



St. Louis
Child Development Center
A program of Catholic Charities

PARENT HANDBOOK

2026

Center Hours
7:00 am-5:00pm
Monday through Friday

ST. LOUIS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
229 Pool St. Biddeford ME 04005
Tel. #: 282-3790
Fax # 282-1694

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*Interpretation for ELL (LEP)
(ELL – “English Language Learners”)
(LEP – “Limited English Proficient”)*

At the St. Louis Child Development Center we employ staff from all ethnic backgrounds. The primary language we communicate in is English. If you communicate in another language, please let us know. We will make every effort to make our materials and communication accessible for your home language.

All Catholic Charities Maine Staff are trained regarding ELL/LEP policies and procedures

All Catholic Charities Maine Staff are provided with language assistance materials and telephone translator materials.

At a minimum, the Catholic Charities Maine Office of Quality and Compliance conducts quarterly assessments to ensure staff are familiar with ELL/LEP procedures.

WELCOME TO THE ST. LOUIS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The staff and administration welcome you to our program and hope you will be happy that you selected us to care for your child. This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the program and policies of our center. Both home and center have important functions to serve in educating and caring for your child. Guiding the development of a child is a cooperative endeavor. In order to provide the most supportive and responsive environment for your child it is important to have open communication between you and our staff.

After your child's transition to the center, it is important to take time regularly to let us know how you feel he/she is doing and what we can do to make your child's experience at the center meet their needs. You are always welcome to visit in your child's room. Please contact your child's teacher or the Director with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you have regarding our program.

COA-NATIONALLY ACCREDITED

The Council On Accreditation is a national accreditor of programs serving infants, toddlers preschool and school-age children. It provides objective and reliable verification that a program is providing high quality childcare services. The COA accreditation process

involves a detailed review and analysis of an organization or program's administrative functions and service delivery practices. All are measured against international standards of best practice. These standards emphasize services that are accessible, appropriate, based in the community, coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, individualized, outcomes-oriented, provided by a skilled and supported workforce, respectful of individual rights, strengths-based, supportive of partnership, child and family focused, treat all people with dignity, involve family and provider collaboration, and address child outcomes. As such, consumers, board members, funders, regulators and staff can have confidence in the credibility, integrity and achievement of the organization or program. COA is recognized by the State of Maine as an equal accreditation body to NAEYC. **Research Note:** *Research has shown that high quality early childhood education can have a positive impact on the development, academic achievement, and safety of children.*

In addition, the State of Maine has issued the center a "Level 4 Certificate of Quality" which is the highest level. The Quality Certificate entitles families to a State tax credit. Please see the Front Office for more details.

MISSION STATEMENT

The center is committed to partnering with families to provide care and early intervention programs for young children, in a learning environment that is; developmentally appropriate, nurturing and safe. We strive to foster the development of socialization skills, independence, a positive self-image, and promote the joy of life-long learning, through our relationships with children, parents, colleagues and the community.

PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

- Each child is special: an individual to be cherished and cared for.
- All children are capable of being loved.
- Children feel good about themselves when they succeed.
- All areas of a child's growth and development are important and must be honored.
- Children learn best through play and interacting with other children in a safe, nurturing environment.
- Children learn important lessons from watching adults. The staff working with the children must always be aware that they are role models for children and must present themselves in a positive manner.
- Praise and positive reinforcement will always work better than punishment in helping children shape their behaviors.
- All materials, curriculum, and strategies must be developmentally appropriate, and tailored to a child's individual needs.

The best place for a child with special needs is with other children, with supports in place to assist the child in meeting developmentally appropriate expectations

SERVICES

The center, as one program of Catholic Charities Maine, believes that the family is the cornerstone of a child's life. The services provided through this program are dedicated to supporting the child and the family in a variety of ways that include:

- The provisions of childcare to enable parents to work, attend school, and/or participate in job training.
- The provision of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that meet the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional needs of children.
- Providing a warm and welcoming environment that makes children feel secure and encourages parental involvement.

The St. Louis CDC provides care for children ages 7 weeks to 9 years of age and the children are grouped by age and developmental level.

<i>Classroom</i>	<i>Ages Served</i>	<i>Total # of Children Served</i>	<i>Child to Teacher Ratio</i>
"Shooting Stars"	6 Weeks to 12 Months	4 – 8	4 – 1
"Puffin Place"	12 – 18 Months	10	5 – 1
"Jungle"	18 – 30 Month	10	5 – 1
"Little Steps"	30 – Months to 36 Months	7 – 14	7 – 1
"Friendship Room"	3 Year Old	10 – 16	10 – 1
"Rainbow Room"	4 Year Old	10 – 16	10 -1
"Busy Beavers"	5 to 9 Year Old, Out of School Care	12 – 20	13 – 1
Total # of Children Served		63 – 94	
<i>The St. Louis Building is licensed for 114 children. However, because we have chosen to enroll a significant number of younger children AND we have chosen to keep class size lower for our pre-school children, the highest # of children we will serve is limited to 94. Also the total # of children served at any given time is determined by the availability of staff. Regardless of the number of staff, the child to staff ratios for each age range will remain consistent with Maine State Licensing Standards for Child Care.</i>			

All the services provided at this center are strictly non-sectarian. The program provides no religious education, and has no requirements concerning religious matters for either staff or clients. The center does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, physical or mental disability, ancestry or national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other legally protected status in admission, access, treatment or employment in its programs or activities.

Interpreter Services: Interpreter services are provided for families with limited English proficiency (LEP). This service is offered in compliance with the Civil Rights Act – Title VI. Because so many different languages are spoken in our community, we are unable to

have all of our paperwork translated into so many different languages. Interpreters will be provided to facilitate communication, fill out forms, have forms translated, or for a variety of other reasons. Our goal is to provide language services to every family.

