

## **Parent Handbook**

### **Philosophy**

The philosophy of Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North is to encourage and support each child's growth to his or her full potential in all areas of development, thus enhancing a positive self-concept and a strong foundation for succeeding in life. Each child is a unique individual and should be treated as such. It is our responsibility to care for the whole child and recognize the special characteristics that each child possesses. Their interests and goals shall be observed and activities shall be created to enhance their abilities.

It is also our philosophy of Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North to create a loving environment for each child. We realize that the first years are the most critical years to help develop a child's self-esteem and security. *Our primary mission is to provide a rich, warm, and supportive environment in which the child may develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.*

### **Contact Information**

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North is located at 405 E. Apple Lane, Athens, IL 62613. The phone number to the facility is 217-636-7950. Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North is owned and operated by Jessica Shull.

### **Hours of Operation**

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North is open Monday through Friday, 7:00am through 5:00pm. The following holidays will be observed each year:

1. New Year's Day
2. President's Day
3. Memorial Day
4. Fourth of July
5. Labor Day
6. Thanksgiving and the following Friday
7. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

If one of the above holidays falls on a Saturday, Pleasant Run North will be closed the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, Pleasant Run North will be closed the following Monday. If Christmas Eve and Christmas Day fall on a Friday and Saturday, we will be closed Thursday and Friday. If Christmas Eve and Christmas Day fall on a Sunday and Monday, we will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

## Enrollment Procedures

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North accepts children ages six weeks to six years of age, regardless of a child or family's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability. The center will serve children with disabilities provided that the care required for that particular child does not compromise the quality of care for other children enrolled at the center.

Enrollment forms need to be completed and returned to the center director before child care services can begin. In addition to the enrollment forms, we are also required to obtain a certified copy of your child's birth certificate within 30 days of enrollment (Per DCFS, hospital birth certificates are not accepted).

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North also reserves the right to terminate child care services at any time with or without cause.

## Finances

A non-refundable registration fee of \$40 will be assessed upon the enrollment of your child to our child development center.

Payments are due by 5:00pm of each Tuesday or the first day of the week your child attends. There will be a \$15 fee for late payments and a \$25 fee for returned checks. If an account goes unpaid for two weeks, that following Monday the parent will be asked to pay for that week's care and all subsequent weeks of care in cash or certified check until the account is current. If payment is not made, the child(ren) can be expelled.

There is also a \$25 charge for parents arriving after the 5:00pm closing. At 5:15pm, parents will be billed another \$25 for every additional 15 minutes their child is in the center.

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North does provide a discount to parents with more than one child at the center. We offer a \$15 discount per week for the second child and all subsequent children enrolled at the same time for the full time children.

Parents will be responsible for payments regardless of their child's attendance, closing of Pleasant Run North due to holidays, inclement weather, or electrical breakdown. Part-time students cannot exchange days when their regular schedule includes a holiday.

Contracts can be broken or changed with two weeks written notice from parent. Contracts are renewed annually.

Families who participate in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) are required to pay their tuition by the end of each month. Any balance due after the last day of the month will be subject to a late payment fee of \$15. If payment is not received at the end of the month, the child(ren) will not be allowed to attend until the account is paid in full and current. The families will also be required to sign a fee agreement, agreeing to be personally responsible for any payment of tuition and any fees not covered by Community Connection Point, in the event they become ineligible to receive child care subsidies. ***In the event that CCP does not pay their full monthly amount, parents will be responsible for paying the difference, in addition to their monthly copayment.***

CCP clients who withdraw their child before the end of the month are responsible for paying the entire monthly copayment.

- **Full-Time Rates:** Children enrolled five days per week are considered full-time (as of 1/1/21)
  - Infants (6 weeks-15 months): \$225.00
  - Toddlers (15 months-2 years): \$215.00
  - Two's (2 years): \$210.00
  - Three's (3 years): \$205.00
  - Four's/Five's (4 and 5 years): \$200.00
- **Part-Time Rates:** Children enrolled less than five days per week will be considered part-time. The child's schedule must be the same each week. Part-time students cannot exchange days when their regular schedule includes a holiday or cancellation day.
  - All Ages: \$46.00/day

Tuition rates are subject to change at any given time. A written notice will be given.

