



charlotte
children's
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Parent Handbook 2024 - 2025

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(802)-425-3328

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403 Churchill Road
Charlotte, VT 05445
(802)-425-5087

Visit us at www.cceckids.org

Table of Contents

- I. Letter from the Director
- II. Our Center
- III. Mission Statement
- IV. Philosophy
- V. The Home - School Relationship, Learning Environments
- VI. Family Conferences and Developmental Assessments
- VII. Staffing
- VIII. Admission and Enrollment
- IX. Tuition Rates, Financial Agreements, Schedule Changes, Attendance
- X. Food Allergy Policy
- XI. Health Policy
- XII. Center Closing Policy
- XIII. Family Volunteers / Community Opportunities
- XIV. Confidentiality Policy
- XV. Behavior Management Policy
- XVI. Child Abuse and Neglect Policy
- XVII. Transition Policy
- XVIII. Parking Lot

Hello Families!

We are so lucky to welcome you into our community here at Charlotte Children's Center (CCC)! A place where we hope to support you and your families by providing family-centered, child-driven care. We not only want to provide reassurance that your child/children are safe, but that they are being supported in learning about themselves, trusting their bodies, their minds, and their curiosity as they navigate this world.

I, Erika Towne (she/her), earned my Master's Degree in Early Education with a focus on Administration from Champlain College. I have worked in Early Education for over ten years, in every possible position from volunteer, substitute, assistant teacher, lead teacher, and director! I have been a director for seven years and started and led a preschool program in Burlington for most of those years. I believe strongly in allowing children to be the architects of their days as they construct their own knowledge of the world around them. Through observation and interactions, I strive to provide each child with the materials and language they need to expand upon their interests and needs on a daily basis. I place great emphasis on nature connections, outdoor play, and age-appropriate risk-taking in order to help children build resilience and develop an appreciation for the natural world.

I know that parents are a child's first teacher, and as such, you know your child better than anyone! Together with our educators, we can collaborate to support you and your child through these first five years as they develop a sense of identity and make sense of their experiences in a community-driven, child-led nurturing environment.

I look forward to embarking on the early education journey with you and your child!

Warmly,
Erika Towne, M.Ed (she/her)
Program Director and Early Educator



“Nothing without joy” - Loris Malaguzzi

I. Our Center

The Charlotte Children’s Center (CCC) is a non-profit early childhood program established in 1984 to help meet the growing need for quality childcare in our community. It is licensed by the State of Vermont Child Development Division and currently holds 4 STARS through the state Step Ahead Recognition System. 4 STARS means the Center is graded as outstanding in the following five categories:

- ★ Compliance with state regulations;
- ★ Staff qualifications and training;
- ★ Interaction with and overall support of children, families, and communities;
- ★ How thoroughly providers assess what they do and plan for improvements;
- ★ The strength of the program’s operating policies and business practices.

The Program Director runs the day-to-day operations of the Center. The Center is also governed by a Board of Directors that consists of up to seven parents and/or community members who provide long-term strategic leadership to the Center. In addition to the administrators, there is a staff of experienced and well-qualified teachers. We also rely on the dedicated involvement of parents to assist the Director in fundraising and community awareness activities. The Center and its Extension are open year-round, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 am to 4:30, excluding specific holidays and teacher in-service days [see the 2024-2025 Calendar]

II. Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide quality, childhood education in a learning community that fosters the growth and positive development of all children. We believe strongly in providing children with inviting spaces that encourage creativity and exploration with opportunities for independent and collaborative learning. We are committed to celebrating each child’s similarities and differences, educating and involving families in the center, supporting our community, and establishing an exemplary workplace.

III. Program Philosophy

At the Charlotte Children’s Center, each classroom has been designed as a welcoming environment to the children, families, and teachers. The soft neutral tones are purposeful to allow children’s artwork and materials to be the visual focus. We believe children are natural explorers and learn best through play. Teachers facilitate collaborative wonder through which the curriculum is co-constructed with the children. Children can express ideas visually, verbally, in writing, through music and movement. In addition, the documentation of the process of expressing ideas, illustrates to parents, teachers and children that their work has value. Outdoor play and movement happen daily for all ages. The playgrounds are used to further encourage

children's learning and experiences. Activities such as art, sand, water play, gardening, reading, nature walks and free play will be part of the daily outdoor opportunities.

