

# PARENT HANDBOOK



CHILDREN'S CENTER OF WESTON

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(At Country School, Office and grades 3-5)

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CHILDREN'S CENTER OF WESTON

(At Woodland School, Grades K-2)

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## **WHO WE ARE**

### **WELCOME TO THE CHILDREN'S CENTER OF WESTON!!**

The Children's Center of Weston was founded in 1974 by a group of Weston parents who needed additional care for their children after the regular school day. Through the years the Center has provided quality after-school programs for hundreds of families in this community. The Children's Center of Weston continues today as a parent-board operated, private, non-profit after-school program for Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade.

### ***OUR PHILOSOPHY***

The goal of the Children's Center is to provide a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment in which children feel relaxed and happy. We believe they need a noncompetitive, supportive setting with choices of activities after their school day. Our professional teaching staff encourages and fosters a sense of self-esteem, responsibility, and competence in each child. Our teachers guide the children to develop important social and thinking skills thus encouraging teamwork, developing lasting friendships and playing or working together in a wonderful social setting. The Center's programs also promote cultural enrichment, diversity, and individual choice.

### ***STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION***

The Children's Center of Weston does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

### ***OUR PROGRAMS***

The Children's Center serves children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 and offers a 4:30 or a 6:00 pick-up option for all its programs. We follow the Weston Public Schools' calendar, except that we stay open on a sign-up basis during February and April vacation weeks and teacher in-service days once the school year starts (subject to adequate enrollment numbers).

Our Kindergarten Program is located in Room 16 of the Woodland School, our First and Second Grade Program is located in Room 17 of the Woodland School, and our 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grader Program is located in room 21 of the Country School. The Children's Center Main office is located in the Grade 2-3 Planning Room right upstairs across from room 21 at the top of the stairs at Country School.

Enrollment begins in March for the following September. Forms may be obtained any time after March 15 by calling or dropping by the Center. Preference is given to siblings of children currently enrolled in the Center and alumni. Additional spaces are filled according to the number of hours the child needs care, with the most full-time given preference. The staff: children ratio in each program is between 1 : 8 and 1 : 13. Please note that, although we strive in our programs to operate in group settings, there will be times when a teacher may be alone with an individual child based on staffing, student, or programmatic needs.

We encourage all prospective families to visit the Center before deciding to enroll. The director or assistant director will give a tour and an orientation to our programs. At this time the teacher or director will ask about the child's interests and needs. To support transitions and coordinate with services offered by other providers, the director and/or teacher will request that parents share with them information about other therapeutic, educational, social and support services received by the child.

Children with special needs will be considered for enrollment in the Children's Center on an individual basis, with the severity of the needs in relation to the Center's staffing and financial resources being the determining factor. We are committed to diversity and inclusion and will make reasonable accommodations to serve any child with special needs. Our full policy regarding special needs inclusion is available upon request.

### ***ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE***

The Children's Center Parent Board, a group of approximately 10 parent volunteers, hires and oversees the Program Administrator (herein called the "director.") The director is responsible for the daily operating of the Center as well as for the hiring and orientation of all staff and the supervision of coordinators (with the advice and consent of the parent board.) The

Kindergarten – Second Grade Coordinator oversees the curriculum of the Kindergarten Program and, with the director, supervises the Group Leaders in the Kindergarten Program.

The Grade 3-5 Coordinator oversees the curricula of their respective programs and, with the director, supervise the Group Leaders.

The Department of Early Education and Care (“EEC”) is the State licensing authority of the Children’s Center of Weston. They may be contacted for information regarding the Children’s Center’s regulatory compliance history. Their contact information is: 1250 Hancock St., Suite 605N, Quincy, MA 02169, (617) 472-2881.

### ***ON-SITE TRANSPORTATION PLAN***

The Weston Public Schools provide transportation to the Children’s Center at Woodland School from the Country School for Kindergartners - 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and to Country School from the Woodland School for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and to Country School from the Field School for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at the close of the regular school day. At regular dismissal 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders are walked over to the Country School by the Weston Public Schools. Wednesdays and other half days, Kindergartners are put on the appropriate bus by their schoolteacher, and the bus is met as it arrives at the Woodland School by a CCW staff member, who walk the children to their room. The Weston Public Schools are responsible for supervision of children until they arrive at Woodland School, whereupon CCW assumes responsibility.