Note: Families often express concern about their children learning English while retaining or continuing to acquire their home language. At the center, we strongly encourage you to use your native language with your child at home. Current research shows that very young children acquire language in the context of a relationship, and that children do best if they hear a single language from a single adult. The teachers speak English with the children at the center, and your child will acquire English through his/her experiences with the other children and teachers.

RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

All children receiving attending the St. Louis Program are guaranteed the following rights.

1. Children will be free from emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation.
2. Each Child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the Child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the Child.
3. Each Child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.
4. Each Child must be provided Child care services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.
5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Child Care Facility.
6. Each Child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that Child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the Child Care Facility.
7. Each Child has the right to Developmentally Appropriate activities, materials, and equipment.
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to Child Care Facility policies and practices.

RIGHTS OF PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS

All Enrolling Parents and Guardians of children attending the St. Louis Program are guaranteed the following rights.

- 1.** A Child's Parent or Legal Guardian will be fully informed of items or services which are included in the rate they pay for Child care services.
- 2.** A Child's Parent or Legal Guardian has the right to be fully informed of findings of the most recent inspection conducted by the Department. The St. Louis Program will inform Children's Parents or Legal Guardians that the licensing inspection results are public information and inspection results must be posted in a prominent place on the Premises.
- 3.** Parents or Legal Guardians will be notified by the Child Care Facility within two business days of any actions taken against the Child Care Facility by the Department, including but not limited to, decisions to issue conditional Licenses, refusal to renew a License, or to impose fines or other sanctions.

THE CHILD'S DAILY SCHEDULE

- 7:00AM-8:30AM** Children arrive at the program and are escorted to the appropriate room or playground by parent/guardian. All children are signed in on the sign-in sheets upon arrival.
- 8:30AM-9:00AM** Morning greeting and AM snack
- 9:15AM-11:45AM** Morning Prime Time (including group time, indoor and outdoor play, and any individual therapies).
- 11:30AM-12:00PM** Lunch- times vary depending on classroom
- 12:00PM-2:00PM** Rest Time/quiet time
- 2:00PM-2:30PM** PM Snack
- 2:30PM-5:00PM** Afternoon Prime Time (including group time, indoor & outdoor play, special activities)
- 5:00PM** Center closes promptly; all children leave for the day.

CURRICULUM

The center uses The Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines for children as the blueprint for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. Each classroom emphasizes creative expression and problem solving, while maintaining a balance of teacher-planned activities and those that emerge from the child's individual interest, abilities, goals and objectives. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines focus on 4 major areas of development including Social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The curriculum emerges from the classroom environment. For example, the dramatic play area affords opportunity for socialization and language development. Blocks are wonderful for exploration of relative size and shape (geometric relationship) as well as fine motor manipulation. Music and movement offer opportunities for socialization, body kinesthetic, pitch and rhythm awareness and appreciation of cultures. Activities like painting or working with play dough develops interest, fine motor skills, socialization, and sensitivity to color, shape, and form. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are integrated, overlapping, and are supported by research about how children grow and learn.

We also are constantly re-adjusting our curriculum to reflect the specific (and always changing) needs and personalities of the children currently enrolled.

We believe that children learn best:

- by supporting children in the context of their family and community
- by having educated teachers who understand child development and how children grow and learn at the preschool stage
- by having sensitive teachers who are knowledgeable about individual learning styles of children
- by having an organized learning environment with a variety of age appropriate materials
- by having a planned daily schedule that includes large blocks of purposeful play that is facilitated by highly intentional teaching practices
- by having planned experiences that promote active thinking and experimenting

Holidays/Celebrations, Culture, and Language: Holidays and celebrations are viewed as an important part of family life. We also acknowledge and respect diversity. We welcome families from different cultures and all faiths. At the center we strive to find a balanced approach to holidays without exaggerating the experience or ignoring it. Curriculum will not be holiday driven but will recognize individual similarities and celebrate individual differences. Some examples may be to group holiday celebrations according to the seasons and look for parallels across cultures, set holiday activities in the context of people's daily lives and beliefs, and connect them to specific children, families, and staff. The center also welcomes families to share their special family traditions with the Center. Please share with your teacher if your family speaks a language other than English or has traditions or cultural experiences that could be shared with your child's class. The program welcomes diversity and the opportunity to learn and build on our understanding of other cultures, family structure, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways. The more teachers know about what is unique and special about you and your child, the better they will be able to help your child grow and learn.

Physical Activity Policy: Children will engage in physical activity for a minimum of 60-90 minutes each day.

- Children will spend at least 30 minutes outside each morning and afternoon session daily, unless it is raining heavily, or there is a weather advisory; such as extreme heat/humidity or a cold advisory.
- In the event of inclement weather teachers will provide physical activity time in the classroom.
- Teacher-led physical activity breaks will be provided throughout the day.
- Active play time is never withheld as a punishment.
- At least one teacher will join the children in active play every day.
-

Passive Media Policy

- Passive media (television & videos) are used only as infrequent events, rather than regular, daily routines. Screen time should not exceed more than 30 minutes per week.
- Programs are previewed by a staff member prior to use to assure they are educational and age appropriate.
- Accommodations will be made to ensure that another option for activity is available.
- No child is required to view the program.
- Teachers discuss what is viewed with the children to develop critical viewing skills.
- Passive media is never allowed during any snack or mealtime.
- There will be no screen time for children under the age of 2 years.

Child Screening Services: With parent permission, all children are screened using the Ages and Stages screening tool within 90 days of enrollment in the program. This provides the classroom teachers and parents with information regarding important developmental milestones for young children and assist with developing appropriate goals for the child. The screening may also identify children that could benefit from a referral for additional early intervention services. Referrals for early intervention may include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, or educational services (developmental therapy). Screening children helps children receive services earlier and prepare them for school. Parents are encouraged to share information with their child's teacher to help complete the screening.