IV. The Home/School Relationship

The Director and Staff are open to receiving your input, inquiries, requests and feedback at any time. Please let your family and child's needs be known.

We know that parents are a child's primary teachers. We know that children benefit from their families' involvement at the Center. The channels of communication between home and school should be open and clear. It is important that families have space to ask questions and advocate for their child, while collaborating and working with their child's classroom teacher.

Besides the numerous fun and exciting experiences that we will share with one another, occasionally school and parents will need to join forces and work together to solve problems or face challenges that might arise. Daily, open, kind communication with teachers will help build a relationship to best serve your child.

Learning Environments

At CCC, we have five classrooms which include: the Discovery Room (ages 2 months-1 year), the Adventurer Room (ages 1-2), the Builder Room (ages 2-3) the Seeker Room (ages 3-4), and the Voyager Room (ages 4-5). Each space is designed with intentionality and thoughtfulness in meeting the needs of the specific age group. All classrooms maintain a balance in child-directed and teacher-directed play, as we believe strongly in supporting and challenging children's needs. In all classrooms, children are offered choices and respected as the architects of their day. The teachers work collaboratively with the children on problem solving, self-regulating, and making safe decisions while encouraging them to take risks in their play and self-expression. Classroom dynamics may vary each year depending upon the demands of the community.

Discovery Room

The Discovery Room is our infant classroom, where children are regarded as eager learners ready to learn and explore through their senses in this first year of life. This classroom is located on the second floor of our Main site location. Learning is supported through positive language, eye contact, responsive materials, and daily sensory experiences. The teachers in this room place a great deal of emphasis on nurturing strong relationships built upon trust with each child. The daily curriculum is based on each child's individual developmental needs enriched with positive interactions, responsiveness, and respect. The infant classroom environment provides open space for infants that encourages and challenges their social, motoric, and cognitive growth. Teachers provide the children in this room with materials and activities that support cause and effect relationships as infants develop a sense of how objects work. While teachers are responsive to each child, self-soothing and independent explorations are also supported through positive guidance and child-led play experiences and interactions. In this room, the schedules are based on each child's needs, and children are allowed to sleep whenever they are tired. The teachers

work with parents on mirroring a similar schedule as their home schedules. Please note that the expectation for children entering the Discovery Room is to be able to bottle feed and transition into a crib for rest times. We will work individually with each child and family, but please note that based on child care licensing regulations, we cannot wear infants to sleep, or let them sleep in a swing or other devices other than their designated crib. This is the only classroom with a separate nap room attached so that we can honor each child's different sleep schedules. We use a sound machine and blackout curtains in the space, and check on sleeping children at least every 15 minutes.

Adventurer Room and Builder Rooms

The Adventurer Room is our toddler room, with children varying in age from 1-2. The Builder Room is our young preschool room with children varying in age from 2-3. Both classrooms are located on the first floor of our Main location. In these rooms, guiding practices are focused on each child's development of self-awareness and identity. At this stage, children develop social growth in which problem solving practices become an important part of their daily experiences. As children develop stronger language skills, they are encouraged to use their words to express and label their emotions, but we understand that toddlers are still emerging in their abilities to understand and empathize with the emotions of others. Teachers employ positive guidance methods to set reasonable expectations for the children in this room. These classrooms will often combine and collaborate for music and library programming. In these spaces, children eat meals at the same time each day, and take one nap a day each afternoon.

Seeker Room

The Seeker Room is our Preschool-aged classroom and is located in its own building on the same property as our Main location. Children must be 3 years of age by 9/1 of each year to enroll in this classroom. In this space, independence, empathy, and representational works are highly regarded among the classroom's guiding practices. During this stage of development, children have a strong grasp on emotions and cognitive gains to represent how they perceive and fit into the world around them. The teachers in this room maintain developmentally appropriate expectations, instill trust in the children's individual decision making, and provide opportunities for the children to explore new materials, ideas, activities, and roles. In this classroom, children are encouraged and trusted to seek guidance within themselves and peers when finding solutions and collaborating.

Voyager Room

The Voyager Room is our Pre-Kindergarten classroom with children ranging in age from 4-5. This classroom is located at our Extension site up the road from our Main site. We rent this space from the Charlotte Congregational Church. In this classroom, children practice prosocial behaviors including helping, sharing, giving, turn taking, and communicating effectively. These interactions promote socialization and assist the children in developing positive partnerships throughout their learning experiences. In this room, children work more closely on literacy, writing, reading, and early math skills. As children near the end of their preschool years, the teachers help prepare both parents and children for the transition into Kindergarten.