Country School K’s (on full days) and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> are directed to bus dismissal (or other central location determined by Country School administration) Upon arrival at Woodland School, the children are accompanied by CCW staff to their respective rooms. Woodland School 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders attending CCW at Country School line up with the predetermined school bus number at dismissal for the ride to Country School. Upon arrival at the Country School, the children are accompanied by CCW staff to their room. The Children’s Center of Weston is responsible for the supervision of Country School children once they arrive at their school library, lobby or school meeting location.

Masks must be worn by all students taking transportation when mask mandates are in place.

At late dismissal (3:15) after late activities, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders will ride the late bus from Woodland School to Country School. Fourth and fifth graders will ride the late bus or be walked over from Field School to Country School. Parents will notify CCW by a written notification that children will be taking the late dismissal bus from Woodland to Country School. Parents of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will notify CCW by a written notification that children will be taking the late dismissal bus from Field to Country School. School teachers do not notify CCW.

Kindergartners who attend Woodland School are walked to their CCW room by Woodland school staff. They are the responsibility of The Weston Public Schools until they are met in the hallway at the CCW meeting location. Our Woodland 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders are met in the hallway by CCW staff and accompanied to their room. They are the responsibility of the Weston Public Schools until CCW staff have connected with them either outside the school classroom or in the school hallway. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> graders who attend Country School are met in the hallway by CCW staff and accompanied to their room. They are the responsibility of the Weston Public Schools until CCW staff have made a connection with them either outside the school classroom or in the school hallway.

Children in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade are walked over to the Country School at dismissal. At arrival to the Country School, children will be met by CCW teachers and accompanied to their CCW classroom in Country School. At late dismissal (3:15) after late activities, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will ride the late bus from Field School to Country School. Parents will notify CCW by a written notification that children will be taking the late dismissal bus from Field to Country School. School teachers do not notify CCW.

Parents are responsible for picking up their children at the close of their Children's Center day. We are not permitted to release a child to a sibling under the age of 16 or any person who is not pre-authorized in writing by the parent. Please be sure to sign out, using your full signature in our attendance books and make contact with a teacher so we are aware you are taking your child. Please note that only adults or designated pick up adult may sign out in the attendance book for safety reasons. Once the child has been signed out, the pick-up person assumes responsibility for the child.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

### ***KINDERGARTNERS' PROGRAM:***

#### ***September and Wednesdays Schedule***

Following attendance and check in time, we eat lunch together (parents supply lunch). The children are then free to play until it is time to go outdoors or to the gymnasium. After clean-up and a nutritious snack, we go outside (weather permitting) or to the gym at or around 3:15 p.m.

### ***KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM***

Following a snack and brief meeting, our Kindergartners go outside or to the gym. Special activities, such as chess, cooking, and arts and crafts, are also a part of our Kindergartners' afternoon. We have a second snack about 4:10, and then we wind down the day with board and card games, reading, and drawing.

### ***SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM***

Our programs for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>rd</sup> Graders and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders are designed to meet the needs of older school-aged children. Included in their afternoon is plenty of time outdoors or in the gym, a supervised homework time (3<sup>rd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grade), and time for activities of their choosing. We encourage the creative exploration of many arts and crafts materials, and we often make our own snacks when the time becomes available. Special interest clubs such as art, theme related activities, jewelry-making, and chess are also part of our School-Agers' afternoon.

### ***SPECIAL CLASSES AT CCW/ COMMUNITY***

#### ***CENTER CLASSES/OFF SITE ACTIVITIES***

The Children's Center offers many special classes taught by outside instructors. Offerings in the past have included karate, drama, yoga, chess, nature/science, and art. Forms will go home and you will have the



opportunity to sign up your children for their favorite classes. These classes take place during the afternoon and carry an additional fee, which is set by the instructor.

