



Family Handbook

September 2019 - August 2020

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The MSU Child Development Center is a community that honors and respects children, families, and educators for their diversity, curiosity, and humanity. We inspire and celebrate well-being in a dynamic, engaging, and playful learning environment.

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the MSU Child Development Center, the laboratory preschool of the Early Childhood Education & Child Services academic program at Montana State University.

This handbook is divided into several important sections to give you the most information about our program philosophy, curriculum, and standards to ensure children's health, safety, and well-being. It is a living document, designed to answer your questions about the preschool and to outline program policies and procedures. You will be notified of formal policy changes during the year via a written policy notice in your mailbox and via email communication.

We strive to partner with families to facilitate the transition between the home and school environment. Communication on a daily basis between parents and teachers is vital. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns, and suggestions.

With kind regards,

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HISTORY

The MSU Child Development Center is Montana's first preschool and has been continuously operating since the 1920s. The preschool is licensed by the State of Montana, is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and a STARS to Quality Early Care & Education program. NAEYC accredited early childhood programs are the top tier in early childhood education, representing less than 10% of all preschools nationwide.

PURPOSE

The preschool serves a diverse group of families, both on and off campus, with the primary goal of providing a quality early childhood education program for children ages 3 - 5. Affiliation with MSU is not required for children to be enrolled in the preschool.

The preschool is a university laboratory site for research and learning used by MSU students, faculty, and community members. The preschool is the primary field placement site for all MSU Early Childhood Education and Child Services (ECE&CS) students and is also used by Elementary Education students pursuing an Early Childhood option teaching. Ongoing projects include well-being groups facilitated by the graduate counseling students, nutrition education provided by interns with the Montana Dietetic Internship (MDI), physical activity experiences conducted in the Marga Hosaeus Fitness Center, engagement with the arts through weekly music lessons and various field trips offered to support children's development in all domains of well-being.

The MSU Child Development Center is an integral part of the university and maintains a learning, discovery, and engagement mission consistent with the land-grant mission of Montana State University.

- **Learning:** The MSU Child Development Center is a quality early education center for preschool aged children and their families in our community. We recognize the unique needs and opportunities for learning among every member of our preschool community and provide many opportunities for children, families, educators, and students to learn and grow. The preschool is an inclusive setting for children and their families from diverse cultures, lifestyles, and abilities, including special needs.
- **Discovery:** Research and creative activities take place at the MSU Child Development Center in various collaborative disciplines, including early childhood education, farm to early care and education, gardening and nutrition education, counseling, nursing, and educational technology. The preschool is a model of best practice for the Montana early childhood profession.
- **Engagement:** The MSU Child Development Center works in close partnership with our local community to enhance the well-being of children, families, educators and students in our program. Connections to county, state, and national organizations further enhance the rich experience of our preschool and ECE&CS academic program.

NAEYC EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM STANDARDS

- 1. Relationships:** We promote positive relationships among all children to encourage each child's sense of individual worth and belonging. We foster each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member.
- 2. Curriculum:** Our preschool curriculum uses the Creative Curriculum approach. Creative Curriculum is fully aligned with the Montana early learning standards and uses exploration and discovery as a way of learning. The curriculum supports children's growth in all areas of well-being, including cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development.
- 3. Teaching:** We use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the program's curriculum goals.
- 4. Assessment of Child Progress:** We are informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children's learning and development. Assessments occur within the context of reciprocal communications with families and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children develop. Assessment data is used to make sound decisions about children, teaching, and program improvement.
- 5. Health:** We promote the nutrition and health of children by participating in the federally funded Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Our preschool protects children and staff from illness and injury by adhering to our state licensing guidelines, which are available at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/earlychildhood/DCCRegulationBook.pdf>.
- 6. Teachers:** We employ and support a teaching staff that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
- 7. Families:** We establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.
- 8. Community Relationships:** We establish relationships with and use the resources of the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals. Walking trips on campus and excursions off campus via Streamline Bus enhance the daily experiences of children.
- 9. Physical Environment:** We have created a safe and healthful environment that includes facilities, equipment, and materials to promote children's and staff members' learning and development.

10. Leadership and Management. The MSU Child Development Center effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high quality experiences.