Complaints/Concerns/Grievance Process

If a conflict arises that you are unable to resolve with the teacher, please contact the administration immediately so we can work together to remedy the situation. If you are unsatisfied at any time with the administration's resolutions, then please feel free to contact the Board of Directors at board@ccckids.org.

If you are still not satisfied, you may contact the Vermont Department of Children and Families, Child Development Division.

Families with children in the infant and one-year old classes receive an individual daily report for their child on Procure. Families with children in the toddler and preschool classes have a daily reflection for the whole class posted on Procure. Teachers and parents also share information about the child at drop-off and pick-up times each day.

In addition, families will receive a monthly newsletter from the Center that is distributed through email. Please make sure to give us a current email address. If you would prefer to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, please let the Program Director know.

Toys from home

Children often need help feeling comfortable transitioning from home to school by using a comfort item from home during morning transitions. After morning transition time these items will be placed in the child's backpack or cubby. With the exception of comfort items, toys from home can be easily broken and are difficult to share with others. In general, toys from home should not come to the Center and will remain in the child's backpack to be brought back home if they accidentally arrive with the child.

Outside Play

Vermont child care regulations state that children should be provided opportunities for moderate to vigorous play and gross motor activity outdoors for *at least* 60 minutes per day. We support children's growth and development by providing outside time in all weather, rain or shine. Children should be prepared for playing outside everyday and come with appropriate clothing (including bathing suits in summer), shoes, boots, hats, mittens and change of clothes for water play, windy, rain, and snow. These needs will be communicated by your child's teachers throughout the year.

We use the [VT DCF weather watch chart](#) to determine on any given day if we should use caution during outdoor play.

If the Wind-Chill Factor Chart or the Heat Index Chart indicates red (danger) we do not go outside until the weather has returned to safe levels.

V. Developmental Monitoring and Assessments:

A developmental screening is completed within 60 days of your child being enrolled in the Center. The purpose of the screening is to identify children who may be in need of further

evaluation or intervention in order to be successful. The Center uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) which is a carefully researched and recognized developmental screening tool. The ASQ-3 is completed by parents and then scored by a specially trained teacher. The results of the screening will be sent to parents along with activities that parents can engage in with their child at home.

While your child is enrolled at the Center, teachers will assess and monitor your child's progress and development frequently throughout the year. Teachers at the Center are trained to observe children carefully as they engage in their everyday activities. The administration and teaching teams here at CCC will determine the most appropriate developmental tools based on the teachers, the classroom, and the classroom needs.

Any additional screening or assessments recommended by teaching staff or per parent request are supported by the center. We will work to the best of our ability to make accommodations and incorporations of a child's *One Plan* or *Individualized Educational Plan* (IEP). The Center welcomes outside educational professionals to perform assessments on children during school hours, per parent's request. (Written permission is required prior to any teaming, collaboration, and/or assessments.

The following resources are available to parents for assessment purposes:

Child Integrated Services - dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cis

The Philo Center 802-985-8211

Stern Center for Language and Learning 1-800-544-4863

Charlotte /Hinesburg School, EEE Program 802-425-2771

Child Care Resource 802-863-3367

VT Family Network 1-800-800-4005

*Other resources can be provided upon request.

VI. Staffing

The Charlotte Children's Center is dedicated to hiring and retaining high quality professionals with a background in Early Childhood Education. All staff will be trained in First Aid and Infant/Child CPR. Each teacher is also responsible for a minimum of 18 hours of continuing education each year.

The teachers apply their knowledge of child development in their classrooms using the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) as a framework to develop curriculum. A safe and healthy learning environment will be established and maintained at all times. The staff also strives to build classrooms that are filled with beauty, joy and wonder. The teachers observe and assess children and plan curriculum and activities to meet children's individual needs as well as work together as a whole group. The teachers provide many opportunities each day for children to grow and develop physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively.

VII. Admission and Enrollment Procedure

The Charlotte Children's Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, ancestry, religion, gender identity, disability, marital status or sexual preference. Admission is based on space and availability in the child's appropriate age group. In the event that the space is not immediately available, that child's name may be placed on the waitlist. The family will be notified when the space becomes available. Priority for admission is given to children of staff followed by children of current families, then families on the waitlist. At the time of enrollment, enrollment form, financial agreement, immunization records, allergy records, and the first month of tuition is due. There is a minimum 2 day enrollment for all children.