Child Assessment Services: Children attending the center shall be involved in an ongoing assessment process which is based on the Maine Early Learning Guidelines or a recognized evidence-based assessment tool. Assessment information will be kept confidential and not released without signed parental permission. The assessment shall include but is not limited to anecdotal records; rating scales; checklists; work samples; informal notes; and observations. The assessment will be conducted in order to compile a portfolio for each child and to assist in planning activities for the classroom. Teachers will compile assessment data 4 times per year (Nov., Feb., May, Aug.) and offer parent conferences 2 times per year. Families will be asked to contribute to the assessment and portfolio contents. The contents of the portfolio shall always be made available to the children and their families and may be reviewed during conferences.

Inclusion:

While we are not able to access all the supports of a fully “therapeutic program,” the St. Louis CDC does define itself as an “Inclusionary Program,” which is to say that we will explore all reasonable adaptations and accommodations required to maintain children in our “mainstream setting.

When a child present with a special need, classroom staff are asked to observe and document the specific need of that child, and in partnership with the Site Manager and/or Program Director and/or the family, develop an adaptive program for that child.

Where appropriate, families will be referred to Child Development Services for additional evaluations and services, and/or the Maine Parent Federation for

Some of the potential adaptations that might be put in place to maintain a child would be:

1. Adapting the program schedule to more fully meet the child's needs.
2. Adapting the established curriculum to be more accessible to the child.
3. Providing time out of the classroom on a regular basis to alleviate the child's stress.
4. Make time and space available to outside therapists to provide services within the program.
5. Allow outside therapist to provide service within our classrooms.

Some of the potential adaptation that we **will not** provide:

1. Keeping a child in a younger (chronological age) classroom which might be more consistent with the child's developmental level. (i.e. We will not place a Pre-School child with developmental delays into a Toddler classroom long term, where the child would not have age appropriate roll models.)
2. Any adaptations that is not approved by the parents/guardians.
3. Any adaptations that might call for any form of physical restraint.

Parent Resources:

Child Development Services: The primary resource for Pre-School children with Special Needs is the local “Child Development Services” (or “CDS.”) This is a state program mandated to both screen children for potential developmental concerns and if warranted provide any approved services. Both screenings and approved services are at NO COST to the parent. You can contact this office by calling: 1-877-770-8883 (www.maine.gov/doe/cds.)

Maine Parent Federation: Raising a child with a disability is a challenging task. The Maine Parent Federation is a statewide organization that provides information, advocacy, education and training to benefit families of children with disabilities and/or special health care needs. You can contact this organization by calling: 1-800-870-7746. (www.mpf.org).

Child Guidance and Discipline

All children need a safe and comfortable place to learn. Guidance occurs constantly and consistently throughout the day. Throughout the day teachers will take opportunities to teach children the skills of cooperation, teamwork, using words to communicate needs, taking turns, controlling physical impulses, expressing emotions in ways that do not hurt others, persistence & problem solving. These skills are best taught in the context of the day's activities. Interaction with children attending the center is an opportunity for the staff to nurture and teach. It is the responsibility of all adults employed and/or associated with the program to model positive interactions for all children in our care. Teachers are a secure base of support for children, they respond promptly and appropriately (taking children's level of development into consideration) to children's; positive initiations, negative emotions, and feelings of hurt and fear by providing comfort, support, and assistance. Teachers encourage children's expression of all types of emotions, with responses that are appropriate to the individual child and situation. Teachers never use physical punishment, threats, derogatory remarks, or withhold food as a form of discipline. Children are supported as they practice the skills of entering and sustaining play, resolving conflicts, as well as problem solving, and dealing with their own emotions and the emotions of others. Teachers do this by helping children to identify feelings, describe problems, and by offering alternative solutions. Logical consequences, such as "you will not be ready to go outside with your friends until you put your coat on", and redirection, such as, "if you continue throwing sand you will be done playing in the sand table", are used.

Behavior Policy: The behavior expected of all children attending any program operated by Catholic Charities Maine will be consistent with the agency's Behavior Management Policy. Behavior considered appropriate for public schools, in family settings and the community will provide the basis for requirements concerning the conduct of children attending the two centers. Specific attention will be paid to the child's developmental level in setting behavioral expectations. Expectations for each child will be based on the child's developmental age, needs, and abilities.

When behaviors are of concern teachers will observe and document behaviors and the circumstances to identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that may predict and/or contribute to the behaviors. Teachers will then try other teaching strategies, make environmental or activity modifications to support appropriate behavior. Teachers will work with the family to develop a plan of support for the child that supports inclusion and success.

All behavioral management interventions will be based on effective practices to help a child develop self-esteem, empathy, self-control, friendliness, cooperation, and respect to assist them to get along with others and to resolve conflicts. .

No specific intervention is prescribed for a particular incident. **Any and all behavior management must A) Reflect the child(ren)'s age and developmental level, B) Reflect each child's individual abilities, needs, and personality, and C) If**

appropriate, impose “logical consequences” for that child’s actions. No corporal punishment or physical restraint is allowed.

Steps in addressing behavioral needs:

- When a child is acting out to a degree that his/her safety is a concern, or the behavior is placing staff or other children at risk, the parent will be contacted. If the situation is critical, the parent will be asked to take the child home. Depending on the severity of the behavior, the parent can be asked to not have the child attend the center until support services and a behavioral plan are put into place. Exclusion could be an option. If so, the Exclusion Policy will be followed.
- If the behavior continues the parent will be requested to meet with the classroom teacher and to develop a behavior plan. The behavior plan will be implemented, and all staff will be made aware of the steps outlined in the plan.
- If the behavior continues, after the behavior plan has been implemented, a meeting between the parent, teacher and the Director/Program Coordinator will be scheduled. All avenues to support the child will be discussed, which will include the topic: Is this the right placement to meet the child’s needs?
- If all these steps have been followed and the unsafe behavior continues, the child might be asked to be excluded from the center. The final decision to exclude the child will be made by the Director-following the Exclusion Policy procedures.