### **Vacation**

Once your child has attended Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North for six months, your child is eligible for one week of vacation per year. There will be no charge for the week that your child is on vacation. Vacation days must be used in five consecutive days and must be used within the year or they will be forfeited. The child may not be in attendance during the week. Please notify the director two weeks before your vacation.

### **Insurance**

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North carries general liability insurance for secondary purposes.

### **Snow Days**

Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North will close due to inclement weather. If Athens School District closes due to severe weather, such as ice, snow, treacherous road conditions, etc., Pleasant Run North will also close **OR** may remain open at the Owner's discretion. Our closing can be found on WICS News Channel 20, Facebook, and the Class Dojo. Pleasant Run North will **NOT** close, however, if Athens School District closes due to severe wind chill and they cannot run their buses. Please call ahead to verify that the center is open before you leave home on bad weather days (heavy snow storms for example).

### **Arrival/Departure**

To help ensure your child's safety, our center features a Secure Access System located at the front entrance. The front door shall have a key pad entrance that the parents must enter a code in order to enter the building. To help us maintain the highest level of security, please keep the code confidential.

Upon arrival at the center, the parent or guardian is required to sign-in his or her child(ren) using the computer system at the front door. Parents and/or guardians must accompany their child into their classroom. Per DCFS licensing, children may not bring food (breakfast or snack) to the center.

Upon departure, the parent or guardian is required to sign-out his or her child(ren) using the computer system at the front door. Only authorized persons are allowed to pick up the child from the center. Parents are required to come into the building and pick up their child(ren). Per DCFS, parents may not take children outside of the playground fence. The child(ren) will only be released to a parent or authorized person who is listed on the child pick-up portion of the enrollment form.

Because we are so concerned about the safety of the children, Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North requires that parents must notify the office if someone other than the parent is going to be picking up or delivering the child. A parent may also fill out a daily authorized pick up form if they know someone else will be picking up for the day. The forms will be located at the front desk. The person will then be asked to show their identification once they arrive to pick up the child.

### **Late Pick-Up**

As stated before, if a child is not picked up by 5:00pm, there will be \$25 fee applied to the parents account. If the child is not picked up by 5:15pm, another \$25 will be applied. This procedure will continue in 15 minute increments.

In addition, if a child is not picked up by 5:00pm, we will contact the parents by phone. If we cannot contact the parents, then the emergency contacts will be contacted. If the parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached by 5:30pm, then the local authorities plus DCFS shall be contacted.

### **Mandated Reporting**

Under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees at Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North are considered mandated reporters under this law. The employees at Pleasant Run North are NOT required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are the required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We, at Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North, take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the employees of Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Cause for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without an appropriate child restraint (i.e. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time

- Failure to attend to the special needs of a child with disabilities
- Sending a sick child to school by over medicating to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

## Health

Another main goal of Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North is to keep the children as healthy as possible. In order to do this, DCFS requires that each child have a physical within six months prior to admission. This medical evaluation is valid for two years, but immunizations must be kept up to date.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center of the absence, as well as the nature of the illness. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses that may occur at our center. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Only the communicable disease information will be shared. Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality.

Children with diarrhea and those with a rash combined with a fever (oral temperature of 100 degrees F or higher OR under the arm temperature of 99 degrees F or higher) shall not be admitted to the daycare center while those symptoms persist and shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in care (DCFS).

When a child shows symptoms of being ill, such as, but not limited to, vomiting, chronic diarrhea, skin rash, and/or fever of 100 degrees or higher, the parents shall be called to take the child home. If a child is sent home, he or she may not return until they are symptom free for 24 hours or unless they have been seen by a physician and have a doctor's note release stating that he or she is no longer contagious. Any child that returns before the 24 hour time frame will be sent home.