During the Fall and Spring, the Children's Center staff encourages CCW families to form carpools to accompany Kindergartners through 3<sup>rd</sup> graders to and/or from off-site activities such as soccer or Community Center classes. An adult caregiver (not CCW teacher) must accompany children in grades K-3 to the soccer fields and /or Community Center Activities. Based on the need for an adult caregiver onsite and on our child to teacher ratios and other complexities and liabilities, CCW staff are not able to accompany children in grades K-3 to these activities. Our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders (any child 9 and over) are permitted to walk to and from off-site organized activities with written parental permission. Prior to release of your child from the center, parent and child must sign a permission form. Please see the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade site coordinator for this form. For safety and liability reasons, we cannot release any child to the Town Library or any other "open-ended" destination.



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

The following policies have been developed by the Parent Board, director, and staff with regard to the safety, well-being, and enjoyment of all the children enrolled in the Center and in accordance and compliance with the regulations of the Department of Early Education and Care. The complete licensure standards are available online at [www.mass.gov/eec](http://www.mass.gov/eec) or in our office.

### ***SAFETY***

1. **Absences:** If your child is going to be absent on his/her regular day for any reason or will not be arriving at the usual time, it is imperative that you call the Center (Woodland K (Room 16) is 781-647-0380; (Woodland first and second grade (Rm. 17) is 781-893-1776; Country third through fifth grade (Rm. 21) and the office is 781-891-8029) and leave a message. An answering

machine is on when we are closed for this purpose. Please leave all details including the reason for the absence. E-mails often are not received in time for this purpose, so we ask that you call first and then e-mail us only with messages that are not time-sensitive.

If your child does not arrive at the Center as expected and no message has been left, the director or site coordinator will make as many calls as necessary to locate your child. If the parent has forgotten to call in, **a \$10 reminder fee will be assessed.** (All fees collected are put back into our programs to help defray the cost of special events.) **Please note that the public schools do not inform us if your child is absent or departs early.** Also, please do not ask your child's friend or sibling to inform us of his whereabouts, as this often is not a reliable source!

2. Sign-out: Each program has a sign-out book or method. When you pick up your child, please remember to sign your full name and the time of pick-up in the attendance book. An adult signature is required.

3. Pick-up: Once you have arrived and have made contact with your child, we will assume that you are then the adult responsible for your child unless you explicitly tell us otherwise. If your child will be leaving with someone not authorized to pick up on his/her enrollment forms, we must have written, signed authorization from the parent. Our staff checks identification of anyone with whom we are not familiar.

4. Supervised Use of Offsite Facilities: The Children's Center from time to time enjoys the use of off-site facilities such as Land's Sake Farm, Field School Playground, and the Town library. Also, we visit back and forth between our Country and Woodland sites on occasion when able. A general consent form (signed during the enrollment period) authorizes your child's participation in brief walking trips from the Center. If you do not want your child to participate in a particular trip, please leave a message or speak with one of the staff.

When more than 10 children are taken off the premises, they will be accompanied by a group leader who is certified in first aid and CPR and a second staff person or designated adult. When 10 or fewer children are taken

off the premises, the accompanying group leader will be certified in first aid and CPR and have an additional group leader with the group.

5. Field Trip Transportation: On field trips from the Children's Center, all children and drivers will be secure and seated. CCW uses Weston Public Schools Transportation services for all major trips. The director or designee will be responsible for bringing the following on all off-site trips: first aid kit, the Center's health policy, emergency information for all children, cell phone, and children's medications and consents.

On each trip off-site, a designated CCW staff member will be responsible for taking attendance and a head count at the following times: at the beginning of the trip, upon boarding the bus; upon arrival at the trip destination to make certain everyone has exited the bus; before re-boarding to make the return trip; and after everyone has exited the bus upon return. In addition, the designated staff member will physically walk through the bus to make sure that no children or belongings remain before the bus departs.