FACILITY

The preschool is located at 105 Herrick Hall on the campus of Montana State University at the corner of Cleveland and 7th. Parking is restricted and limited. Parents may park on the east side of the building for arrival and pick-up for 30 minutes at a time with a designated CDC parking permit provided each year. You will be at risk of being ticketed if you park without your CDC parking permit or leave your vehicle in the lot for more than 30 minutes.

In addition to the spacious classroom and playground, our program includes a children's bathroom, food prep kitchen, laundry room, staff office, and an observation room. The observation room is accessible to enrolled families and prospective parents, as well as MSU students and faculty. A sign in/sign out sheet is reviewed weekly by the ECE&CS Program Leader to track observation room use.

LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

The MSU Child Development Center employs a combination of permanent staff members and student employees. Under the leadership of the Preschool Director, co-teachers work together with support from many teaching assistants (including student employees) to prepare the learning environment, implement curriculum, and model best teaching practices.

MSU students enrolled in the ECE&CS academic program complete field work in the MSU Child Development Center. Elementary Education students pursuing an Early Childhood Education option also complete their fieldwork in our program. Other student volunteers represent backgrounds in various disciplines, including community health, family and consumer science, health enhancement, psychology, and counseling. Field work students are not considered staff and are not factored into student/staff ratios.

The ECE&CS Program Leader provides a connection between the academic program and the laboratory preschool. The Program Leader oversees special projects, including Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved research initiatives, technology integration, and activities to promote emotional well-being, nutrition, physical activity, and appreciation of the arts.

Building and maintaining relationships with the community and advocating for children and their families guides our mission and philosophy. These are standards and practices we share with our NAEYC accreditation agency. All leadership and teaching staff are registered on the Montana Practitioner Registry and are members of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The MSU Child Development Center seeks to employ teachers with bachelor's degrees in early childhood education or equivalent educational degree. Teachers complete more than sixteen hours of professional development or higher education annually. Student employees and volunteers have many opportunities to learn about early childhood best practice through observation and experience in our preschool classroom.

ACADEMIC OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM

As the laboratory preschool of Montana State University, we participate in academic observation and Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved research activities carried out by MSU students and faculty. The participation offers great value to increasing the collective knowledge regarding children and their development and to the professional training of students who will pursue careers in early childhood education and related fields. A Faculty Advisor in the ECE & CS program oversees all research projects in the Center.

The enrollment packet contains a permission form providing general informed consent for observation of children in the classroom. Individual children are not identified in observational reports or research. Informed consent forms for IRB-approved research are distributed to parent mailboxes.

ENROLLMENT

The MSU Child Development Center operates year-round. Children ages 3 years through entrance to kindergarten are eligible to attend the MSU Child Development Center. Our state licensing guidelines require that children have turned 3 before their start date. Children are expected to be able to use the bathroom independently with rare accidents only, as our facility and staffing cannot accommodate toilet training. Exceptions are made for children with special needs.

The enrollment process begins with an in-person, over-the-phone, or emailed inquiry. After an application has been submitted, the Preschool Director will confirm interest in enrollment and will add the child to the waitlist. Families are updated periodically via email about waitlist status. When there is availability, the Preschool Director will send an email confirmation of enrollment followed by a mailed acceptance letter and enrollment packet. Enrollment typically occurs in the early fall and late spring. Three spots are set aside for children with special needs. If a spot becomes available, families will be eligible to enroll no matter their position on the waitlist. This hold will only be active during enrollment time. Emergency contact information, proof of immunization, and permission forms are required for every enrolled child and are part of the enrollment packet. Prior to enrollment, a home visit and several classroom visits for children and parents are planned. Visits are scheduled at the family's convenience and occur in the two weeks prior to the start date.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family involvement and communication is vital to the children's success in our preschool program. There are a variety of ways to be involved, including reading to children in the classroom, participating in special events such as field trips, eating lunch with the children, or helping to prepare a special snack or meal. If attending lunch, parents must sign up on the lunch guest form at the entrance of the preschool. We encourage parents to think of creative ways to maintain involvement in their child's education. Parents are always welcome to visit the classroom or observe from our observation room.

A Home Visit and Home History form are used to gather information about children and families prior to enrollment. Notes about our curriculum, including letters and permission slips about field trips, are sent home to parents in the mailboxes located in our entrance hallway. Weekly emails are sent from the Preschool Director to keep families informed about important policies and community-based learning opportunities to support well-being. Events are held throughout the year to bring the children, parents, families, and educators together for socializing.

