

Parent Handbook

6135 Heisley Rd

Mentor, Ohio 44060

Hours of Operation:

Monday-Friday

630am-545pm

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(Meeting hours 9:30a-1:30p)

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Parents,

Thank you for choosing Creative Explorers Child Care Center. We are looking forward to getting to know you and your child. This handbook is focused on informing you about our program, philosophy, curriculum, policies, parent involvement and general information. Please read this handbook carefully and thoroughly. It will be used as reference for you during your child’s enrollment. You will be notified of any changes made to our program or policies.

As we welcome your child into our program, we strive to provide your child with a great educational experience and environment. We hope to give you peace of mind knowing your child is in the care of quality and qualified teachers that will facilitate your child’s growth and development.

About Creative Explorers Child Care Center

At Creative Explorer’s our focus is making learning enjoyable. The center prides itself on providing a stimulating, safe environment that enriches children’s minds and provides them with a curriculum that fits their needs developmentally. We serve a diverse community of children, ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Creative Explorer’s focus on S.T.E.A.M. Science technology, engineering, art, and math.

At Creative Explorers, we provide a safe, healthy atmosphere for each child that will stimulate physical, intellectual, social and emotional growth. By using Creative curriculum, children will learn through a combination of play, creative art, and teacher-led activities. The child's interest will be the motivational factor for the learning that takes place. Our dedicated staff help guide children’s learning and understanding during child’s free-play time in specific classroom centers. Our staff of caring, trustworthy childcare providers maintain a positive environment where your child is cared for and respected. Your child is very special, and it is our goal to attend to their needs.

# The Creative Explorers Child Care Center Philosophy & Mission

Every day is a day to learn and grow! We believe that every child can master developmental skills and reach developmental milestones. Our purpose in caring for children is to facilitate learning, encourage social growth and development, and teach children to love education.

Creative Explorers Child Care Center Curriculum

Here at Creative Explorer’s, we believe in molding young minds to grow. That is why we choose to use Creative Curriculum. Creative Curriculum is focused on learning through play and teacher-directed lessons. Your child will enjoy playing while they are learning. Our teachers will guide and structure children’s play time, so it is educational as well as fun!

Pretend cooking in the kitchen in their classroom isn’t just play.

Just Playing- A Poem for Parents

When I am building in the block room, Please don’t say I’m “Just Playing.”

For, you see, I’m learning as I play, about balance and shapes.

Who knows, I may be an architect someday.

When I am getting all dressed up. Setting the table, caring for the babies;

Don’t get the idea I’m “Just Playing.”

For, you see, I’m learning as I play. I’m expressing myself and being creative;

I may be an artist or an inventor someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair “Reading” to an imaginary audience;

Please don’t laugh and think I’m “Just Playing.”

For, you see, I’m learning as I play. I may be a teacher someday.

When you ask me what I’ve done at school today,

And I say, I “Just played.”

Please don’t misunderstand me.

For, you see, I’m learning as I play.

I’m preparing for tomorrow.

Today, I am a child and my work is play

# Our Programs

Our program is geared toward learning through play for all age groups. Although each age group is different and requires varying needs, Creative Explorer’s teachers plan and implement individual and age-appropriate goals. Below is a general idea of how our classroom schedules are.

Infant & Toddler Sample Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 6:30-9:30 Arrival, Exploration Play, Breakfast  9:30-9:45 Circle Time  9:15-9:30 Story Time  9:45-10:15 Crafts/activities/centers  10:15am-11am Outside Time/Large motor  10:45 Clean up, prepare for lunch  11am-11:30 Lunch | 12-2:30- Rest/nap time (soft music)  2:30-3pm- wake up time, snack  3pm-3:45- Outside or Large Motor Activities  4pm-4:20- Circle time review  4:20-4:40- Music, Sing, Dance  4:40-5:15- Sensory Play/Fine motor  5:15-5:45pm- Story time/Dismissal |

Please note- Infant eating, sleeping and individual needs are met on demand and individual schedules.