VIII. Schedule, Tuition, Financial Agreements and Attendance Policy

The Center strives to provide a schedule that works for each individual family, while balancing the enrollment and staffing needs necessary to maintain the organization.

Schedule Options:

Families may choose from three weekly schedule options:

A full time, 5-day schedule or two part time options, which include either a 3-day or 2-day schedule.

Schedule Changes:

Every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of the child, as well as the changing life needs of enrolled families. If a parent wishes to change their child's schedule or terminate enrollment, notice must be given to the Director ***in writing at least four weeks prior*** to the date of change. Tuition is expected during the month of notification. Please note that families may not make up for days that are missed.

Drop Off Policy:

Unless a child has a planned doctor's appointment, we ask that children get dropped off to school no later than 9:30 AM so that they can join the routines of the day with their peers and not create extra midday transitions. Midday drop offs are not an option for this reason.

Financial Agreements:

Once a schedule is selected, parents are required to sign a financial agreement. This contract obligates families to fulfill the tuition requirements for the time slot for the contract year.

Parents must adhere to a specific schedule and cannot switch days of the week, unless a permanent schedule change is requested, at least 4 weeks in advance.

Tuition

Tuition rates vary by classroom. Programs are based on age and developmental needs, as dictated by the mandated child- teacher ratios in the state of Vermont. Since the number of children in each program increases as the children get older, the tuition rates will decrease.

Tuition rates are determined on an annual basis by the Director, and approved by the Board of Directors. As a non-profit organization, tuition goes toward teacher salaries and benefits, professional development, daily morning and afternoon snacks provided by the center, facilities maintenance and upkeep, classroom materials, and continued programming.

Payment

Monthly tuition payments may be paid in full on the first of each month, or in two equal payments on a bi-monthly basis. Billing is run through our Procure application through automated ACH payments. The Center is dependent on tuition monies to meet its budget. Though the Center is as accommodating as possible, families not adhering to the payment schedule could place the Center at significant financial risk. If a payment has not been received by the 10th of the month, a written reminder will be sent. If payment is not received by the 15th, a late fee of 5% will be assessed.

If a family experiences difficulty in meeting their payments, it is important to speak with the Director to work out a payment plan. After 15 days past due, the director will reach out to the family to assess whether payment can be made in full or whether a payment plan is needed. The Program Director will suggest the family apply for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program to see if they meet the income guidelines for additional childcare subsidy.

We encourage and welcome you to speak with the Director if you have any questions or concerns.

Tax Payments:

Many families require a receipt for childcare for tax or employer reimbursement purposes. If you require one, please contact the Director. Please allow up to two weeks for processing, especially during tax season.

Employer Federal ID#: 22-25-33829

Drop-in Days:

If you need care for your child on a day not included in their contracted schedule, you may contact the Director ahead of time to ask if a drop-in day is possible. This cannot always work, but with enough notice, this may be possible if teacher:child ratios can still be maintained. The daily rate for a drop in day is \$70 for a full day, and \$40 for a half day. You will receive an additional charge on Procure for any drop-in days that must be paid by the end of the month of service.

Pick-up and Drop-off/Late Pick Up Fees:

The Main Center and the Extension both operate daily from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm.
-Early drop off between 7:30 am - 8 am is a limited option when numbers allow. Please, contact the Director if early care is of need for your family.

The staff works very hard to provide a high quality experience for all children. Late pick-ups adversely affect both the child and the staff member who is required to stay later. Please notify the Center when you are unable to pick up your child on time. Charges will be assessed for tardy pick-up times and billed on your monthly invoice. **A fee of \$5.00 per child will be charged for every five minutes beyond 4:30 p.m through our procare app.** After receiving three late pick up charges, the fees will double for all subsequent late pick-ups. Should the late pick-ups continue, a meeting between the Director and the parents will be arranged to discuss the child's continued attendance at the Center.

*If someone other than those listed as authorized pickups will be dropping off or picking up, be sure to inform the center staff via procare. **Anyone picking up a child will be asked to present identification to confirm their identity.** We request your cooperation as the policies are in place to protect your family.*

The Charlotte Children's Center will be diligent in ensuring that children are cared for in the safest manner possible. Should any staff member have concerns about the safety of a child's ride home, the staff member will inform the Director or Associate Director. If possible, an alternate ride will be offered, or the authorities will be notified.