Formal parent conferences occur in October and April and provide the opportunity to discuss children's activities, social interactions, and progress. Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) are distributed to parents during conference periods. Parents are encouraged to talk to teachers daily at drop off and pick up to exchange information and to set up more formal meetings as needed. Additionally, parents are asked to evaluate our program each year using a questionnaire developed by the NAEYC. Parental feedback and input are vital to our preschool program and is welcomed at any time!

DAILY SCHEDULE

The MSU Child Development Center is open year-round, Monday through Friday from 7:30am – 5:30pm. We are closed on MSU holidays in accordance with university policy and closed for roughly 2 weeks around Christmas and New Year’s Day. Additionally, the preschool is closed for one week in August just prior to the start of MSU classes to prepare the indoor and outdoor learning environment for a new school year. The program may also be closed no more than two days per year for teaching training.

Teachers follow the outlined daily schedule below and modify to best meet the needs of the children. The daily schedule includes indoor and outdoor playtime as well as opportunities for quiet play and active movement. Time for individual and group activities are also planned daily.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 7:30-9:00: | Children arrive & begin classroom activities |
| 8:30-9:30: | Breakfast available |
| 9:00-9:30: | Clean up classroom & transition |
| 9:30-10:00: | Morning meeting |
| 10:00-10:30: | Small group activities |
| 10:30-10:45: | Transition to outdoors |
| 10:45-11:45: | Outside activities |
| 11:45-12:00: | Hand washing & lunch transition |
| 12:00-12:30: | Lunch |
| 12:30-12:45: | Group story |
| 12:45-1:30: | Group rest & quiet activities |
| 1:30-1:45: | Transition to outdoors |
| 1:45-2:45: | Outside activities |
| 2:45-3:00: | Transition to indoors |
| 3:00-3:30: | Afternoon meeting |
| 3:30-4:30: | Classroom activities and projects |
| 3:30-4:30: | Snack Available |
| 4:30: | Clean up classroom & closing meeting |
| 4:30-5:30: | Quiet activities or outside activities |
| 5:30: | All children required to be picked up <u>no later</u> than 5:30 |

GUIDANCE POLICY: BE SAFE, BE KIND, BE CARING

The MSU Child Development Center guidance policy is based on the recognition that the development of positive social skills is an important and active learning experience. The *Second Step* curriculum (Committee for Children, 2002) for social-emotional development is used consistently in the classroom and the NAEYC Code of Ethics is an essential guide for teachers.

Children develop social competence, autonomy, a positive self-concept, and respect for others through active involvement with peers and adults. Teachers' interactions and responses to children are based on their understanding of child development research, developmental theories, and developmentally appropriate practice. Teachers understand behaviors from the child's point of view. They realize that young children are inexperienced with large group situations and need to practice their skills. Teachers appreciate and understand each child's uniqueness, temperaments, abilities, backgrounds, and previous experiences. Difficulties, problems, and conflicts are approached as opportunities for learning and are labeled as mistaken behaviors.

Acceptance of the term "mistaken behavior" implies a positive view of children and their behaviors. Behavior, like any learning experience, includes mistakes. Children may have learned that using inappropriate behaviors such as hitting or screaming often may bring the results they desire, such as obtaining the toy they want, or the attention they need. Instead of punishing, teachers value the child, understand the reasons for the behavior, look for ways to teach an appropriate behavior and allow for practice and learning.

Teachers take a proactive approach to guidance by thoughtfully and intentionally planning curriculum (using *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*), including establishing daily routines and preparing the indoor and outdoor learning environment to prevent problems. Teachers model safe, kind, and caring behaviors at all times. The *Second Step* curriculum is used to introduce and practice empathy building, impulse control, and problem-solving behaviors. Teachers work with children to solve problems. Teachers allow children time and repeated opportunities to practice problem solving. Practice is often gained by making choices. Choices can be made daily about when to have breakfast or snack, where they choose to play, or what materials to use for a project. In some situations where choices are limited, such as whether or not to help at clean-up time, or wash hands before a meal, teachers can avoid using ultimatums by reinforcing the need for the task and pointing out possible choices in carrying out the required task.

Four specific guidance strategies are used to intervene when children need help solving problems and learning appropriate behaviors:

- conflict management through conversation,
- guidance talks between teacher and child,
- class meetings,
- and individual guidance plans.