EXCLUSION POLICY

The safety of the children and staff is our primary concern. Some children have difficulty in large groups of peers and need smaller childcare groupings than are available at St. Louis. When children present special needs beyond our normal capacity for caring, we will make every accommodation for the child and family. However, if a child has sufficient issues: behavioral, medical or developmental, which prevents us from keeping that child or other children safe, we may need to exclude the child from the program. This decision rests with the Site Director (along with the second administrator-if present) of the center and the classroom Lead Teacher.

PROCEDURE

Prior to excluding a child enrolled in the program, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The Lead Teacher will bring any and all concerns for a child's safety and/or the safety of other children and/or staff to the attention of the Site Director (along with making the second administrator-if present) Documentation through the use of Incident reports will be used to support all concerns.
2. The Site Director will make an assessment of the situation. The Site Director (along with the second administrator-if present) and the Lead Teacher, will determine and document:
 - a. The severity of the child's behavior
 - b. Any evaluations/assessments needed or already conducted.
 - c. Any contributing factors to the child's behavior (either home based, or program based).
 - d. Any adaptive programming available for the child in question.
 - e. Any support/interventions in place for the child and/or the family
3. The parent will be consulted early in the process. If exclusion is a possible outcome for the child, the parent should know early on that this is a possibility.
4. If exclusion is the only option to guarantee the child or other children's safety, the Site Director will consult with Catholic Charities Maine's Director of Quality and Compliance prior to the final decision to exclude. The timing of the exclusion will be the decision of the Site Director.
5. Whenever possible, the Site Director or the second administrator will counsel the parent as to alternative childcare placements available.
6. If returning to the center is a future option, this decision will be made by the Site Director.

HEALTH

Immunizations: Current Maine State Licensing Standards require that all children attending the St. Louis program document that they are fully vaccinated (or provide documentation that the child has a **MEDICAL exemption** in regards to this standard.)

A copy of the current requirements for immunization by age can be found at the end of this handbook.

Personal Hygiene: The center supports personal hygiene by helping children learn proper handwashing and how to brush their teeth. Children brush their teeth daily. Staff, visitors, and children wash their hands after coming in contact with bodily fluids such as mucus, blood & vomit including after blowing nose and coughing on hands, after handling pets or animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that may be contaminated by contact with animals, before attending to wounds, before meals and snack, after toileting & diapering, before handling foods, before assisting with tooth brushing, after water play, and when moving to another group that includes contact with Toddlers. Staff will also wash their hands before & after administering medication, after assisting a child with toileting, and after handling garbage or cleaning.

Food: Good nutrition is the foundation of a healthy, happy child. St. Louis does provide an early AM "snack," breakfast and PM "snack," all meeting USDA nutrition guidelines. Parents are asked to provide lunches for their children.

Candy, gum, soda, etc. are bad for teeth and destroy the appetite for more nutritious food. We prefer that children not bring sweets with them to the center. Please do not bring in food products such as; chocolate milk, donuts, Danish, etc. These items not only do not fit our nutritional philosophy of the 5210 Program. but they also hurt the feelings of other children who do not have such a snack. You are welcome to bring in food products such as: 100% juice, fruit, toast, or dry cereal. Food brought from home must be in a container labeled with the child's name and the date. To keep foods cold, please add an ice pack to their container. For celebrations, we discourage bringing in the traditional sweets such as cake and ice cream. Instead we suggest that parents bring in healthy options such as fruit, yogurt parfaits, or other items that are low in sugar, fat and sodium. Please check with the classroom teacher before bringing in any special food items for the class.

Toileting & Diapering: Teachers work closely with families to coordinate a toileting plan for each child. It is in the child's best interest if the toileting plan is followed consistently both at home and school. Diapers & pull-ups will be checked at least every 2 hours when children are awake and when they awaken. Soiled and wet diapers will be changed as soon as detected. Please make sure your child has enough extra clothing in their cubby for accidents. Parents are required to supply diaper/pull-ups. Licensing regulations require that staff **do not** clean or rinse soiled clothing or diapers. Soiled clothing (and medically necessary cloth diapers) will be immediately placed in a plastic bag to be sent home that day. Note: If cloth diapers must be used, the diaper will have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of urine & feces. Both the diaper & outer covering will be changed as a single unit.

Napping: All children will have a scheduled nap/rest time, as required by our licensing regulations. Cots and/or mats will be provided by the Center and assigned specifically to one child. Parents are requested to provide a blanket and pillow for their child. All bedding needs to be brought home weekly for laundering.

Clothing: Children need to be dressed for indoor/outdoor play when they come to the Center. The children spend time outdoors every day (weather permitting). All children need to have appropriate clothing for outside play including snow pants, boots, hats, mittens, and warm winter jackets from the months of November to mid April. This clothing is required for cold and windy weather not just snow that can occur during these months.

Every child must have at least one extra complete change of clothing including underwear, socks, pants and shirt in their backpack. Extra clothing is needed due to accidents, water play, or wetness from rain, mud or snow.

The center keeps a limited supply of clothing available for an emergency. At the end of the day if your child is wearing clothing please launder and return it the following day. This will ensure that we will have clean extra clothes for the children who need them.

Children are discouraged from wearing boots in the classroom. Please bring in a pair of sneakers or other shoes to wear in the classroom during the winter months. Any clothing that could be a safety hazard is discouraged.

Please label all clothing and belongings. This will assure that your child's lost or mixed up belongings will be returned when located.

Pet Policy: Pets are not allowed in the facility or on facility grounds without permission from the Director. Pets such as ferrets, turtles, iguanas, lizards, birds of the parrot family are prohibited at the center due to risk of salmonella. Any other wild or dangerous animals are also prohibited due to the risk of injury. All pets at the center or visiting the program must be in good health, free of disease, fully immunized, maintained on a flea, tick and worm control program, and be suitable for contact with children. A certificate from a veterinarian shall be provided or on file stating that the pet meets these conditions before visiting the program. Teachers supervise all contact & interactions with animals. Children with allergies to animals will not be exposed to pets. All hands will be washed after handling pets or animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that may be contaminated by contact with animals.