Signing in and out daily

In every classroom there are tablets where we are required to sign your child in and out daily, through the application, Procure. This is one of the many Vermont Licensing Regulations you can read in the link at the end of the Parent Handbook. If your child **is not** signed in when a licenser comes for a visit but is present in the classroom, then we will be given a violation. We ask that you please help us with this important task. Please take a few moments to sign your child in and out daily.

Attendance Policy

We ask that all families **send a message in the Procure app** if their child will be absent due to illness/vacation or staying home to rest. If you have not called or emailed us by 10:00 am, we will then make contact with you. Not only do we care for you and your family and want to be sure everything is okay, regulations state we must have notification if a child is not attending the program on any given day.

The Center has contract agreements with the Champlain Valley School District, Addison Northwest, and Mount Abraham Unified School District (formerly Addison Northeast School District) to provide high quality and developmentally appropriate early education for children receiving ACT 166 monies for children ages three-five. Under these contracts, we track a child's attendance that is submitted weekly to the School Districts. Since we are receiving state funding, they require all absences to be accurately tracked and reported. There is also an expectation that we will share attendance records with these School Districts and the possibility that the school may contact families and/or discontinue tuition funding when attendance is irregular.

If your child has been absent from the pre-k program for an average of one week over the course of one month, we will contact you in writing that you will risk losing your pre-k funding. If your

child is out for three to four consecutive weeks, we will notify you in writing that you will not be eligible for pre-k funding for those weeks and you will be responsible for paying for those weeks missed. [These policies are put in place by ACT 166, if at any time you have any concerns about attendance coverage, please contact the administration for support.](#) ***Please note: that this funding will not cover extended or consistent absences.***

IX. Policy for Food Allergies

In keeping with the Center's commitment to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our children and peace-of-mind for their families, the following measures have been adopted to ensure the safety of those children with peanut, tree nut or other food allergies. Once a child has been diagnosed with a food allergy, parents may be asked to send their own snacks for the child depending on the severity and type of allergy.

Nut Policy

We are currently nut-free in our Adventurer Classroom. The Center will provide only peanut/tree nut free snacks in the classroom. Parents of a child with an allergy may choose to bring in alternative snacks.

[These other precautions are important to adhere to:](#)

- A strict hand washing policy will be followed.
- A "no sharing" food policy is enforced in all rooms, with special adherence in the adventurer room.
- Activities and craft projects will be peanut/tree nut free.
- All teachers and staff will know the identity of the child(ren) with allergies
- Teachers will receive training in emergency management of food allergies
- All teachers will be trained in the use of an epi-pen
- Parents assisting in field trips in the adventurer room will be told the identity of the child. A first aid kit including a current Epi-pen and a cell phone (in case of emergency) will be brought with the child(ren) on all field trips.

Family Obligations

All families at the Charlotte Children's Center play an important role in ensuring the safety of children with allergies. In order to keep all of our children healthy, we ask that parents immediately notify the director of any food allergies a child has.

Once a child has been diagnosed with a food allergy, we request written confirmation from the child's physician regarding the nature and extent of the allergy, as well as any specific medical protocol for the care of the child. If the protocol specifies the use of Benadryl or an epi-pen the family is asked to provide those medications to be kept at the school in the event of an emergency.

It is the responsibility of the family of the allergic child to begin to teach the child to take personal responsibility for their allergy at the appropriate age. Teachers will work with parents to support this process at the Center.

In the Event of Emergency

In the event of accidental exposure of a child with an allergy to an allergen, such as peanuts / tree nuts, the Charlotte Children's Center emergency response is as follows:

1. Identify the child in distress (with symptoms of anaphylaxis).
2. Follow the medical protocol provided by the child's health care provider
3. Call for emergency back-up (911)
4. Notify parents or their alternate emergency contact

This response will be followed for any child who has an anaphylactic reaction at the Center, regardless of the cause. In the case of a child's first anaphylaxis (in which case no prescribed Epipen is available), 911 will be contacted immediately and the emergency response team will administer the appropriate medication.

X. Health Policy

The staff of The Charlotte Children's Center works hard to ensure a healthy environment for all families. The spread of germs is the biggest threat to our healthy environment. Each program encourages regular hand washing opportunities throughout each day and toys and materials are cleaned and disinfected regularly. According to State Licensing Regulations, everyone entering the center is required to wash their hands upon arrival to help keep germs at a minimum.