11:30-12noon- Clean up, prepare for rest/nap time

\*\*Schedules can vary, and teachers may change the schedule for the day. Reasons for changes can include the number of children in a room and children’s needs and interest.

Please note- Infant eating, sleeping and individual needs are met on demand and individual schedules.

## Preschool Sample Schedule

6:30am-9:00am Small Group/Breakfast 12pm-2:30-rest/nap time, soft music

9:00am-9:20- Circle Time 2:30-3pm-snack

9:20am-10:20am- Centers 3:00-320- story time/circle time review

10:20-10:50 Large Muscle

10:50-11:10- Large Group/Story time

11:10- 11:30 Lunch prep

11:30-12 Lunch

320-345- Centers

3:45-425-Large Motor/ Outside

4:25-5:00 Large Group Activities

5pm-5:45pm- Teachers Choice/Free play

\*\*Schedules can vary, and teachers may change the schedule for the day. Reasons for changes can include the number of children in a room and children’s needs and interest.

\*Parent Involvement: Due to covid, we are no longer allowing parents inside of the classrooms to help minimize the spread of germs. We will still have Family engagement activities so that teachers and staff can interact. Parent teacher conferences will be done via zoom. Staff will utilize Brightwheel for daily parent communication.

Enrollment & Attendance:

All paperwork in the enrollment packet provided should be complete prior to your child starting at the center. The required documents include the JFS form 1234 enrollment information, SUTQ Family Questionnaire, Infant Information form if applicable, and child medical statement as well as any additional paperwork needed for medical reasons. We charge a $30.00 enrollment fee. All phone numbers should be up to date and accurate. Parents should fill out the “Child Pick-Up List” form listing all adults you allow to pick up your child. Your child will not be released to any person who is not listed on their form. Creative Explorers must be made aware of any changes in custody agreements. If a parent wishes to remove another parent from the pick-up list, they must provide court documents stating the custody agreement. If a child is scheduled to arrive from another program or activity and does not come on time, staff will contact the parent. All parents must sign up for Bright wheel. This is our communication app for parents. \* Medical/physical statements specifically should be turned in within two weeks of your child’s start date.

# Schedules

\*\* **Full-time** hours are **over 25 hours** per week, with a maximum of 60 hours.

\*\* **Part-time** hours are **under 24.9 hours** per week. Any hours exceeding the maximum 24.9 hours for part-time will result in additional fees.

A schedule should be filled out when enrolling. Your child’s schedule should include the days of the week they will be attending and the hours per day. Their schedule should be updated as often as necessary. Creative Explorer’s requires your child’s schedule to be updated and accurate to ensure that the center can provide all meals, educational materials and adequate staffing needed.

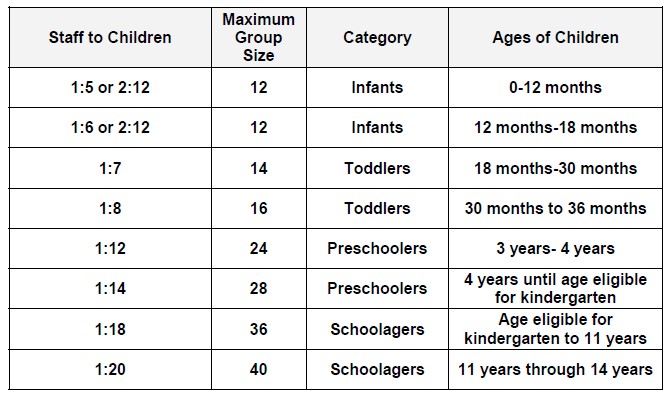
Your child should be in attendance every day that is listed on their schedule. You should notify Creative Explorers if your child will have any changes to their schedule. Changes include missing a scheduled day, needing care for additional days (not on the schedule) or changing days on their schedule. **All Children must be in attendance by 10:00am. *Children who are enrolled for full time hours, must be in attendance for a minimum of 25 hours or more. If your child is not punched in for more than the 25 hours per week minimum for full time, the parent is responsible to pay the difference between full time and part time hours for that week once absent days have been used***. If you are unsure how many hours your child has used per week, please ask management and we can find out if you’ve reached your minimum 25 hours needed for full time.