Further, teachers use respectful language and encouragement when providing feedback and comments to children. Teachers strive to create an atmosphere that encourages positive and supportive interactions for the community. The outcome is children getting along with others, solving problems, taking responsibility for their actions, and becoming positive citizens of a democratic, peaceful classroom.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The MSU Child Development Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin, or sexual preference.

ANTI-BIAS STATEMENT

The early childhood education professionals at The MSU Child Development Center understand that children can absorb our society's biases of gender, age, color, language and physical characteristics at an early age. For this reason, we support children as they explore, celebrate and understand differences.

Children and adults can be empowered to stand up for their rights and the rights of others and to recognize and question social injustice. We challenge the children and ourselves to:

- explore issues of fairness as seen from a child's perspective;
- see conflict as a challenge in problem solving;
- be open to differing perspectives, attitudes, ideas and behaviors;
- monitor our words and actions for unconscious bias or prejudice;
- recognize and demonstrate respect for diversity among people.

INCLUSION IN THE CLASSROOM

The MSU Child Development Center provides education for all children, including those with identified disabilities and special learning and development. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Teachers are aware of the identified/diagnosed special needs of individual children and trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. Therapy is developed appropriately and incorporated within classroom activities as much as possible rather than removing the child from the classroom. The permanent co-teachers make appropriate professional referrals when necessary. Family members are involved in development and use of individualized education plans. Teachers address the priorities and concerns of families of children with special needs.

KINDERGARTEN CAMP

During the summer months (May - August), children who are registered to attend Kindergarten are invited to participate in our Kindergarten Camp program. Children engage in activities and experiences with same-age peers as they prepare to enter elementary school settings. A low teacher-child ratio ensures that children positively experience the schedule and routine of a school day to set them up for a successful transition to kindergarten.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illness

At the MSU Child Development Center, a focus on well-being is central to our work with children. Staying healthy is important to us all. To ensure that illness is kept under control, we ask that all individuals wash their hands upon entering the classroom. Illness in young children is very common and is a difficult problem for parents and teachers. While we recognize it is challenging for a parent or family when an illness occurs, it is equally challenging for teachers caring for the ill child. Everyone shares a concern for the well-being of children in the center. Families are strongly encouraged to arrange back-up care for the inevitable days when a child will be too ill to attend the program.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, a teacher will call you to arrange for you to pick him/her up. Your child must be without fever ($\geq 101^\circ$ without medication), vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. Vomiting includes two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in the stool, and/or decreased form to the stool. Please do not send your child to school if he/she cannot fully participate in all of our daily activities.

Children with any of the bacterial infections listed below must be treated with antibiotics for 24 hours before they return to the day care center:

1. strep throat;
2. scarlet fever;
3. impetigo;
4. bacterial conjunctivitis (pinkeye); and
5. skin infections such as draining burn or infected wounds or hangnails;
6. Generalized rashes, including those covering multiple parts of the body, must be evaluated by a health care provider to determine their cause before the child can return to The MSU Child Development Center;
7. Children with chickenpox may not be admitted to The MSU Child Development Center until their sores dry up, which usually takes five to seven days. Day care providers must not purposefully expose susceptible children to chickenpox, even with the permission of the susceptible child's parents;

Children with symptoms of severe illness, such as uncontrolled coughing, breathing difficulty or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food or fluid intake, or a seizure, must be evaluated by a health care provider before they may return to The MSU Child Development Center;

A child need not be excluded for a discharge from the nose which is not accompanied by a fever.

If a child develops symptoms of illness while at The MSU Child Development Center and after the parent or guardian has left, The MSU Child Development Center must isolate the child immediately from other children in a room or area segregated for that purpose; contact and inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request the parent or

guardian to pick up the child; and report each case of suspected communicable disease the same day by telephone to the local health authority, or as soon as possible thereafter if no contact can be made the same day.

The MSU Child Development Center may readmit a child excluded for illness whenever, in its discretion:

- a. the child either shows no symptoms of illness;
- b. the child has been free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours without medication; or
- c. the child has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours for bacterial infections.

Medication

The MSU Child Development Center requires medication authorization for children with special health care needs. Our preschool believes children should be given approved medication, when needed, in the safest possible way. Written consent is required for ANY medication so that medication is administered in a safe manner. Parents will be notified if the child has any adverse side effects from the medication, or if a medication error or incident has occurred. In the event of adverse effect or a serious allergic reaction, staff will seek emergency care (911).