6. Procedures for Meeting Potential Emergencies:

a. The director or designee will call either the Weston Police or Weston Fire Department to determine whether to evacuate or shelter in place in the event of a natural disaster (if the School Principal or Superintendent of the Weston Public Schools has not already communicated this information.)

b. If so instructed, both the Woodland School Rooms 16 and 17, and the Country School Room 21 will follow their designated evacuation plans. They will meet at their designated meeting places.

c. In the event that either of these designated meeting places is deemed unsafe, the Woodland School CCW will evacuate to the Country School, or the Country School CCW will evacuate to the Woodland School, or such place as the authorities deem safe at that time.

d. The director or designee will call the Weston Police and/or Fire Department and advise them of CCW's evacuation of the facility. CCW programs have land lines and cell phones available.

e. The site coordinator in each classroom will be responsible for bringing the emergency backpack with each child's emergency information, medications and consents, and the day's attendance sheets. The director

and/or designee will be responsible for calling children's emergency numbers to alert parents of the evacuation and the location of their child.

f. The site coordinator in each classroom will check bathrooms and any other spaces where children might be to assure that no child is left in the facility.

g. A designated staff member will always be the last one out of the facility.

7. On-Site Missing Child Policy:

a. Attendance will be taken. If a child is not in attendance and there is no evidence of his having been picked up, all groups will be gathered together.

b. After groups are together, attendance will be retaken. All staff will be asked when they last saw the child.

c. Some staff will be designated to stay with the assembled children and some staff will be designated to recheck the facility.

d. The School office personnel will be asked to initiate a Page-All.

e. If the child is not found with 5 minutes, the parents will be called and asked if they have picked up the child.

f. If the parents cannot be reached or it is determined they did not pick up the child, 911 will be called.

8. Off-Site Missing Child Policy: Steps a., b. and c. will be followed as above. Then a call will be made to advise the child's CCW site coordinator and/or the director that the child is missing. Then steps e. and f. will be followed.

9. Updating Emergency Information: Please remember to inform the director and teachers if any emergency names or numbers on your child's enrollment form changes during the school year.

10. Communicating Safety/Health Concerns: If a parent has any concerns regarding safety or health, the parent should follow the communications guidelines in the Raising Concerns policy in the Communications section below.

## ***HEALTH***

1. Emergency Procedures: In case of an emergency, you will be contacted immediately after the child has been made comfortable. A staff member will stay with the child at all times. If we cannot reach either parent, the child's pediatrician will be contacted, and then the emergency numbers you have supplied on your child's enrollment form will be called. Attempts to contact emergency numbers will continue to be made until someone is reached.

In case of extreme emergency requiring immediate medical attention, the Weston Fire Department Rescue Vehicle will be called. We will then contact the parents and/or pediatrician.

### 2. Medication:

a. All medication administered to a child, including but not limited to oral and topical medications of any kind, either prescription or non-prescription, must be provided by the child's parent, with the exception of topical, non-prescription ointment applied to skin that is not broken (e.g., Aquaphor applied to chapped skin), which CCW may provide.

b. All prescription medications must be in containers in which they were originally dispensed and with their original labels affixed and within expiration dates. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's packaging and within expiration dates.

c. The Children's Center cannot administer any medication contrary to the directions on the original container, unless so authorized in writing by the child's licensed health care practitioner. Any medications without clear instructions on the container must be administered in accordance with a physician's or pharmacist's written descriptive order.

d. The Children's Center will not administer the first dose of any medication to a child, except under extraordinary circumstances and with parental consent.

e. The Children's Center of Weston's complete Health Care Policy in which all staff are trained, including full medication administration and individual health care plan procedures, will be distributed under separate cover to all CCW families.

3. Illness While at the Center: We follow exclusion policies for serious illnesses, contagious diseases, and reportable diseases in conformance with regulations and recommendation set by the Division of Communicable Disease Control, Department of Public Health. We will notify parents in accordance with Dept. of Public Health recommendations when any communicable disease or condition has been introduced into the program. Masks will be worn indoors while mask mandates are in place. Insect repellent and sunscreen shall be provided by the parents and reminders will be given to children to apply sunscreen and insect repellent. Please supply the bug spray and/or insect repellent with a note to your child's CCW teacher. It is strongly recommended to apply sunscreen and bug spray in the morning prior to school as a first application for any time spent outdoors.

Should your child become ill while at the Center, you will be notified immediately. Minor mishaps not resulting in injury will be treated and discussed with you at pick-up time.

**Fever:** Our health care policy states that a parent will be notified if their child is presenting with a fever of 100 degrees or more. A child should be fever free for 72 hours, without fever reducing medications, before returning to school after an illness. If your child did not attend school due to illness during the day, your child will not be able to attend the center on the afternoon of the same day. Please refer to the Health Care Policy and other health policies in place for additional information.