# Absent Days

When your child will be absent, we require you to call and notify the center or send us a message on Brightwheel. If your child is absent for more than 5 days without notice or without contact, they will be withdrawn from the center. ***Children are only allowed 20 absent days per calendar year***.

Class Sizes and Ratios

The classroom sizes vary based on age. State of Ohio regulates the child and staff ratios for child care centers. Creative Explorers strictly follows ratio regulations. Another staff member will be added to classrooms if at any time there are more children to a group than allowed.



# Hours of Operation

Creative Explorers is open Monday through Friday 6:30am-5:45pm. Drop off hours are 6:30am-10:00 am. If your child has an appointment, you must notify the center and child must be here by no later than 11:00am. If you are running behind to pick up your child, please call the center to inform us. Picking up later than 5:45pm will result in a late pick up fee of $10 between 5:50pm – 6:00 pm, thereafter $1/min per child will be charged.

# Emergency Closings

Creative Explorer’s will close due to dangerous weather, freezing temperatures, and power or heat loss. You will be notified by Brightwheel as soon as a decision has been made to close the center. Creative Explorer’s may also have to unexpectedly close during a business day if power is lost and/or heat. In the event that we do close unexpectedly we will message you on Brightwheel for the immediate pick up of your child. The safety of our students and staff is of utmost importance to us. Please understand that in the event of an emergency closing we are doing it for safety reasons. Please note that if there is power loss the phones will not work. You will be contacted by staff using their personal cellphones.

# Scheduled Closing Dates

We are closed for all major holidays. We do periodically close for staff development days, in which families will be notified early in advance. Days closed surrounding holidays may vary, depending on how the holiday falls in the week. For a current holiday calendar, please see the office.

Holiday Schedule:

* New Year’s Day
* Columbus Day
* Thanksgiving Day
* Black Friday
* Christmas Eve
* Christmas Day
* New Year’s Eve
* Good Friday
* Memorial Day
* Juneteenth
* Independence Day
* Labor Day

# Tuition & Fees (Payment Schedule)

Tuition is due every Monday morning before drop off. Late payments of co-pays or tuition will be charged a late fee of $25.00 if not paid by Monday. If balance is not paid by Friday, an additional $25.00 late fee will be charged. Failure to pay balance in full before the next week will result in suspended services until balance is paid. Parents must pay tuition or fees online via Brightwheel. Any accounts that are 1-week delinquent will be charged $10/day including the $25 late fee. After 2 late payments, autopay is required. Any delinquent accounts that are not paid within 2 weeks will be sent to collections. Any tuition paid that was not used (ex. School closings, absence) will be credited to your Brightwheel account. We do not give cash refunds for tuition. All hours must be used within the week. Unused hours do not transfer to following weeks.

**There is a $30.00 registration fee due upon enrollment.**

**There is an annual enrollment fee due every June. The fee is $30 per child or $50 per family. This fee is used for curriculum materials for the year.**

The tuition varies in price for each age group.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Age Group | Part time weekly rate | Full time weekly rate |
| Infant | $185.00 | $245.00 |
| Toddler | $175.00 | $230.00 |
| Preschool | $165.00 | $210.00 |

# Fees/ Overtime charges

Fees may vary. ***All fees paid are non-refundable***. There is $10 late fee for late pickups 5:50 – 6:00 (per child) after 6:00p there will be an additional $1.00/minute late fee for each child. \*\*Your child must be on a Part-time or Full-time schedule. If your child exceeds Part time hours, you will be charged full time tuition.

A bounced check will result in a $61.00 fee, which includes bank charges and the late fee.

# Supervision and child guidance

Creative Explorers staff have been trained to follow principles of applied behavior analysis. We treat each child as an individual and take into account developmental and age-appropriate management of behavior. It is our philosophy to implement positive reinforcement to reward desired behaviors and use redirection when confronting undesired behaviors. All behavior support plans and goals will be developed in consultation with parents’ teachers and directors and would be consistent with the requirements of rule 5101: 2-12-22 OAC. Parents are encouraged to speak with your child’s teacher or director with concerns or suggestions.