All medications, regardless of whether they are prescriptions or over the counter (OTC), must be in original containers bearing the original label and directions for dosages. Prescriptions must also bear the child's name and prescribing doctor's name. Caregivers or health providers must demonstrate how to administer the medication prior to a teacher administering it at the preschool.

The MSU Child Development Center must have the following documentation on site to administer medication to a child:

1. A medication record which includes:
 - a. The written authorization of the parents for the administration of medication;
 - b. The prescription of a health care provider if required; and
 - c. A medication administration log.
2. A medication administration policy for the child which includes:
 - a. Types of medication which may be administered;
 - b. Medication administration procedures to be followed, including the route of medication administration, the amount of medication given, the recommended storage of medication, and the times when medication is to be administered;
 - c. A health care and medication plan for children who may have special health care needs or those requiring medication for chronic health conditions that have been approved by a health care provider licensed in Montana; and
 - d. The rules of disposing of expired medication. All expired medication will be disposed of in the recommended manner.

Children's immunization requirement policy

All children are required to have a completed immunization report signed by the child's physician. All immunizations must be up to date at the time of enrollment. Immunizations are to be kept up to date thereafter following the Montana immunization guidelines. Immunization is an important public health policy effecting children. As a matter of state law, children in the program must:

- be immunized as required for the child's age group against MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), Polio, Varicella, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, and Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib). Unless the child qualifies for conditional attendance.
- Be in the process of becoming fully immunized according to the approved schedule, or
- Have a physician's statement that immunization is contraindicated for medical reason.
- The only immunization for which a religious exemption is allowed is Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae type B). This form must be signed, sworn to, and notarized yearly. It must be kept with the "Certificate of Immunization" (HES-101) in the child's records.

Children's Health Records

Health records are maintained in each child's individual file. Before enrollment the preschool administrator reviews health records from the Home History form, Immunization form, and Emergency Contact and parental Consent form. All immunizations must be up to date before enrollment or have a plan for completion made by a physician. Exemptions for medical reasons are the only exceptions and must be documented by a licensed medical practitioner.

The State of Montana does not allow religious exemptions. Required follow-up for medical conditions are tracked by the director and reported to the Gallatin County Health Nurse if required. Children who are not immunized for a specific disease will be excluded from attendance if the disease occurs at the center. In the instance that such a disease is reported, the child's parent will be contacted immediately. If the child is already in attendance the parent will be asked to pick up the child. The child will be removed from the classroom and will remain outside of the center with a teacher until the parent arrives. The parent must consult with their physician and/or the Gallatin County Health Department to determine when the child can safely return to school. Written confirmation of safety from a health professional is required upon the child's return to the center.

Teachers review all enrollment forms before the child's enrollment date and note any allergies or medical conditions that impact participation in the program activities. Teachers copy the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form and place one copy in each of the following places: the child's file, field trip file, classroom Emergency Binder, Director's Enrollment Binder. The Preschool Director is responsible for providing parents with a new form each year to ensure that the information is updated.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen is an Over the Counter (OTC) medication and can be applied to children only if State of Montana regulations are followed.

- An OTC permission form for sunscreen is included in the enrollment packet.

- Parents/guardians return the signed form along with sunscreen lotion in the original container, labeled with the child's name.
- Staff apply sunscreen with gloves, using the child's personal bottle.

Safety

In accordance with state of Montana licensing regulations, all staff and volunteers have up to date immunizations and a criminal records check. Staff also abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethics and are mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect.

Attendance is taken daily and parents are required to sign their child in and out. If you arrive at a time when teachers are engaged with the children, be sure to make eye contact so that teachers know your child has arrived. It is important that parents connect with teachers every day! Please have your child dropped off by 9:30AM. Additionally, please notify MSU Child Development Center Teachers or Preschool Director if your child will be absent by 9:30AM.

The MSU Child Development Center maintains a 7:1 child-to-staff ratio. By having more adult supervision, the needs of the children are better addressed.

Fire Safety

The MSU Child Development Center is licensed by the state of Montana and participates in annual safety inspections. Herrick Hall is equipped with a central fire alarm system. Fire drills occur monthly to familiarize the children with our procedure for exiting the building. We also have an evacuation procedure and work closely with the MSU Police Department and the MSU Department of Safety and Risk Management to ensure safety for all members of our preschool community. Eight fire drills are practiced per year as well as two non-fire emergency drills.