4. Allergies: Please be sure to keep us up-to-date concerning your child's allergies, any suspected allergens, and medical conditions. With required consents, children nine years of age and older will be permitted to carry and use inhalers on their own as needed. However, a back up supply must be sent into the center.

The Center's complete Health Policy, which includes procedures for identifying and keeping children safe from food and environmental allergens, is available in the office upon request.

## ***FOOD POLICIES***

1. Snacks: The Children's Center provides two snacks each afternoon, served at approximately 2:30 and 4:10. These usually include fresh fruit, whole grain

crackers, and/or vegetables. We also cook our own delicious snacks when able. The Children's Center's snack menus are reviewed by a nutritionist who has training in the USDA nutritional requirements of children. Snack menus for the week are posted in the classroom and then kept on file in the office.

Since we do so much cooking and good food is expensive, a bi-annual snack fee per child is assessed once in September and again in January to partially offset snack costs.

2. Lunch: Kindergartners and all children on "Early Release Days" will sometimes eat lunch at the Center.

Parent should supply a well-balanced meal, which typically might include a small sandwich, yogurt, thermos of milk, and a fruit or vegetable. Foods with little or no nutritional value (i.e., soda, candy, excessively sugared desserts) are not recommended for lunch. CCW classrooms are peanut and tree nut aware and we provide peanut and tree nut free snacks.

3. Allergies/Food Restrictions: Please notify us of any known or suspected allergies to food. We will accommodate the food needs, whether due to allergies or other reason, of any child in our program. If you prefer to provide snacks from home for your child, this also can be accommodated, and you will not be asked to pay the "snack fee."

4. Birthday Celebrations: Due to sheer numbers of children, we do not always celebrate individual birthdays at the Center. In some CCW classrooms we celebrate monthly. If, however, you would like to bring in a snack for all the children in the group to enjoy, when able, arrangements can be made with the program Site-Coordinator.

## ***CLOTHING***

Each child at the Center, especially Kindergartners, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders, but even 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders should have a full change of clothes. Every item should be clearly marked with your child's name. Please give these to your child's teacher. We do spend time outdoors even in cold weather, and a change of clothes after playing in the snow or falling on wet grass makes a big difference in your child's comfort!

## ***TEETHBRUSHING***

Our licensing agency requires that we make available toothbrushes to all children who are in our care for 8 or more hours. We have one-use, disposable toothbrushes and toothpaste available on sign-up days longer than 8 hours if your child wishes to brush their teeth on these days.

## ***BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND CHILD GUIDANCE***

Children's Center teachers encourage self-control and use positive child guidance techniques such as recognizing and reinforcing children's appropriate behaviors, having reasonable and positive expectations, setting clear and consistent limits, and redirecting. They help children learn social, communication, and emotional regulation skills they can use in place of challenging behaviors. The Children's Center believes in using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to encourage appropriate behavior and prevent challenging behavior.

If children are physically aggressive with one another, the teachers will intervene quickly and help them develop more positive strategies for resolving conflict. We will explain the rules and procedures and the reasons for them to children, and where appropriate and feasible, we will have the children participate in establishing rules, policies, and procedures. The Center staff will discuss behavior management techniques to promote consistency.

All CCW teachers will have a method of communicating effectively with each child in their care.

The following practices are strictly prohibited:

Spanking or other corporal punishment; subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment including any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body; shaking, threats, or derogatory remarks; depriving children of outdoor time, meals, or snacks; force feeding children or otherwise making them eat against their will, or in any way using food as a consequence; disciplining a child for soiling wetting, or not using the toilet, forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual



or excessive practices for toileting; confining a child to any piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision; or excessive time-out. Time-out will not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and will take place within the teacher's view.