Health & Safety Training: All full-time staff working directly with children are required to receive pediatric C.P.R. and First Aid certification. There must always be present a staff member in the center who is currently certified in first aid and CPR. Full time staff also receives annual training regarding the safe handling of Blood Borne Pathogens.

Immunizations: All children are required to have a Certificate of Immunization that illustrates a child's immunization status within 30 days of enrollment as required by the State of Maine's Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities. This information will be kept in the child's file.

Health Policy: Sick children must be cared for at home. Your child cannot attend the center if he/she has had (or develops):

- A fever,
- Vomiting,
- Diarrhea,
- Draining from eyes and/or ears,
- An unidentified rash or
- Behavior change.

If your child becomes ill while attending the program and is determined to be too ill to be in our care you will be contacted and requested to pick your child up as soon as possible. If your child continues to have any of the above symptoms at bedtime, they need to be kept out of childcare the following day (note: your child must be symptom free *without* medication). The decision to send a child home rests with classroom staff, in consultation with the Director/designee.

Specific Readmission Guidelines:

Chicken Pox	May readmit when fever free and all sores have dried and crusted – usually 6-7 days after rash first appears.
Conjunctivitis	May readmit when there is no longer any discharge from the eye.
Rash	When accompanied by fever or behavior change, may readmit with physician’s written assurances that symptoms are not contagious.
Open Sores	If open sores have drainage, child may return after treatment has begun– lesions should be covered if possible.
Head Lice	Parent/guardian of affected child will be notified. Child can return once treatment has been given. When child returns a head check must be performed by center staff, prior to the parent leaving. <u>If child still has live lice or a significant amount of nits, the child will not be allowed to return.</u>
Ringworm	May readmit after anti-fungal treatment is started – lesions should be covered if possible.
Scabies	May readmit after anti-parasitic treatment has been completed.
Strep Throat	May re-admit 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started and when temperature has been normal for 24 hours.

In some cases, we may require a doctor’s certification in order for your child to return to the program.

Staff will provide information to families both verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease. When children are ill, it is helpful for parents to share the symptoms with staff, to support the process of minimizing the spread of illness.

Allergies: Parents must inform the center of any and all allergies or special medical conditions affecting their children. The center will honor these needs upon receipt of proper documentation from a physician. Children's allergies will be posted in the child's room with parental permission. Parents complete a permission form for allergy posting as well as allowing the information to be shared with food preparation personnel.

Children with special health care needs, food allergies or special nutrition needs, must have an individual care plan or instructions provided by the child's health care provider, to instruct teachers how to handle the child's specific needs. This plan will be placed in the child's file. Any strategies for dealing with a child's allergic reaction must be discussed with all staff who have contact with the child.

Medication: The dispensing of medication is a serious matter. Staff may administer medication to children in the program only under the following conditions:

1. Only medications prescribed by a physician and in the original medicine container with a written, signed and dated request from the parent or legal guardian will be administered.
2. If a child is receiving a prescribed daily medication it must be provided to the center by the parent or legal guardian or the child will not be allowed to remain at the center until another supply is provided.
3. Proof of the physician's prescription may be a pharmacy label on the original container or a signed note from the physician.
4. No "non-prescription" medications will be administered to a child without a physician's order and a written, signed and dated parental permission naming the medication and dosage frequency.
5. No injected medications may be administered by childcare staff, except pre-packaged emergency medications (e.g. bee sting kits, EpiPen's) specifically prescribed by a physician for a life-threatening condition which has been documented in the child's file.
6. Before the program staff will administer any medication, A "medication permission form" must be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian. This form will indicate the name of the child, name of the medication, amount to be administered, method of administration, frequency and times for administration, possible side effects, and any special instructions. This form will also serve as a record of when the medication was administered, by whom, and any observable side effects.

7. All medications will be stored in a locked secure area. Only teachers assigned to that specific classroom (along with program supervisors) shall have access to these medications.
8. All medications administered shall be recorded on the child's medication log. This "Medication Log" is a component of the Permission Form and will indicate the name of the medication, amount dispensed, by what method, time, date, and the signature of the administrator of the medication. This medication log will be reviewed regularly by the Program Site Manager and/or Program director, to mitigate the risk of error.
9. All documentation regarding the administration of medication will be retained and placed in the child's file.
10. All direct service staff will be trained in these policies and procedures as a component of new hire orientation. These medication policies and procedures will be reviewed via staff meetings at least annually. Administration of medications will also be a required component of the bi-annual CPR/First Aid re-certification. Additional staff training will be provided if/when medication for children is complex enough to warrant.
11. Any unused medications will be immediately returned to the parent/guardian upon either the last day of the prescribed timeframe for administering or the child's last day in the program. IF a child leaves the program AND the family does not take the medication (i.e. the medication is still with us after the child leaves) the Program Site Manager or Program Director will place the medication in a locked/secure location until it can be properly disposed up through a community drug take back program (periodically offered by local police and/or hospitals.)

CHILD-RELATED EMERGENCIES

If a child receives a serious injury, the staff on site will determine the level of need and take one or more of the following courses of action.

1. The parent will be notified and asked to pick the child up and make arrangements for the appropriate treatment. Staff can, if appropriate, require a note from the parent, documenting that the child was seen and treated before the child is re-admitted.
2. Staff will call 911, requesting an ambulance come to the center to treat and transport a child (if necessary) to the emergency room. The parent will be immediately contacted to inform them of what has happened (all parent numbers, along with emergency back up numbers and "permission to treat" signatures are on file in the main office and in the classroom).
3. If a parent cannot be reached, we will try contacting the emergency people the parent has listed on their application form.

