics & Science: Environmental Awareness, Memory, Concept Development,
Problem Solving

Social Studies & Health Education: Trust, Sense of Self, Social Relationships, Initiative and
Self-Care

Health Education & Physical Education: Gross and Fine Motor, Coordination, Physical Health
and Self-Care

Arts and Humanities: Music, Drama, Visual Arts, Dance

Please ask your director and teacher to explain more in-depth about what your child is learning. You may also request a Parent Guide on the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards that explains the areas of learning and how you can promote your child's learning at home that will help prepare him or her to succeed in school.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS

The Center maintains and exceeds compliance with licensing standards and state and local regulations for the safety and health of children in group care. No child will be left alone or unsupervised at any time and safety regulations are observed at all times. Parents/guardians are permitted and encouraged to visit the Center at any time and may enter the room even if the door is closed. Volunteers may visit the Center during assigned times and only after being formally accepted into the volunteer program.

Emergency Numbers

Home, work, cell phone numbers, and email addresses are kept on file for each child. Two alternate phone numbers of relatives or friends who may be contacted in case of illness or emergency are also required. For a child's well-being, it is imperative that changes in addresses, phone and email addresses be reported immediately.

Medical History, Authorization for Emergency Care and Incident Reports

Each child's medical and dental history, along with authorization for emergency medical care and preferred hospital, signed by the parent/guardian, must be on file at the Center.

All staff receive First Aid and CPR training and at least one person has current certification in First Aid and CPR at all times. Emergency numbers are posted. Should an emergency arise for a child while at the Center, immediate attention will be given and a life squad called if necessary to transport the child to a hospital emergency room. The parent or guardian will be notified.

An incident report will be filled out and requires that the staff person present at the time of the incident and the parent or guardian sign the report.

Well Child Policy

To ensure a healthy, safe environment at the Center for all children, efforts are made to keep the spread of communicable diseases to a minimum. If a child becomes ill while at the center, all efforts are made to keep the child away from the other children to minimize the risk of exposure and until the child is released to an authorized adult. Parents will be notified of an outbreak of contagious illnesses that occur in the Center.

Children may not be admitted or permitted to stay at the Center if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 100 degrees or above
- skin rashes that have not been treated by a physician
- diarrhea (more than 2 unexplainable loose stools)
- vomiting
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- presence of head or body lice, nits and/or other parasites
- yellowish skin or eyes
- severe or persistent coughing
- rapid or difficult breathing
- earaches
- severe head cold
- other evidence of infection
- general listlessness

Children may be re-admitted:

- After 24 hours and with a physician's statement it is safe to readmit your child to the center, provided that the child is free from communicable disease
- If visibly free from communicable disease such as fever (without fever reducing medicine), diarrhea, vomiting for at least 24 hours and is back on a normal diet.
- If returning to the Center poses no risk to the other children.

Classroom Pet Policy

Small pets such as fish, hermit crabs, gerbils or other permissible pets (no wild, exotic or undomesticated animals) may be present in the classroom environment to enhance learning. Licensing and health regulations will be maintained at all times and include: Adult supervision and control of the pet; written parental consent; and written parent notification if their child is bitten or scratched by the animal. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the director and/or teaching staff of any pet allergies or contraindications to exposing their child to a particular classroom pet.

Medication Administration

Medication is administered only if the parent/guardian signs a consent form *each day* and the medication is in the original prescribed container, with original label/directions. This includes prescription or over the counter medication. Sunscreen, ointments, and other such products are subject to medication policies as well. For the safety of all children enrolled, it is the policy of the Center not to administer fever reducing medicines.

Prescription medication will be given only to the child whose name is on the container and only according to label directions. Licensing regulations require that aspirin not be given without the authorization of a licensed physician. The Center reserves the right to ask for documentation or a phone call from a physician prior to administering any medication. All medications must be administered according to directions on the container. Medication will not be administered if the expiration date on the container has passed.

A proper measuring device must accompany all medication for accurate dosage administration. The Center does not keep any medications on hand. All medication, prescription, or over the counter medication will be locked in a box or locked cabinet. Any medications needing refrigeration will be kept in a locked box in a refrigerator at the Center.

Only designated staff will administer medications. The name of the medication, the dosage, the time and the person administering the medication will be documented in a medication log. For safety concerns and potential allergic reactions, the parent/guardian must administer the first dose of a newly ordered medication.

Immunization Certificates

Licensing regulations require that all children have a current and completed state of Kentucky Immunization Certificate in their permanent file. Immunization certificates from states outside Kentucky must be converted by their physician or the Health Department to a Kentucky certificate. Children will be permitted to enroll and attend, however, an immunization certificate must be provided to the office within 2 weeks of enrollment. Failure to provide a current immunization certificate will result in a child being denied admission to the Center. As of July 1998, children are not required to have tuberculin (TB) tests prior to school admission, however, Hepatitis B vaccine is now required for children entering kindergarten and must be dated for recall for subsequent Hepatitis B vaccines.