Unfortunately, illness is an inevitable consequence of any group setting. This means that maintaining a healthy environment sometimes entails the exclusion of sick children. The attached table outlines guidelines to be followed in the case of illness. These guidelines are based on State of Vermont Child Care Licensing, State Health Department and the Center for Disease Control. The Charlotte Children's Center staff will work with families to determine whether or not a child should be excluded from the program. A local pediatrician may also be consulted. Ultimately it is the opinion of the staff member that will be the determining factor, since their goal will be to ensure a successful day for all children. Families are expected to respect the staff member's decision and if notified to pick up their child, they should arrive as quickly as possible to do so. If the parents of an ill child are unable to be reached the staff member will contact the person the parents listed as the emergency contact. Parents are expected to ensure that the emergency contact is available if necessary.

The Charlotte Children's Center will not administer any medication to any child without written authorization from the parent. Parents are responsible for completing the medication chart in their child's program. Medication must be supplied in the original container and given to the appropriate staff member at drop off time. The Charlotte Children's Center will assume no responsibility for complications that may arise due to the administration of medication. In each

classroom there is a locked medicine box on a high shelf. If your child should need to take medication while at school please make sure to notify his teacher; fill out an administration medication form, and then lock the medicine in the box. Prescription medications need to be in their original container with the child's name and health care provider on it.

If a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, the family should notify the center as soon as possible so that other families may be notified.

Once the center has been notified of a confirmed communicable disease we will post signs and provide families with relevant informative materials.

Symptom/Illness	Necessary Actions
Bacterial Meningitis	Remove the child from the Center until the Medical Professional indicates safe return, notify the Health Department, notify other families of exposure.
Chicken Pox	Remove child from Center until all pox are scabbed and a medical professional indicates a safe return. Notify other families of exposure.
Colds and Flu	Remove the child from Center if disposition warrants Or if symptoms are too severe to reasonably control.
Diarrhea (3 loose stools)	Remove child from Center until symptom disappears
Diphtheria	Remove the child from the Center until a medical professional indicates a safe return, notify the Health Department, notify other families of exposure.
Fever (100.4 degrees or higher)	Remove the child from the Center until symptoms disappear. Children must be fever free for 72 hours, without the use of medication, before returning to group care with a doctor's note.
Fifth Disease	Notify center. Children may return once they have rash, which indicates that they are no longer contagious.
Giardia	Remove the child from the Center until a medical professional indicates a safe return, notify the Health Department. Notify families of exposure.
Hand, foot, and mouth (coxsackie virus)	Exclude if the child has a fever or behavior change, excessive drooling or unable to participate. The child may return after being seen by a healthcare provider if feeling well and is 72 hours fever free.

Hepatitis A	Notify the center.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impetigo 	Remove the child from Center until a medical professional indicates a safe return and notify other families of exposure.
Measles	Remove the child from the Center until a medical professional indicates safe return, notify the Health Department, notify other families of exposure.
Mumps	Same as above
Pertussis	Same as above
Pinworm Infection	Remove child from Center until 24 hours after treatment is initiated
Eye Irritation. Pinkeye	We no longer exclude for Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis. We can apply eye drops (over the counter or prescription) only with medication authorization form.
Ringworm Infection	Remove the child from the Center until 24 hours after treatment is initiated. Wash all personal belongings in hot water and dry in a hot dryer. Notify other families of exposure.
Rubella	Remove the child from the Center until a medical professional indicates a safe return, notify the Health Department, and notify other families of exposure.
Severe Coughing	Remove the child from the Center until symptoms disappear for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by a medical professional.
Streptococcal Infection	Remove child from Center until medical professional indicates safe return or on antibiotics and fever free for 24 hours.
Tuberculosis (active)	Remove child from Center until medical professional indicates a safe return, notify Health Department, notify other families of exposure.
Vomiting	Remove the child from the Center until symptoms disappear for 24 hours.
In the event of a Pandemic the Center will follow guidelines set out by VT Dept of Health and the Child Development	https://www.healthvermont.gov/ https://dcf.vermont.gov/COVID-19

Division	
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SIDS Policy and Safe Sleep Practices

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep unless there are medical orders requiring alternative positioning.