To make this work the following practices will be followed:

- Emergency information will be maintained and updated as needed. Parents must notify the Office immediately and update the Emergency Form noting any change in their emergency contact data.
- All staff will know the location of the emergency information. Copies of the emergency forms will be kept in the child's file in the office and another copy in the classroom.
- Childcare staff will take the sign-in sheets and the emergency forms with them on all field trips.
- Per State Licensing: There must always be present a staff member in each childcare facility who is currently certified in first aid and infant, child and adult CPR.
- Each room will have a fully stocked first aid kit.
- The first aid kit will always be available, including indoors, on the playground, and on field trips.
- An Incident/accident Report will be completed by a staff member whenever a child is injured in the program and the parent should be made aware of the event. The parent acknowledges the report by signing and dating it as does the staff person making out the report. The parent will receive the signed report and a copy is placed in the child's file. Note: If the child needed to seek medical or dental services, the report shall go to the Director to review and follow-up with if necessary.

4 All cases of serious injury, illness (or child death) connecting in any way to the St. Louis Program will be immediately reported to:

- State of Maine Child Licensing
- Catholic Charities Maine Office of Quality and Compliance
- Any appropriate Federal, State or Municipal Offices (i.e. Center for Disease Control, etc.)

SAFETY OF CHILDREN

Child Supervision: The children enrolled at the center are always supervised by sight and sound. Children will not be sent indoors or outdoors, without a staff person present. Staff will avoid situations where they are alone with one child.

Field Trips: A Field Trip Permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian for any trip off Center grounds. A field trip is determined to be any time a group of children leave the grounds for a specific destination. All field trips are local walking trips. Teachers take emergency contact information for children with them and carry a first-aid kit & cellphone in case of emergency.

Alcohol and Illegal Substances: The center prohibits the use of alcohol, illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances. This policy extends to any center-sponsored event. If a parent/guardian arrives to pick up her/his child and appears intoxicated or under the influence and exhibits behavior such as slurred or incoherent speech, difficulty walking, or other unusual behaviors that may indicate use of drugs and/or alcohol, staff may request the parent or guardian to seek an alternative form of transportation. The local police will be contacted to intervene if necessary. Safety of the children is our utmost concern.

Smoking Policy: The center (building & grounds) by State Licensing Regulations must be "Smoke Free". Smoking is not allowed in the building, playground, parking lot, entrances or walkways. Individuals who do smoke must do so off grounds.

Firearms: firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) in the center, parking lot, or on facility grounds. This policy extends to any center-sponsored event.

Fire Drills: Fire drills are conducted year-round on a monthly basis so the children will know what to expect in the event of a fire. The facility complies with State and local fire regulations and is inspected bi-annually by the State Fire Marshall's Office. Each room has two fire exits, and staff is well rehearsed in the procedures to follow in the event of a fire or building evacuation.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES AND PLANS

"Center Wide" emergencies will generally fall into three categories:

Evacuating the Building (as in cases of fire alarm.) Children will be escorted out the building via the most available exits (and there are outdoor exits in all of the classrooms.) Fire drills are practices at least every month.

Evacuating the Building and Grounds (as in cases a fire, bomb threat, flooding, potential flooding or other emergency situation which renders the center harmful or potentially unsafe.) All children and staff and other adults will evacuate to "**Curros Greenhouse and garden, located at 200 Pool St.** (just up the road from the center- heading back towards town-on the left-hand side of the road). At that time, all parents will be called to pick up their children immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the designated adults on the emergency form will be contacted. Fire drills will be held monthly, in order to ensure that the center can be evacuated in a timely manner.

When evacuating the building, classroom staff will always bring along both the attendance sheets and contact information for all children, so parents can be contacted as soon as possible.

Sheltering in Place (as in cases threats from individuals.) A center wide communication (via staff and classroom phones) will alert all staff. The staff will ensure all children are indoors, all doors are locked. If the threat is outside the building, children will be moved into the central hallway. In order to minimize the potential for this kind of threat, the building is maintained in a secure fashion at all times (all outside doors remained locked at all time. No un-attended adults (including parents) are allowed into the building at any time.

In all of these scenarios, there is always one individual in the facility designated to contact emergency services, while classroom staff focus on addressing the needs of the children. These emergency procedures are reviewed regularly, and staff are re-trained on this issue at least once a year.

MANDATED REPORTING

Under Maine state law, the center is considered a "mandated reporter" of potential child abuse and neglect. This means that staff, like all doctors, hospital personnel, public school teachers and any other child day care in the state, is required to report any evidence that might be the result of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The decision on whether the evidence we report should lead to an investigation by the child protective unit, is made by the Maine Department of Human Services. In the event that a child is interviewed by DHHS, parents are contacted prior to this occurrence by DHHS personnel.

Center childcare staff will not:

1. Interview any children
2. Ask "leading questions" of any children
3. Do any form of investigation
4. Pre-judge any children or families

We will act as advocates for children and families whenever appropriate. It is not the intent of this law to require facilities, like the center, to act as police or investigators. It is, instead, an attempt to protect those children who are truly endangered.

In an effort to ensure the safety and security of the children attending Catholic Charities Maine Child Development Centers, we are designated as Sex Offender Restricted Zones. This means that; All persons convicted of qualifying sexual offense(s) under Maine State law (17-A MRSA§261) called "**An Act to Prohibit Unauthorized Contact of Persons Convicted of Sex Offenses against Persons under 14 Years of Age with Persons under 14 Years of Age**", are prohibited from having direct or indirect contact with a child under the age of 14 on the property of Catholic Charities Maine where children under the age of 14 receive services. This includes, but is not limited to, CCM Child Development Centers & Child Residential Programs.

Because of this law we need parents to notify us immediately if any one on their child's pick-up list has been convicted of any such crime. If so, they will no longer be allowed to pick-up a child from our center. Please also be aware that you may not send a person convicted of such a crime to pick-up a child even on a one-time basis.

Parent Involvement and Communication

Parent Involvement: Parents are encouraged and welcomed to get involved with the program. There will be various opportunities for parents to participate in classroom and center wide activities over the course of the year. We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom and share areas of expertise with the children. Parents are invited to let the child's teacher know about their special talents, interests, hobbies, and cultural heritage as opportunities to provide enrichment activities in the classroom. Parents are welcome to eat meals with their child and are always welcome to assist on local walking field trips.