### ***POLICY GUIDE FOR AVOIDING SUSPENSIONS AND TERMINATIONS***

1. As part of professional development and ongoing training, topics in behavior management, helping children with emotional difficulties, supporting self-esteem, etc. will be discussed in staff meetings. Specialists in this area will be sought out and brought in to observe and make recommendations as needed. Educators will be encouraged to take workshops and attend professional conferences to develop their child guidance skills.
2. At the beginning of the school year, the teachers and children together will establish a set of reasonable behavior standards to be adhered to by everyone while at the Center. These will be guidelines, which ensure the rights of all, while protecting the group and individuals within it. These guidelines will be posted and the children frequently reminded of them.
3. If a child is having difficulty staying within these guidelines, the teacher will speak with him or her and give the child an opportunity to express his or her feelings.
4. If the child continues to have difficulty, the teacher will alert both the site coordinator and the director so that a staff meeting can address the problem.
5. If requested by the teacher or otherwise deemed appropriate, the director will observe the child for at least two, one hour long periods. These observations will be documented.
6. If the director believes the behavior problem to be significant and impacting the well-being of the child or the group, she will make an appointment with the parent(s) to discuss her findings. At this time a referral

for additional services may be made and/or a behavior plan to be followed may be instituted.

7. If the director believes that a behavioral incident is of an extreme nature so that it imperils the physical or emotional well-being of the child or any other child at the Center, the parent may be asked to pick up the child immediately. At this time, a suspension of not more than 3 days' duration may be implemented. This behavior may include, but is not limited to: hitting, biting, uncontrollable outbursts of abusive or inappropriate language; running away from the group; deliberate and persistent teasing or bullying of another child; or refusal to comply with the reasonable request of the teacher so that the child or other children are endangered.

8. Following such a suspension, the director will meet with the parent(s) to discuss possible referral for services and to transition the child back into the program.

9. After the suspension period, whether or not the child is receiving outside services, a two-week probationary period will be in effect. The director will again observe the child for at least two separate, hour-long periods. If, within this two-week period, the behavior does not show improvement as documented by the director, the child will be terminated from the program. Notice of termination will be given to the parents in writing, with documented reasons, by the director.

10. At the parents' request, the director will refer the child for additional services and/or to other after-school programs.

11. If a child is terminated, either by the parents or the Children's Center, the teachers will prepare the child in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand.

12. Parents may appeal a termination to the Children's Center Parent Board, whose decision will be final. Please contact the Parent Board President regarding an appeal, describing the reason for the appeal.

## ***SUSPENSIONS AND TERMINATIONS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF TUITION OR HABITUAL LATE PICK-UP***

Tuition paid by parent is the Children's Center's sole revenue source. Therefore, it is extremely important to the viability of the Center for all payments to be made on time. If for any reason this is not possible, advance arrangements must be made with the director.

Written notice of an overdue payment will be sent home 10 days after the due date. At that time, a \$10.00 late charge will be assessed. If payment is not made in full, including the late charge, within 30 days of the due date, the child(ren) may be suspended from the program on the 30<sup>th</sup> day until such time as the payment is made in full. If after 45 days the account is not current, the child will be terminated and the slot filled from the wait list.

If extenuating circumstances exist of which the Parent Board should be aware, a written appeal of this policy may be made to the Board officers with 15 days of the payment due date. Such an appeal must contain an explanation as well as a proposed schedule for bringing the account up-to-date. The Board officers will respond within 10 days of the receipt of the appeal.

A child also may be suspended or terminated from the Children's Center of Weston if the parent is unable to pick up by 6:00 consistently and no alternate arrangements are made. Although we understand a rare, unavoidable late pick-up, habitual lateness will not be tolerated.

In the above cases of termination, the teachers will prepare the child in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand. Parents may appeal a termination to the Center's Parent Board, whose decision will be final, by contacting the Parent Board President.

## ***OTHER TERMINATIONS***

An enrollment between a family and the Center may be terminated by the Children's Center of Weston at any time due to a breach of any policy in the Parent Handbook or in the enrollment and financial agreement, for any reason that the director and the Parent Board, in their sole discretion, determine to be a threat to the health, safety or welfare of any child, parent or staff member, or as a result of conduct by the child or any of the child's family members, which the director and the Parent Board, in their sole discretion,

determine to be against the best interests of a child, the Children's Center of Weston, or the Children's Center of Weston's community (subject to the appeal procedure detailed in the Parent Handbook). In such a case, tuition that has already been paid by the family for remaining days in the applicable year will be refunded.