If a child falls asleep in the swing or comes in asleep in their carseat, they will be transferred to the crib as soon as feasible. Cribs shall have firm, well-fitting mattresses and crib sheets. Soft objects, toys, sheepskins, beanbags, waterbeds, comforters and pillows shall not be used.

No child will be swaddled. We strongly encourage you to bring in sleep sacks for your child. Also, pacifiers are permitted in cribs with parental permission.

Lice Policy

Children who come to the Center with an active case of head lice will be asked to stay home until they are free of eggs and nits. Parents in the a classroom with a case of head lice will be asked to take home all personal belongings to launder them.

Medication Policy

The center does not stock or provide medications; only those provided by the family will be administered. For all medications, prescription, non-prescription and topical lotion, parents will need to fill out a permission form. All medications will require a specific start and end date; the only exceptions will be epinephrine or other medication for an allergic reaction and medication for emergency rescue breathing (such as an inhaler). These emergency medications may be left at the Center and have the start and end date, as well as time to be given, "as needed." All other medications will be returned to families at the end of the administration dates. Medication (prescription/over the counter) will not be administered until written permission is obtained.

XI. Center Closings:

You can find an up to date [2024-2025 Calendar Here](#). Please note that we close at 3:30 on the first Wednesday of each month to conduct Staff Meetings. Notices and reminders will be sent to you via Procure each month. CCC closes for the following: a week of Teacher In Service each August, Labor Day, Indigenous People's Day, Parent Teacher Conferences, Thanksgiving Break, December Holiday Break, New Year's Day, Teacher Professional Development, April Break, Memorial Day, and the week of Independence Day. Please note that families are financially obligated to pay for any days we are closed so that we can maintain our budget.

Closing due to inclement weather

The Charlotte Children's Center will follow the Champlain Valley School District for closing due to inclement weather. If CVSD has a delayed opening of one hour, the Center will open at 8:30 a.m. If there is a two hour delay for opening, the Center will open at 9:30 a.m. Families are responsible for finding information on school closing on either a TV or radio station the morning of the event. WCAX and WPTZ are both consistent places to find this information. If CVSD is closed for other reasons such as heating or transportation issues, the Center will remain open and you will be notified by the staff members about the status of our hours. If it is necessary to close the Center early for any reason, parents will be notified individually by email or telephone. If we are unable to contact you after a reasonable amount of time, we will call the emergency contact numbers parents have given us.

XII. Parent Volunteers/Volunteer Obligations:

The Center benefits greatly from all parent volunteers. **Each family is responsible for fulfilling a total of 6 hours of volunteer work at CCC.** Examples of this include: helping at CCC events, attending Outdoor Work Days, being a member of our Board of Director, assisting with daily snacks, providing programming, etc. We want you to consider how you want to show up for our community, and we are willing to work with you on finding a positive, effective way to make this happen!

Each year the Parent Volunteer Organization plans some fundraising events to benefit the Center. Parents are always invited to visit or volunteer in the classrooms and are asked to chaperone field trips. About twice a year we will ask parents to provide a teacher appreciation lunch for the staff. Without our wonderful staff, we wouldn't exist. One parent creates a google spreadsheet to share and many volunteer to bring in a dish. It is just one of the many ways we celebrate the staff at the Center.

Twice a year, the Director organizes parent workdays. Workdays are a great way to support the Center, complete necessary projects, and meet other Center families. All families are notified in advance and can sign up to help with specific projects.

The Board of Directors often has openings for parent volunteers when board terms end. Please the Director, Board President, or other board members if you are interested in a board position.

XIII. Confidentiality:

All information that is shared with the staff of the Charlotte Children's Center will be held in strict confidence. Since all staff members work with all families the Director is responsible for sharing pertinent information with teachers on a need to know basis. Child assessments and health records are kept in a file cabinet in the Director's Office.

Assessments for preschool children who receive ACT 166 funding will be shared with the partnered School District personnel, but only after parents have signed a Consent to Release Form.

XIV. Behavior Management:

At the Charlotte Children's Center, a set of limits and rules that are appropriate for each age group are in effect. Only positive methods of guidance and discipline will be used with the children to encourage self-control, self-direction, positive self-esteem, and cooperation. It is a goal of the Charlotte Children's Center staff to encourage children to be in control of their own behavior and to make positive choices to ensure their own success.