State Regulation and local day care ordinance mandates that boosters be given by 49 month of age. In accordance to the change in Immunization Regulation 902KAR2:060, all Varicella (chickenpox vaccine) is required for children at 19 months of age and less than 7 years of age.

Safety and Disaster Drills

Fire, tornado, and earthquake drills are conducted monthly. In the case of a fire, disaster or related event, an evacuation plan is posted for quick exit from the Center if necessary.

Permission Slips

A blanket permission slip for field trips allows a child to participate in short walks around the adjacent grounds and other limited impromptu events. A separate notice and permission slip is provided for planned field trips away from the Center.

Transportation Policy

Transportation is provided by Kenton County Schools when children are transported to and from home. When additional transportation is provided for field trips or outings, public or private transportation by a state approved vendor or a school bus is used and must meet the Transportation Cabinet's safety inspection requirements. Employees are not permitted to transport children. An employee who transports children during non-work hours does so on their own and not as an employee of Children, Inc. The agency assumes no responsibility for incidents that occur before or after an employee's scheduled hours of employment.

Nutrition

Meals served at the Center follow the USDA Food Program. Families must complete a Children, Inc. food form and a different one from the school (if attending 1/2 day with the school) to participate. Children who attend the Center's morning session receive a morning snack at no charge. Lunch is provided through Kenton County's lunch program once children are exchanged with school staff. Lunch fees are payable to the school. Children who attend the afternoon session at the Center receive lunch prior to arriving at the Center. Lunch fees are payable to the school. Afternoon snack is provided at no charge to children who participate in extended care. For non-exchange students only: Children who remain at the Center for the full school day receive lunch and snacks as indicated by their enrollment schedule. Lunch fees are payable to Children, Inc. Menus for meals and snacks are posted at the Center. For days when River Ridge Elementary is not in session, children are required to pack a nutritious lunch. Please do not send food that needs to be heated in a microwave. Refrigeration will be available. Please include the following food components in packed lunches: protein, bread, vegetable and/or fruit. Milk will be provided at no charge. It is important teachers are informed of any food allergies. Alternative choices will be offered. A parent may choose to arrange food from home. For special dietary needs, a "Modified Food Form" (available from the director) must be completed by the parent/guardian.. It is imperative that these arrangements are made in advance to ensure nutritional safety and health. If snacks are brought from home for special occasions, please ensure that they are commercially packaged and have nutritional value. Refrain from bringing in high sugar or fat snacks. Please consult with your child's teacher about the need for a nutritional variation or snacks from home.

Note: "The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer." All Nutrition and Health Services programs and activities are operated in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture policy which does not permit discrimination because of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA-related activity should write immediately to: Secretary of Agriculture, Washington DC 20205.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The law states that it is the duty of anyone who suspects or has reasonable cause to believe a child is dependent, neglected or abused to report his or her suspicions to authorities. KRS (Kentucky Revised Statute) 620.030 states that

“any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is dependent, neglected, or abused shall immediately cause an oral or written report to be made to a local law enforcement agency or the Kentucky State Police; the Cabinet or its designated representative; the Commonwealth's attorney or county attorney; by telephone or otherwise.”

Our staff is mandated by law to comply with this statute.

CHILDREN AND PARENT RIGHTS PURSUANT TO KRS 199.898

- (1.) All children receiving child care services in a day care center licensed pursuant to KRS 199.896, a family child care home certified pursuant to KRS 199.8982, or from a provider or program receiving public funds shall have the following rights:
 - (a.) The right to be free from physical or mental abuse;
 - (b.) The right not to be subjected to abusive language or abusive punishment; and
 - (c.) The right to be in the care of adults who shall meet their health, safety, and developmental needs.

- (2.) Parents, custodians, or guardians of these children specified in subsection (1) of this section shall have the following rights:
 - (a.) The right to have access to their children at all times the child is in care and access to the provider caring for their children during normal hours of provider operation and whenever the children are in the care of the provider;
 - (b.) The right to be provided with information about child care regulatory standards, if applicable; where to direct questions about regulatory standards; and how to file a complaint;
 - (c.) The right to file a complaint against a child care provider without retribution against the parent, custodian, guardian, or child; and
 - (d.) The right to review and discuss with the provider any state reports and deficiencies revealed by such reports.

- (3.) The child care provider who is licensed pursuant to KRS 199.896 or certified pursuant to KRS 199.8982 shall post these rights in a prominent place and shall provide a copy of these rights at the time of the child's enrollment in the program.