Per DCFS, the following symptoms which exclude the child from daycare or will lead to a child being sent home are:

- A child with a fever of 100 degrees F or higher may be sent home at any time upon Director or Assistant Director's discretion
- A child with diarrhea and/or rash combined with a fever of 100 degrees F or higher- child may not return until free of all symptoms for 24 hours
- Illness which prevents the child from comfortably participating in program activities
- Illness which calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours- child may not return until 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting
- Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's doctor states that the child is non-infectious

- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease- child may not return until the doctor's states that the child is non-infectious
- Purulent Conjunctivitis (pink eye), cannot return until 24 hours after treatment was started
- Strep Throat- child cannot return until 24 hours after treatment was started
- Impetigo- child cannot return until 24 hours after treatment was started
- Head Lice and/or Scabies- child cannot return until the child is completely free of live lice, eggs, and/or nits
- Chicken Pox- child cannot return at least 6 days after the onset of the rash (need to be scabbed)
- Whooping Cough- child cannot return until 5 days of antibiotics received
- Mumps- child cannot return until 9 days after on set on parotid gland swelling
- Measles- child cannot return until 4 days after the disappearance of the rash
- Covid-child cannot return until 10 days after start of symptoms for infants/toddlers, 5 days after start of symptoms, masked for remaining 5 days for twos and up. \*Covid policies are subject to change\*

Other symptoms not mentioned may require your child to be sent home. In addition, any time an illness prevents a child from participating comfortably in activities or requires more care than the teacher can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children, the ill child will be sent home. The parent will be notified by phone and will be asked to pick their child up from the center and will need to do so within 1 hour of being notified.

### **Safety**

If a child is involved in an incident or accident during the course of the day, a staff member will complete and fill out an accident report. The report will be kept in the child's classroom. The director will call the parent or guardian and notify them of the incident or accident. Parents or authorized person are required to sign the accident report from that day at pick-up. A copy of the report will be given to the parents and a copy will be kept in the child's file at the center. The teacher will also discuss the matter with the child's parents during pick-up.

If the injury is life threatening, 911 will be called immediately. If first aid is necessary, proper procedures to treat the injury shall begin. In the event of any injury requiring medical attention, the parents will be notified according to the telephone numbers provided for this purpose. If the parent is unable to be reached, the emergency contact on the enrollment form shall be contacted. Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North will not be liable for any costs incurred for emergency care.

### **Medications**

In order to insure the safety of the children, the following steps must be taken in order for the staff to administer medicine to your child:

1. Tell the caregiver that your child has medicine to take on that day.
2. Fill out the medicine slip with the name of the child, name of the medicine, amount, time needed to be given, parent signature, and date.
3. Inform the teacher if the medicine needs to be refrigerated.

4. Please make sure that all non-prescription medicines are brought to the center in the manufacturer's packaging and labeled with the child's name. Dosage must coincide with the manufacturer's recommended dosage or documentation from the physician. If the manufacturer states that the physician must be consulted for the age of your child, the center must have documentation on file regarding the dosage to be given from the child's physician. Also, we can only administer prescription medicine according to the label and it must be prescribed to that child. He or she cannot share medicines with siblings.

All medications will be properly stored in a locked container. If the medication requires refrigeration, please let the teacher know. Please deliver medication to your child's teacher. Do **NOT** leave it in your child's cubby.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are occasionally scheduled with the older preschool children in our center. Parents will need to sign a permission slip for their child to participate. Field trip notices will be posted in advance. However, transportation will not be provided by our center.

### **Clothing**

Please make sure that your child has an extra set of clothing in their cubby at all times that is season-appropriate and clearly labeled. Also, please remember that the children are here to play and should wear "play clothes."

Sandals may be worn with socks only! This is done to prevent any injury that might occur.

### **Toys**

Although we realize how much children like to bring toys from home, we strongly discourage bringing anything except for "Show-N-Tell" days. Pleasant Run North cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys. Guns, swords, or any violent toys or play are **NEVER** allowed.

### **Nutrition and Meal Service**

DCFS requires that all food served to the children (snacks and meals) shall be provided by our center, except as follows:

- Parents may provide food for their infants not yet consuming table food or for any child requiring a special diet that cannot reasonably be provided by our center.

For those children on a special diet or for religious beliefs, we **MUST** have a written consent from your child's physician stating your child's nutritional needs.

We also encourage parents to bring treats for holidays and/or birthday parties. However, DCFS requires that the Health Department inspect the kitchen that the treats are prepared in. Therefore, any treats brought to share with the children **MUST** be store bought. We cannot have homemade treats.

### **Confidentiality**

All information obtained by Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North is considered confidential. The private information and/or records will not be shared with other children, parents, or families. Each child's personal information will only be available to the necessary staff and The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), upon written request.