Mandatory Reporting

MSU Child Development Center staff are legally required, or mandated, to report suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect. If a staff member knows or has reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused, they must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency. Reports can be made to the child abuse hotline (Centralized Intake) at 1-866-820-5437. All reports of child abuse or neglect must be made through this hotline. Reports can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a staff member's responsibility to call and report suspicions. According to Montana law, any mandatory reporter who purposely or knowingly fails to report when required or prevents another individual from reporting is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Transportation

Children are not transported from the MSU Child Development Center without parent consent. Children do take frequent walking trips to various locations on campus. These include the Museum of the Rockies, the duck pond, and the Hosaeus Fitness Center. When the children are out on an adventure, a note is written outside the classroom door and a staff member will remain at the preschool in case a child is dropped off. Parents give children ages 4+ permission to ride the Streamline Bus for excursions around town and specifically to Bozeman

Public Library and Birchwood at Hillcrest.

Please review our state licensing regulations for a complete description of the health and safety requirements of our preschool program. The licensing regulations are available on the DPHHS website:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/qad/documents/LicensureBureau/ChildCare/LicensingRequirementsforChildCareCenters.pdf>

Confidentiality Policy

Information contained within a child's record and staff files shall be privileged and confidential. Unauthorized removal of records or unauthorized divulgence of parents, staff or program's confidential information is a strict policy of the preschool program.

Violation of these rules is considered serious and will result in discharge without prior warning. All staff and student observers must comply with these professional ethics at all times and never discuss children, families or staff elsewhere. Observations made in the classroom and all information discussed at staff meetings and professional development opportunities are to be kept in strict confidence.

The MSU Child Development Center does not release information in a child's record to anyone without parental written consent. The child's parent or guardian shall, upon request, have access to his or her child's record.

Media images taken at our school and/or events of children within the MSU Child Development Center should not be posted on any social media networks such as Facebook, etc. Please be considerate of other families when posting pictures and comments on any social site.

Outdoor Time

Children will spend a considerable amount of time playing/working outdoors. Children will go outside every day unless:

1. The temperature is below 10° including wind chill
 - a. Accurate temperature information is determined by the outdoor thermometer on the porch. Wind speed and wind chill temperature is found on the web at www.noaa.gov.
2. Hazardous outdoor conditions exist including air quality issues, lightning storms, hailstorms, extreme heat, etc.
 - a. Hazardous outdoor conditions are determined by the Gallatin County Health Department and are found at <http://todaysair.mt.gov>
3. For air quality during fire season, the Health Department provides the following information:
 - a. DEQ issues daily forest fire air quality updates around the state. This information is found at www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/. During "very unhealthy" air quality periods, the Health Department recommends that persons most at risk for respiratory complications due to air quality concerns avoid outdoor activities.

Individuals at risk include children, the elderly, and persons with known respiratory problems. Everyone else should avoid prolonged exposure.

Be prepared for outdoor time by dressing for the weather. Winter weather requires a warm jacket, hat, mittens and boots—snow/ski pants may help make outdoor time more enjoyable. Summer weather requires comfortable clothing, appropriate shoes for play and walking, a hat and sunscreen.

A primary focus for outdoor supervision is education and safety.

- Adults must be in position to supervise all areas of the playground.
- Staff must be engaged with children during their outdoor play much like engagement occurs in the classroom.
- Outdoor time is not a time for adults to congregate together to visit with each other.

NUTRITION

The MSU Child Development Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This is a federally funded program that promotes nutritious eating habits and family style dining. According to CACFP regulations,

- In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are prepared and served daily. We employ a nutrition specialist to plan and prepare the MSU Child Development Center menu. We strictly adhere to USDA guidelines and also support local agriculture by serving Montana Made Meals whenever we can. Our efforts are supported by interns from the Montana Dietetic Internship (MDI) and Towne's Harvest Garden.

We offer food family style to provide children and staff the opportunity to take and eat as much food as they want during meals and snacks. The intent behind feeding in the CACFP is that all children get enough food to meet their nutrient and energy needs.

Family-style dining teaches children:

- choosing from well-balanced and nutritious meals
- how to serve themselves
- eating how much they choose to eat
- trying new foods
- the skills of eating at a table with others
- following positive role models
- table manners
- good eating habits
- positive relationships with food

Following the US Dietary Guidelines, children are encouraged to try new foods from a variety of fresh and locally grown options. Breakfast is served from 8:30am – 9:30am, lunch is served from 12:00pm – 12:30pm, and an afternoon snack is served from 3:00 – 4:30pm. Please do not send your child to school with meals or snacks. Our menu is posted in the kitchen, at the parent board and is e-mailed each week.