### ***STAFF TRAINING/MANDATED REPORTING***

The Children's Center policies and procedures are intended to comply with all applicable law and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and EEC, including those regarding training, background checks, and reporting.

The director is responsible for training all new staff in their duties before they are given direct supervision of staff or care of children. This orientation will include all relevant policies and procedures, and a working knowledge of the EEC regulations. Every candidate for employment with the Children's Center (both paid and volunteer) and all outside instructors of special activity classes are screened through the Massachusetts CORI, SORI, Department of Children and Families ("DCF"), and fingerprint system.

Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in regular staff meetings and at workshops and conferences. All staff will be certified in First Aid within 6 months of their employment, and at least one staff member certified in CPR will be on-site at all times.

All staff members are State-mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect. If a staff member is alleged to have been abusive or negligent, he or she will not work directly with children until the DCF investigation is completed and for such time as the EEC requires. The complete policies for staff training and on abuse and neglect are available in the office.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### ***DAILY PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION***

In order to give your child the best care we can, it is very important that the channels of communication between home and the Center be open. If anything has happened that might be upsetting to your child (new baby,

illness, parent traveling, or just one of those days), please be sure to inform us so that we can handle situations that may arise with greater understanding. For our part, we will try to fill you in on anything noteworthy that we see happening at the Center. Please take a moment at pick-up time to check in with the teacher and ask about your child's day.

If any question arises concerning the handling of a situation, the parent should speak directly with the individual teacher who has the most information. If the situation is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent is asked to contact the director. In the event that further investigation is desired by the parent, staff, and/or director, the president of the parent board will be contacted. The parent board president may then convene the parent board or a subcommittee to address any unresolved matters. All communications should be on an individual basis. Parents may not use the Family Directory for group or mass communications as described in the Family Directory policy below.

Each child has a file mail folder for parent notices going home, so please make it a habit to check this each day. We will also send notices home by email.

### ***CONFERENCES/PROGRESS REPORTS***

Our licensing agency requires us to prepare a written progress report of each child in our care. This is a collaborative effort by all the CCW teachers who work with your child. In February and/or March we will post a sign-up sheet with conference times for parents who wish to discuss their child's progress report or any other issues with us. Of course, we encourage you to speak with your child's teachers as soon as any concern arises, and we would be happy to find a mutually convenient time to meet.

### ***PARENT VISITS***

Parents are welcome schedule an outdoor visit at the Center at any time that their child is present.

## ***DONATIONS***

The Children's Center is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization and contributions of any kind are tax deductible. The director will be happy to supply you with a letter acknowledging your donation for your records.

## ***PARENT BOARD***

Parents are encouraged to consider serving on the Center's volunteer parent board. Please submit a letter of interest expressing your support to the program and interest reasons to join the Parent Board. The Board of Directors and Director will review your interest letter and invite you to the first board meeting in October/November. The board meets approximately 5 times per school year with the director and coordinators, who are nonvoting members. The board makes all policy decisions regarding enrollment and tuition and sets the broad goals for the Center. The director is appointed and evaluated by the board and is responsible for implementing its policies.

## ***RAISING CONCERNS***

Parents with a concern regarding the classroom or the center's programming, should contact the relevant Site Coordinator or the Director for Center Programming. If you have a concern that you wish to bring to the Parent Board, you should contact the Parent Board President. Mass mailing, email, and social media posting are not appropriate channels to raise any concerns and are strongly discouraged.

## ***FAMILY DIRECTORY***

The Children's Center publishes a Family Directory. The Family Directory is not to be used to raise concerns. The Family Directory may not be used at any time for group mailings, mass communications, general information requests or distributions, solicitations, advertisements, or personal business reasons. All communications should be on an individual basis for matters related to a specific child or a specific family.

## **OTHER POLICIES**

### ***FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE***

The Children's Center of Weston makes funds available for assistance in the form of partial tuition waivers for qualifying families when in a financial position to do so. Please contact the director for the financial assistance policy and application.

### ***RETURNED CHECKS***

Any check returned due to insufficient funds will be assessed a \$25.00 handling fee by CCW. If two checks are returned within the school year, all subsequent payments will be required to be made by certified bank check or money order.