Parents are strongly encouraged to ask questions about their child's educational/enrichment activities. Teachers welcome input into how each child learns and takes parental comments and concerns as important information to make the child's and center's programming better. Teachers need as much information as possible from parents as they are the expert about their child.

Parents are welcome to use the lounge for relaxing and chatting with staff and other families. The Parent Bulletin Board allows us to share information and community events with you.

The center has an advisory group. The focus of this committee will be to provide a parental voice to center offerings for enrichment at the center that involve both the children and their parents. It also is a sounding board to discuss and update policies and procedures directly associated with the center.

Conferences / Parent Communication: In the fall and spring, classroom teachers conduct parent/teacher conferences concerning each child's progress. This gives the teacher and the family a chance to discuss any needs, difficulties, or concerns. These conferences are held at times to meet both parent and teacher convenience. Additional conferences may be scheduled when either parent or teacher feels it is necessary or a child enrolls after the fall conference date.

It is important that communication remains open between home and school. We communicate with parents on a regular basis by:

- posting weekly curriculum planning/events on the parent bulletin board.
- displaying and documenting children's work and photographs of them working in the classroom, with descriptions of the process and learning involved.
- informal communication in the morning or at the end of the day about the child's work, activities, play, or interactions.
- written communication such as letters/newsletters describing upcoming classroom events, field trips, or activities or letters related to behavior observations and/or behavior plans related to the Behavior Policy.
- Daily notes for children who are younger than preschool age.

Program Evaluation: Catholic Charities Office of Quality and Compliance requests parent feedback on a regular basis as one component of an ongoing "quality of service evaluations on the work of St. Louis Child Development Center.

PARENT FEES

While we do work with a variety of funders to assist families in meeting their child care costs (CCSP, ASPIRE, TANF, Military Voucher Programs etc.) most parents will be assessed a fee for service. Each family's fee is determined by:

1. The age of the child(ren)
2. The number of children from the family enrolled in the program (we provide a discount for more than 1 child enrolled.)
3. The number of days and/or hours a week the child is enrolled.
4. If the family is participating in one of the assistant program. the "Parent Co-Payment" as established by that specific program.

This is a "weekly fee" for 52 weeks a year. Holidays, emergency and weather closings, staff training days and our annual shut down week (as well as children's illnesses and family vacations) are built into the annual program costs. Therefore, parents must pay their full regular fee for the weeks children are enrolled. Our general holiday closings include:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Labor Day
President's Day	Columbus Day
Patriot's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Friday after Thanksgiving

We ask that, if possible, the family enroll in our "Tuition Express" program, which will facilitate this weekly payment.

If Tuition Express is not an option, we can receive payment via cash, check, money order, credit or debit cards. But once again, payment must be made prior to the week of service. If a family has difficulty in meeting their child care expenses, we ask that they call the St. Louis business office to discuss the difficulty.

St. Louis Child Care Rates **Effective July 3, 2021**

INFANT PROGRAM: 6 Weeks – 12 Months

5 Days:	-	\$330.00
4 Days	-	\$264.00
3 Days	-	\$198.00
2 Days	-	\$132.00

TODDLER PROGRAM : 12 Months – 36 Months

5 Days:	-	\$320.00
4 Days	-	\$256.00
3 Days	-	\$192.00
2 Days	-	\$128.00

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM: 36 Months to Kindergarten

5 Days:	-	\$300.00
4 Days	-	\$240.00

3 Days - \$197.00
2 Days - \$120.00

Pre-K (Before and After/Wrap Around Rates

30 or more hours per week: \$300.00
20 – 29 hours per week: \$235.00
10 - 99 hours per week: \$197.00
1 - 9 hours per week: \$137.00

School Age Program

30 + hours per week - \$216.00
20 – 29 hours per week - \$182.00
10 – 20 hours per week - \$116.00
1 – 9 hours per week - \$ 67.00

Late Fee Policy:

The Center has the following late fee policy:

1. Children who are not picked up by 5:00 pm will be assessed a fee of \$10.00 for any part of the first 15 minutes and \$5.00 for each fifteen-minute interval after.
2. These fees are in addition to regular weekly fees.
3. Payment for all late fees is expected by Friday of the week the fee was incurred.

Staff members are only scheduled until 5:00 PM. and have other commitments at the end of the day. You are expected to pick-up your child no later than the time that was agreed upon and documented on your enrollment agreement. If this time needs to be modified, please see the Office Manager or Director. Repeated late pick-ups will result in a written notice and/or meeting with the Director and if not remedied will result in termination.

Yearly Holiday Schedule

January	New Year's Day
	Martin Luther King Day
February	Washington's Birthday
April	Patriot's Day
May	Memorial Day
July	Independence Day
September	Labor Day
October	Columbus Day
November	Veteran's Day (<i>a teacher workshop day</i>)
December	Close 5-7 days depending on Christmas to New Year's schedule

Program also closes for 4-5 additional teacher workshop days during the year.

Closings: St. Louis CDC strives to be opened every day. The program may close if the Director decides there is the need to insure staff and children's safety. If the Director closes the program, families will be notified of the closing by public announcement by 5:45 am. Public announcements will be aired on WCSH Channel 6 and Channel 13. Parents can go to these TV channel web sites and sign up for a text alert when there is a delay or closing. If the center closes early due to inclement weather this also will be aired on WCSH Channel 6 and parents will be called to come pick-up their child. Our decision to close early will be based on the safety of your child and our staff traveling in inclement weather and regional closings in our area. Note: On-line you can setup a text response from Channel 6 so if we close for any reason you will be notified by a text from the station. If you are not bringing your child to the center due to inclement weather, please call the center and let us know.