### **Discipline**

At Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North, our goal is to prevent as many discipline problems as possible. There are many ways to keep the children's interests high and frustration levels low, which creates positive behaviors. The following are some examples of how to do that:

- Arranging the room to allow for accessibility of materials and teachers, providing a balance of quiet and active pursuits and including some individual and some group activities.
- Providing materials of sufficient amount, variety, challenge, and familiarity to meet children's needs.
- Allowing choice in activity, flexibility in some routines, and having a few simple rules.
- Predicting areas of difficulty and planning techniques to be utilized in the event problems arise.

Playing, learning, friendships, and respect for others are all behaviors given positive attention while inappropriate behavior is redirected or dealt with in accordance with the incident.

Physical punishment is NEVER used at our center. However, when it does become necessary to manage or control the child's behavior, and he or she is over 24 months old, time out shall be used. The child will sit for a short time (1-2 minutes) until he or she is able to talk about what happened. The teacher shall then discuss why the child needed to sit and how next time the child might handle the situation differently.

Some basic discipline guidelines that Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North follows are:

- Every child is expected to behave in a respectful manner.
- Bodily harm to another individual will not be tolerated.
- Foul language or profanity will not be tolerated.
- Every child is expected to follow the rules set forth by the classroom teacher and administration.

If a child continues to be unmanageable, the parents may be asked to remove the child from the center temporarily or permanently.

### **Discipline: Biting and Other Aggressive Behaviors**

When a child is biting and behaving in a physically aggressive manner toward other children or the staff, the director is to be notified immediately. The child's parents are to be notified the same day of the behavior and how it was handled.

It is our policy to use a variety of techniques to discourage biting and aggressive behavior depending on the age and development stage of the child. They include but are not limited to:

- Redirection
- Giving more opportunities for oral stimulation (for biting)
- Teaching the child how to calm him or herself



- Separation from the group, logging each incident to look for stimuli, helping the child communicate their needs/wants
- Shadowing the child
- Logging each aggressive or biting incident. The log should include the name of each child involved, the time of day, how it was handled, and the cause of behavior.

If the child persists in the aggressive behavior or biting (one or more times a day or week), the following are steps that may be taken:

- A parent/teacher/director meeting to discuss the problem and possible solutions
- The parent may be required to shadow his or her child
- The parent may be required to remove his or her child from the facility for a predetermined amount of time (i.e. the remainder of the day, week, etc...)
- The parent may be required to find permanent and alternative care for his or her child

### **Communication**

We work hard to maintain open and frequent communication between parents and teachers by greeting the parents each morning and each afternoon, through daily sheets, monthly newsletters, family events, phone, email, and social media. Pleasant Run Learning Center & Preschool North also has an open door policy for parents, who are welcome into our center at any time during the day to observe or visit in their child's classroom. Parents are also encouraged to communicate with teachers and administration any requests or concerns that they may have. We are always available to meet with parents and/or guardians to discuss any aspect of the center's program.

### **Curriculum**

In accordance with our philosophy, the staff at Pleasant Run North believes in treating each child as an individual. After assessing the needs and interests of each child, the teacher, along with the support staff and director, will help create fun and exciting activities to enhance learning.

Learning Centers shall be used to help create a sense of choice and exploration for the children. Several areas, such as block area, kitchen or housekeeping area, writing area, computers, and creative choice area (coloring, cutting, etc...) are just a few examples of centers that are created to help the children grow and learn.

There are also specific routines that are followed each day to help create a sense of security and predictability for the children. An example of that would be calendar time each day. The children enjoy the repetition of counting the days of the week and months of the year.

Through all activities at our center, there are several universal objectives:

1. To help create security and self-confidence in each child
2. To explore learning and make it as fun and exciting for every child
3. To help create the ability to problem solve
4. To develop fine motor and gross motor skills
5. To create an environment where affectionate relationships with peers and teachers are created

6. To allow children to make choices and experience the consequences of personal decisions
7. Encourage children to make good health and safety choices
8. To help children distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior
9. To develop a concern for the rights and wellbeing of others
10. To develop an appreciation that everyone has his or her own unique characteristics that makes each person different