In the event a child exhibits harmful behavior that is a danger to themselves or others the Charlotte Children's Center will follow state regulation 6.2.8.4. 1,2,3

In support of continuity of care and education, the program will consult with the child's parents and professionals, as appropriate, to develop and implement a plan to address concerns, with the goal of continuing the child's enrollment. In the event the concerns cannot be resolved, written notice to the child's parents will be given at least 5 days prior to expulsion. If a child is expelled, a full copy of the child's file will be provided to parents on or before the child's last day in the program.

If a child receives Act 166 funding a Pre-K Suspension and Expulsion Incident report will be sent to the SD/SU of the children's school of enrollment within 5 calendar days from the date of the incident.

XV. Child Abuse or Neglect:

In accordance with the state law and regulation, as well as sound early childhood education practices, it is a policy of the Charlotte Children's Center to report all suspected instances of child abuse or neglect.

It is the Charlotte Children's Center's Policy to:

- * Ensure that teachers are informed of the Center's maltreatment policy and of their duty as mandated reporters, to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect, as well as that failure to report can result in a fine.
- * Question all staff at the time of initial employment as to whether the person has ever been found to have abused or neglected a child in any way, or been convicted of any offense involving violence or inappropriate behavior with a child.
- * Report yearly to the State Division of Social Services the names of all staff members for the purpose of checking against the State Registry of Convicted Child Abusers.
- * Provide staff with training on the prevention and identification of child abuse and neglect.
- * Cooperate with The Child Development Division in any investigation involving the facility or its personnel.
- * Take immediate action to safeguard children, up to and including suspending a staff member from duty, should an allegation of abuse or neglect be made against a staff person. Any confirmed act of abuse or neglect will result in immediate staff termination.

XVI. Transition Policy:

Transitions are determined by the staff: child ratios. It is not guaranteed that a child will move to the next program at the minimum age. Teachers and families will work together to ensure that

each child's transitions are as successful as possible and occur when that child is ready. Children transition to the next class at the start of each school year, unless their developmental needs indicate otherwise and we are able to make this work mid-year while maintaining teacher:child ratios.

XVI. Parking Lot Safety:

The Center's parking lot is particularly busy at the beginning and end of the day. Although the Center has no way of monitoring its parking lot, it is requested that for everyone's safety:

- Children may not be left unattended in cars in the parking lot.
- Cars are never left running.
- A child never leaves a car or the building unless they are holding the hand of an adult.
- Cars are driven slowly both in the parking lot and in the driveway.
- Children are not transported to or from the Center without appropriate car seats or restraints.
- Families should not ask the Center to release their child to a sibling under 18, even if the parent is waiting in the car in the parking lot.

XVII. Emergency Preparedness

The Center strives to provide safe learning environments for the children in our care. We are required by the *VT Child Care Regulations* to hold fire drills monthly, which the children are great at practicing. In the beginning of the school year the children are warned of fire drills and what the expectations are when they hear the alarm go off. This is what the children practice:

1. Stop what you are doing
2. Calmly go to the door and line up
3. When a teacher does a count to make sure all the friends are in line, please walk with the teacher to the designated spot on the playground. (There is an evacuation map located by all the doors exiting to the playground)
4. Once the Administrators have done a sweep, everyone is released to go back inside. At that time, everyone walks back to the steps and heads inside.

We cannot stress enough the importance of inside shoes. We do not stop to put shoes or boots on when conducting a drill (unless there is a ton of snow outside and we have all been informed of the drill) In an emergency, our main concern is to get everyone out of the building safely.

The Center is also required to conduct *Secure the School Drills* every other month. During this time, the Center goes on lockdown and the children gather in a quiet area with the teachers. While this may sound scary, we explain to the children that in case of an emergency we need to stay close together. The doors and windows are locked, lights are turned off, and the shades get drawn. If you have any questions regarding this, please don't hesitate to ask.

In addition, once a year we will also run a full evacuation/relocation drill. Families will receive an email regarding the drill and when it will be expected. We will relocate to the Charlotte Library (Discovery, Adventurers, & Builders) and the Town Hall (Explorer & Seekers). In the event of a real emergency, parents will be notified as to where and when to pick up their child.

Thank you for choosing The Charlotte Children’s Center. We look forward to being a part of your child’s early childhood experience and building a long-term relationship with your family. Please share with us your goals and philosophies for making this experience as successful as we can. If you have any further questions about our program, or would like to schedule a tour, please email Erika Towne, Program Director at erika@ccckids.org. We look forward to welcoming you to our learning community!