THIRD PARTY VISITORS

As part of quality programming, community helpers and other individuals sometimes are in the building or invited to the program to volunteer or provide a variety services to benefit the children. or program These individuals are under constant supervision of the director, teachers or other authorized staff. These individuals are not counted in the child-adult ratio and have no supervisory or disciplinary responsibilities over the children. All volunteers formally registered in Children, Inc.'s Volunteer Program are under constant supervision and must abide by the policies and procedures in place at the program. All visitors to the program are also required to observe the policies and procedures of the program. Visitors may include, but are limited to, individuals from the following entities:

- The Public Library
- Northkey Community Care
- Health Points
- Northern Kentucky Health Department
- Partnership Agencies such as local school administration, officials or teachers
- Dance and music instructors
- Thomas More Nursing College
- Gateway Technical and Community College
- First Steps
- Children, Inc. Central Office staff
- Volunteers registered in Children, Inc.'s Volunteer Program
- Service Technicians and Delivery Personnel
- Vendors providing services such as "Photo Day", "Ice Cream Day" and such
- Visiting Fireman or Policemen or other Public Officials
- Family members or friends of children enrolled
- Board of Directors, United Way, USDA Auditors or other Administrative Visitors
- Families touring the facility for possible enrollment
- Others recruited by the Director to enhance programming or provide needed services

Any parent who does not want their child to participate in an activity that has been established by the director as a program enhancement or needed service, must notify the director upon enrollment of this request.

CHILD CARE EMERGENCY/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PARENT INFORMATION FORM FOR REUNIFICATION

* Please see your child care provider if you would like to review the complete emergency/disaster preparedness plan.

CHILD CARE EMERGENCY/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PARENT INFORMATION FORM FOR REUNIFICATION

Name of Provider/Program	Early Learning Center at River Ridge
Program address	2772 Amsterdam Rd, Covington, KY 41017
Emergency/ Disaster contact at the child care program	Cindy Ernst-On-site Director Rene Bricking, Director
Phone number of emergency/disaster contact	Cindy Ernst: 859-341-4408 ext 5208 Rene Bricking: 859-750-0538
Cell phone of emergency/disaster contact (Please do not call cell phone number during non-emergencies; it will not be turned on.)	Alternate contact: Phyllis Berry or Patti Craig, Central Office Children, Inc. 859-431-2075 ext 111
In the event the facility/home must be evacuated because of an emergency/disaster, the staff and children will leave the building and gather in the immediate area at	<u>Option #1</u> – River Ridge Elementary Parking lot
In the event the facility/home must be evacuated because of an emergency/disaster in the immediate area the children and staff will be transported by FOOT to	<u>Option #2</u> – River Ridge cafeteria, upper & lower Levels <u>Option #3</u> – School will bus to Villa Madonna Academy, 2500 Amsterdam Rd, Villa Hills, KY 41017 <u>Option #4</u> – School buses will Safe keep children in buses.
The address, phone number, and contact person at the relocation site is	Voice Messaging System 859-341-4408 ext 5208 Rene Bricking -859-750-0538 Phyllis Berry or Patti Craig 859-431-2075 Staff will contact families by mobile phone
The address, phone number, and contact person of the alternate relocation site (#2) if the first relocation is not accessible, is	Voice Messaging System 859-341-4408 ext 5208 Rene Bricking -859-750-0538 Phyllis Berry or Patti Craig 859-431-2075 Staff will contact families by mobile phone
If necessary, children will be transported to this health care facility	Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center 513-636-4200 or St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Edgewood or Florence
Address, phone number, and position title of contact at health care facility	Emergency Departments: Children’s Hospital, 3333 Burnet Avenue, Cinn, OH 45229 513-636-4200. St Elizabeth Florence, 4900 Houston Rd Florence, KY 859- 212-5200, or St Elizabeth, 1 Medical Village Dr, Edgewood, KY 41017, 859-301-2000

* Please see your child care provider if you would like to review the complete emergency/disaster preparedness plan.

**Early Learning Center at River Ridge Elementary
PARENT HANDBOOK POLICY AGREEMENT**

I _____, do hereby

acknowledge that I have received and read the Early Learning Center at River Ridge Elementary Parent Handbook. I understand that I am accountable for all of the information contained within this handbook and will abide by the policies set forth.

I understand that at times there are Third Party visitors to the center as outlined on page 18 of the handbook. I _____agree _____do not agree with these conditions.

I understand that permissible small pets may be present in the classroom environment. I will inform the director and/or teacher of any of my child's pet allergies.

I _____consent _____do not consent to pets in the classroom environment.

I, the undersigned, hereby _____consent _____do not consent to the reproduction, publication and other use of photographs, or cinematic imagery or voice of myself and/or my child by Children, Inc. or affiliated organizations in newspapers, TV stations, non-profit agencies or other organizations or businesses and without monetary compensation,

Print Name

Signature of parent or guardian

____/____/____
Date

Name of Child(ren) Enrolled

Witness