If a child becomes disruptive or harmful to other students, staff or school property we may call the parent to pick up the child for the remainder of the day. The child must be picked up within 1 hour. The child may have a written warning or be suspended from the program depending on the nature of the behavior. If a child consistently displays harmful, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior, the center may get parental consent for a specialist or counselor to further assist teachers in the classroom. If behavior does not improve after this, Creative Explorer’s may terminate childcare services. It is our policy that children are never left unattended.

Creative Explorers reserves the right terminate any childcare services without notice at the director’s discretion if it is deemed that we can not meet the child’s needs.

# Biting in Child Care

It is always a big concern for parents and staff if a child begins to bite other children in the childcare setting. Biting usually occurs with toddlers because sometimes they do not have the language skills to express themselves with peers. If a child is bitten by another child, we will give the child first aid and comfort. We will explain to the child who is biting why it is wrong and inform both parents. It is our policy that staff are never allowed to disclose to parents who bit their child. Consistent biting will result in termination of care until these behaviors subside.

# Outside/Large Motor

At Creative Explorers we believe in offering children plenty of physical activity. When the weather permits, children are always taken outside on the playground for large motor activities. By Ohio regulations, children shall be taken outdoors when the temperature is above 25 Degrees Fahrenheit. During hot weather children will not go outside above 90 degrees. We cannot allow any children to stay in the building while classmates are outside.

Children must stay with their group. Please dress children appropriately for the weather. Please bring sunscreen for your child and inform management. If there are any safety reasons which should prohibit the children from going outdoors, they will stay inside. Considerations may include temperature, humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, lightening, rain or ice.

# Supplies

All children are required to have a change of clothing daily, including a shirt, pants, underwear, socks, diapers and wipes. It is the parent’s responsibility to keep supplies stocked daily/weekly. You may use Brightwell to ask what’s needed or bring in enough supplies for the entire week.

# Toys from Home

Toys from home are not permitted in the building. Creative Explorers provides all equipment and materials. We are not responsible for the loss or damage of toys or personal belongings.

# Clothing/Dress

Please dress children appropriately for the weather. Flip fops are not permitted. Creative Explorers implements lots of crafts and messy activities, so we ask that parents bring children in inexpensive clothing that you do not mind getting dirty. We ask that children do not wear beads in their hair, as this can be a choking hazard for young children if a bead may come out. We are not responsible for replacing clothing /shoes/ jewelry, or any other personal items.

# Pick Up and Drop Off

Parents must sign children in on the TAP system daily. Wellness checks will be done when entering the building. Due to COVID safety protocols, parents are only permitted in the front lobby. Only one family member can enter the building at any given time. A staff member will escort all children to their classrooms. We ask that you use Brightwheel to communicate with your child’s teacher about anything they should know about your child for the day, such as your child’s eating and sleeping habits, mood, who is picking up, or anything that will affect your child’s day. If you need time to speak with your child’s teacher you may request a parent teacher conference, or feel free to call and speak with the director. ***Children must be in attendance by 10:00 am, at this time we begin our curriculum.***  All communication between parents and staff must be in an appropriate manner, no foul language will be permitted. Children will only be released to parents, and approved pickups and the pick-up list. If there is a custody agreement, a copy of agreement must be kept at the center and will be followed according to the agreement. If child is due to arrive from a special program and does not arrive within 15 minutes of scheduled time, parents will be notified. Parents must send a message via Brightwheel when they are on their way for pick up, this allows the teachers time to clean up any activities they are engaged in, change diapers/potty before you arrive.