The MSU Child Development Center is a nut-free facility. Please do not send your child to school with baked goods or other processed items to prevent contamination of food. If you would like to commemorate a special event to celebrate a special occasion, please feel

welcome to join your child in the classroom to serve a healthy and nutritious snack. Teachers can help you plan these events. Please contact Preschool Director if wishing to bring food for a special event.

TUITION AND CALENDAR

Parents sign a Tuition Payment Contract upon enrollment, indicating their payment schedule for tuition. Tuition invoices are issued each month, and available electronically. Payment is due prior to care received (i.e., pay September 1 for September enrollment). Three payment options are available: monthly on the MSU payday, monthly on the first of the month, bimonthly on the 1st and 15th of the month). Payment is made by check to the MSU Child Development Center, or CDC.

Children are required to attend at least two half-days per week for continuity and consistency. Schedule changes must be requested in writing to the attention of the Preschool Director a minimum of 30 days in advance.

Annual assessment of overall operating costs will be evaluated January of each year. If tuition rates need to be increased, families will be notified by February and rates will be put into effect in May.

The MSU Child Development Center operates year-round from 7:30am – 5:30pm. The preschool is closed on all MSU administrative holidays and is also closed for one week in mid-August and roughly two weeks over winter break for professional development. All closure dates are listed on the last page. **Tuition will not be prorated for any of these closures.**

| Half-day: \$32/day 7:30am – 12:30pm or 12pm – 5:30pm | School-day: \$36/day 8:30am – 3:30pm | Full-day: \$42/day 7:30am – 5:30pm |
|---|--|--|
| 5 days/week = \$640/month | 5 days/week = \$720/month | 5 days/week = \$840/month |
| 4 days/week = \$512/month | 4 days/week = \$576/month | 4 days/week = \$672/month |
| 3 days/week = \$384/month | 3 days/week = \$432/month | 3 days/week = \$504/month |
| 2 days/week = \$256/month | 2 days/week = \$288/month | 2 days/week = \$336/month |
| 1 day/week = \$128/month | 1 day/week = \$144/month | 1 day/week = \$168/month |

LATE POLICY

Please adhere to your child’s allotted schedule (half-day, school-day, full-day) for drop-off and pick-up. The CDC closes at 5:30pm regardless of the weather or traffic. Parents should plan to arrive at the CDC at least 10 minutes before their child’s pick-up time. Please call the preschool classroom (406-994-5010) if you know you are going to be late so teachers can brief your child. Children can become anxious when they are not picked up at their regular anticipated time. Any

family leaving the center after the prearranged time is considered late.

- Half-Day Schedule:
 - AM: Pick-up by 12:30pm
 - PM: Pick-up by 5:30pm
- School-Day Schedule: Pick up by 3:30pm
- Full-Day Schedule: Pick up by 5:30pm

Late arrivals are documented per calendar year. Your first late pick up is considered a warning and is documented with the Preschool Director. If you pick up late a second time, the Preschool Director will personally contact you to discuss the tardiness, put together a time management plan, and to communicate consequences of a third late pick up. The second late pick up will be documented. A third documented late pick up may result in dismissal from the program. Teachers are scheduled around our attendance contracts. If children are picked up late, teachers have to stay past their scheduled shift. Please be respectful of our teacher's free time.

ADD-ON DAYS

Add-on days are allowable but must be pre-approved by Preschool Director. Add-on days are not guaranteed. Additional days will be billed to your monthly invoice at the below rates:

- Half-Day (7:30-12:30 or 12:00-5:30): \$35/day
- School-Day (8:30-3:30): \$40/day
- Full-Day (7:30-5:30): \$45/day

2019 – 2020 CLOSURE DATES

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 09/02/19: | Labor Day |
| 11/11/19: | Veterans Day |
| 11/28/19 – 11/29/19: | Thanksgiving Break |
| 12/23/19 – 01/03/20: | Winter Break |
| 01/20/20: | MLK Day |
| 02/17/20: | Presidents' Day |
| 04/10/20: | University Day / Professional Development |
| 05/25/20: | Memorial Day |
| 07/03/20: | Independence Day |
| 08/24/20 – 08/28/20: | Professional Development |