### ***LATE 4:30 PICK-UP***

If your child is signed up only until 4:30, he or she should be picked up no later than 4:30. Parents should plan to arrive prior to 4:30 to allow for a smooth transition. If you will be late picking up, please call ahead to us so that we can inform your child and also be sure that we maintain appropriate staffing ratios. If you pick up before 5:00, you will be charged \$10.00 for the additional time. If you pick up after 5:00, you will be charged \$20.00 for the additional time. If you have children in two rooms, the fee will be doubled because of the impact on two separate staffs. If you are late picking up late three times during the quarter (10 week period), you will be requested to change your pick-up time to 6:00.

This policy is designed to allow us to effectively maintain our staff to student ratios, avoid last-minute staff schedule changes, and preserve quality of service to those families who are signed up until 6:00. All fees collected are put back into our programs to help defray the cost of special events.

### ***LATE 6:00 PICK-UP***

Please call ahead and let us know if you will be late so that we can prepare your child and make staffing arrangements. No matter the reason, if

you arrive later than 6:00, you will be assessed a \$2.00 per minute late fee, beginning at 6:01. This should be paid directly to the teacher who has remained with your child (at 6:00 our teachers are no longer being paid by CCW). If you cannot pay at the time you pick up, please plan to bring it the next day your child attends the Center. If you have children in two rooms, the fee will be doubled because both staff members will need to be paid for the extra time.

If you find that you are having difficulty picking up by 6:00, alternative arrangements must be made. Chronic lateness may necessitate your being asked to withdraw your child from the Center.

For everyone's sake, we urge you to plan to arrive at the Center no later than 5:45. Your child will then have time to make a smooth and happy transition, and the teachers will have an opportunity to speak with you about your child's afternoon.

## **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

The Children's Center of Weston encourages families to set their schedule of enrollment days to the best of their ability at the time. Typically, a four- and five-day enrollment is required, with exception to specific communications. The Children's Center of Weston allows for a schedule change during the school year, if the change can be accommodated based on numbers and staffing. This is also due to attendance records and keeping track of any changed days. Families will be asked to complete a schedule change form to be submitted and reviewed for acceptance.

## **SPECIAL DAYS**

### ***HOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS***

The Children's Center follows the Weston Public Schools' calendar and is closed for all legal holidays, as well as Thanksgiving and December vacation.

February and April vacations are sign-up weeks at the Center. We will be open Tuesday through Friday (unless a holiday falls on one of these days and the school building is closed) from 8:00 – 6:00, provided enough children need



care to cover staffing costs. These weeks are not prepaid by parent and therefore carry an additional charge.

### ***TEACHER IN-SERVICE/NO K DAYS***

The Center will open at 8:00 on Teacher In-Service and No Kindergarten Days to provide additional care for children who enrolled those days of the week. Advance sign-up is required, and an additional fee will be charged for the extra hours spent at the Center.

### ***EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS***

The Children's Center will open early on "early dismissal" days for children who are normally enrolled those days. Because these days occur about one Wednesday per month, we charge an additional \$25.00 per month during the school year for children in Grades 1 – 5 who attend the Center Wednesdays and \$89.00 per month for Kindergartners (which includes the first Wednesday early dismissal days and their regular early Wednesdays). The Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and the last day of school we will open at 11:00 and close at 2:30. If offered, you may choose to sign up your child until 2:30 on these two days for an extra fee.

### ***SNOW/EMERGENCY CLOSING DAYS***

If there is no school in the Weston Public Schools due to severe weather or other emergency, the Children's Center also will be canceled. These days are made up at the end of the school year. If the schools have a delayed (normally 10:00) opening, the Center will open at the usual dismissal time (If a Wednesday, you may bring your Kindergartner at 12:15 p.m.)

If school is released early due to inclement conditions or other emergency, the Center will be closed. If the Public Schools are in session for a full day and they cancel after school activities due to an afternoon storm, the Center also will be canceled. In this event, we will call and email you as soon as we are alerted by the Weston Schools.

Please be sure to keep all your emergency notification information up-to-date so that you can be reached quickly in case of the above events.





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