# Managing Sickness and Illness

At Creative Explorers we try our best to maintain a clean, germ-free facility to prevent illness. A child with any of the following symptoms shall immediately be discharged to a parent or guardian. If we cannot reach the main caregivers via phone or brightwheel (ex. mom or dad) we will then call the emergency contacts, or the contacts listed on the child’s “pick up list”. If a child is ill, they will be separated from the group and given an activity to do while waiting for a parent to pick up. Children with an illness must be picked up within 30 minutes of being notified and kept home until symptom free for 24 hours. All parents must have a means of direct/immediate contact in the event of an illness or emergency. All emergency contacts must be aware that they may be contacted.

-Temperature of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit

-Diarrhea: 2 or more abnormally loose stools

-Sever coughing

-Difficult, or rapid breathing

-Redness of the eye, discharge of the eye

-Untreated infected skin patches, irregular irritation of spots or rashes

-Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations

-Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

-Vomiting

-signs of discomfort, irritability or abnormal behavior while in the daycare.

# Child Medical/Physical Statement

It is required that all children have a medical statement signed by their pediatrician annually. The physician must sign the form provided by Creative Explorer’s. Parent resources are available on the parent table for hearing, vision, dental and medical screenings. All medical forms must be turned in within the first 2 weeks of a child’s enrollment and every year thereafter.

Families who refuse immunizations of children are permitted to attend the center but are still required to turn in a medical statement signed by the pediatrician.

# Administration of Medication and Food Supplements

The center will administer medication to a child only after the parent has completed a request for medication form and care plan if necessary. All sections must be completed. Medications may not be stored in a child’s bin or bookbag, but in an area inaccessible to children. All medications must be in the original container and administered according to the instructions. We are not allowed to give the first dose of any medication, whether it is over the counter or prescription, unless it is to be used during an emergency such as an EpiPen.

If your child requires a food supplement or a modified diet, you must secure written information from your doctor regarding this and provide replacement. We will treat supplements as medicine and above procedure will be followed.

Our center does not accept school age children.

*We ensure that ADA requirements are followed in our procedure for administering medications and care to children with disabilities.*

# Meals and Snacks Provided

All meals are provided by Creative Explorer’s. We provide breakfast, am snack, lunch and afternoon snack. Creative Explorers will meet one-third of the child’s recommended daily dietary allowance. Any modifications to diet that restrict a food group must have a care plan completed by doctor. In the event of a party/special event at Creative Explorer’s, parents may bring in store bought foods only. **Please ask about allergy restrictions when bringing in treats for the class.** Outside food is not permitted in the classroom unless it is a meal replacement due to a restricted diet. Any child who cannot eat the full school lunch/meals provided, must bring in a packed lunch from home. Meals should be nutritional and well balanced and exclude any soda pop, candy, etc. **Lunches from home must be pre-cooked/ready to serve for the child to eat, we do not cook separate meals provided by parents.**

The center provides Gerber Good Start infant formula, as well as baby food. If your infant does not drink the center provided formula, parents must provide premade bottles.

Breakfast: 8:00am-9:00am AM Snack: 10:00am Lunch 11:00am-12:00pm Pm Snack: 3:00pm

Transitioning into/ within/out of the center

Transitioning into our program:

After touring our facility, parents are given an enrollment application and a parent handbook. The enrollment packet includes the application, and a Step up to Quality Family Questionnaire. We require that the child’s first day of enrollment be a half day (no more than 4 hours). This gives the child time to adjust without overwhelming them. Upon enrollment, the parent will discuss with the teacher any concerns, and or goals for the child. Teacher’s will introduce the new child to peers, show them around the classroom and offer a welcoming environment.

Transitioning within the program:

When a child is ready to transition to the next age group, a meeting is planned with the parent and director. We will discuss the routine in the new class and any goals and concerns about the child. The child will then spend 1-2 hours daily for 2-3 weeks until fully ready to transition into the new classroom. The child is introduced to new friends, class rules, and teachers. A phone meeting will be scheduled within 3 weeks after the child is permanently moved to discuss progress and adjustments.

Transitioning out of the program:

If a parent chooses to withdraw a child from the center, a 2-week notice must be given prior to the child’s last day of enrollment, or the parent will be responsible for 2 weeks of tuition. If a child’s personal belongings are left at the center after withdrawal or more than 5 absent days, these items will be donated. When a child is transitioning into a new school setting, the child’s records may be transferred to the new setting with a request for records form. The parent must request this document from the Director, return it and then records can be released.

On Site Space for breastfeeding Mothers:

We provide space for breastfeeding mothers in the infant classroom. Mother’s may use the classroom rocking chair, and the chair may be moved to the back of the room if requested for more privacy.

# Formal Assessment

Creative Explorers teachers use formal assessments on children with permission of the parent. We use the color bands on TS Gold for child assessment. This assessment is reviewed and graded by our teachers. All developmental screenings are completed using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. We use these assessments and screenings to recommend parents for further evaluation if needed.

# Emergency Transportation

We request the right to transport children to the nearest hospital or closest place for children to receive emergency care. In the event a parent refuses Creative Explorers to transport their child, parent must be able to get to center within 10 minutes in the event of an emergency.

# Emergency Procedures

There is always at least one staff member trained on First Aid communicable disease and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury staff will administer basic first aid. If the injury/illness is more serious, first aid will be administered, and parents will be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If the injury or illness is life threatening, EMS will be contacted parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records. Staff may not transport parents in their vehicle, only parents or EMS will transport. When emergency transport is required, the incident report will be available at the center within 24 hours of the incident. If parent refuses emergency transport, parent must be able to get to center within 10 minutes in the event of an emergency.

# Incident Injury reporting

Staff shall complete an incident report and provide a copy to the child's parent or the person picking up the child on the day of the incident or injury if:

1. A child becomes ill or injured and requires first aid care.
2. A child needs emergency transportation.
3. A child receives a bump/blow to the head.
4. An unusual or unexpected incident occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the center or children.

\*\* There will be a staff member trained in CPR, First Aid, Communicable Disease on site at all times.

# Field Trips

All field trips will be inhouse. Creative Explorers will not do outside trips at this time.

# Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents teacher conferences are held quarterly to discuss child assessment and screening results and complete a developmental goal sheet. If a parent needs to schedule a separate meeting regarding their child, please submit a request with the director 24 hours prior.

All questions or concerns should be immediately discussed with the center director.

# Swimming and Water Play

Creative Explorers will not use swimming pools. All water activities will be done with water tables and/or sprinklers.

# Infant Care/Diapering

Bright wheel is used to communicate all diaper changes feedings naps and activities. Parents shall provide at least 6 premade bottles per day, 2 changes of clothing, 10 diapers, 1 pack of wipes and a swaddle for young infants. Diapers are changed every 2-3 hours or sooner if needed (except during rest time). Children who are potty training are taken to the bathroom every 1-2 hours. Breast milk must be labeled with the date expressed, as well as the day prepared for school. Please label all belongings. If infant car seat is left in the building, it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure proper restraints before placing child in car.

# Napping/Resting

The center wide nap time is 12pm-2:30pm. All children will rest on individual cribs/cots. Children who do not rest will be given quiet activities to do on cots. Parents must provide a blanket and take them home on Fridays to launder. Blankets and pillows must be small enough to fit in a child’s backpack. Infant naps are based on individual schedules. The center cannot deny a child’s rest time, nor interrupt their sleep during their scheduled nap time.

**This center does not provide evening or overnight care.**

# Termination of services

Creative Explorers believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between

Creative Explorers, the student and the parent is essential to the fulfilment of Creative

Explorer’s mission. Thus, Creative Explorers reserves the right to terminate, if Creative Explorers reasonably concludes that the actions of the parent make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible or seriously interferes with Creative Explorers accomplishment of educational purposes. Creative Explorers reserves the right to discontinue services if at any time the center cannot appropriately meet the behavioral, educational, or medical needs of a student.

Creative Explorers **does not and shall not discriminate on the basis** of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

**Extra Curriculum Activities:** Creative Explorers partners with outside parties (ex. Librarian, yoga/dance instructors etc.) to enhance your child’s experience while at our center. Your child will never be left alone with any outside party.