ATTENDENCE

For your child to receive the maximum benefit from the program and participate in the daily routine we request that your child arrive by 9:00 AM. If your child will be late or absent for the day, please contact the office. Attendance is tracked daily and the reason for the absence is also noted. The center accepts a variety of childcare vouchers: DHHS Child Care Voucher, ASPIRE and Transitional Vouchers. When a childcare is being subsidized by one of these vouchers, we are required to report absences to the funding agency. If absences are excessive, the subsidy may be cancelled. If a child is ill or away on vacation, we ask that parents call us in the morning or prior to going on vacation, to let us know that the child will not be attending this will be considered an EXCUSED ABSENCE. However, if a parent doesn't call and the child does not attend on a scheduled day, this will be considered an UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. We must report more than 2 unexcused absences or 10 excused absences/month to ASPIRE and the DHHS voucher agency.

DROP OFF AND PICKUP

Parents are responsible for their child/children at drop-off and pick-up. Upon entry and exit of the building children must be accompanied by an adult. When entering the building, parents will be met at the front door and a St. Louis staff person will escort your child to their classroom. Your child's hours of attendance are recorded at both drop-off and pick-up times. Each child has emergency contact information both in the Office and in the classroom. This information contains the list of people who are authorized to pick-up your child. We will not let children go with unauthorized people. Until we get to know everyone who may pick-up a child, we will ask to see a picture ID, such as a Drivers License. Changes to the pick-up permission list must be made in writing, please see someone in the office for the form. In case of an emergency you can call the center and give permission for someone, not on the pick-up list, to pick-up. Please stop in the office the next day to sign the phone message.

Note: A parent **cannot** give permission for a minor (under 18 years of age or older to drop-off and pick-up their child/children.

TRANSPORTATION

The center does not provide transportation. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for transportation to and from the program. **Please never leave a child unattended in your vehicle when picking up or dropping off your child.** If your child receives transportation services, it is your responsibility to contact the transportation provider to cancel transportation if your child will be absent.

SECURITY

The center does have a internal and external security system and safety procedures. No un-accompanied adults or children are allowed in the facility. Parents are required to drop

off at the front door (where a staff will take the child to their classroom(s), and children will be picked up from the outside classroom door. People are not the parents must have prior permission from the parent or guardian, and must show proof of identification prior to pick up.

Confidentiality and Security of Files: Information about children in our care or formerly in our care and services that were provided to them by the program shall be kept confidential. Discloser will be granted with written authorization from a child's legal guardian, except as otherwise specified by law. Information about children in our care or formerly in our care shall be shared with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). All special education services provided by the Center are considered to be "protected health information" and are covered under the rules of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). All children's records will be kept in locked files in a secure location.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

As a Program of Catholic Charities Maine, the center subscribes to the Agency's policy and procedure on client grievance.

The center believes in rights of clients to participate actively in their own plans of care, including the right to question how the care is being provided. Grievances from clients are regarded as important, and sincere attempts will be made to mutually resolve any and all grievances in a fair, open and honest fashion.

Note: Please see the Director of the center to voice your grievance or to provide a written grievance. The Director will notify the Office of Quality & Compliance of the grievance to assure that policies and procedures are being followed appropriately.

MAINE CHILD CARE LICENSING

Per State requirements, in the instance of a licensing violation, St. Louis Child Development Center will self-report to State of Maine Child Care Licensing. To ask questions about the rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities or to report a licensing violation, please call: (207) 287-9300 or 1-800-791-4080.

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Sara Gagné-Holmes
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
11 State House Station
286 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-2887
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Child Care Immunization Standards

Age at which child must have vaccines to be in compliance:	Minimum Number of Doses Required of Each Vaccine							
	DTaP	Polio	HepB	Hib	PCV	MMR	Varicella	HepA
0 through 2 months	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
By 3 months	1 Dose	1 Dose	1 Dose	1 Dose	1 Dose	None	None	None
By 5 months	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	None	None	None
By 7 months	3 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses ¹	3 Doses ²	None	None	None
By 16 months	3 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	3 Doses ¹	4 Doses ²	1 Dose ³	1 Dose ³	None
By 19 months	4 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses ¹	4 Doses ²	1 Dose ³	1 Dose ³	None
By 25 months	4 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses ¹	4 Doses ²	1 Dose ³	1 Dose ³	1 Dose ³
By 43 months	4 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses ¹	4 Doses ²	1 Dose ³	1 Dose ³	2 Doses ³

¹ A complete Hib series is two doses plus a booster dose on or after 12 months of age (three doses total). If a child receives the first dose of Hib vaccine at 12 - 14 months of age, only one additional dose is required (two doses total). Any child who has received a single dose of Hib vaccine on or after 15 - 59 months of age is in compliance with these specified vaccine requirements. Children 60 months of age and older are not required to receive Hib vaccine.

² If the PCV series is started when a child is seven months of age or older or the child is delinquent in the series, then all four doses may not be required. Please reference the information below to assist with compliance:

- For children seven through 11 months of age, two doses are required.
- For children 12 - 23 months of age: if three doses have been received prior to 12 months of age, then an additional dose is required (total of four doses) on or after 12 months of age. If one or two doses were received prior to 12 months of age, then a total of three doses are required with at least one dose on or after 12 months of age. If zero doses have been received, then two doses are required with both doses on or after 12 months of age.
- Children 24 months through 59 months meet the requirement if they have at least three doses with one dose on or after 12 months of age, or two doses with both doses on or after 12 months of age, or one dose on or after 24 months of age. Otherwise, one additional dose is required. Children 60 months of age and older are not required to receive PCV vaccine.

³For MMR, Varicella, and Hepatitis A vaccines, the first dose must be given on or after the first birthday. Vaccine doses administered within 4 days before the first birthday will satisfy the requirement.

If you have questions regarding catching your child up on immunizations, please contact the Maine Immunization Program at: (207) 287-3746 or (800) 867-4775, Email: ImmunizeME.DHHS@Maine.gov.

For questions regarding the childcare facility rule change, please contact the Office of Child and Family Services at: (207) 207-624-7900.

Revised: August 8, 2021

Receipt of Parent Handbook

I have received the 2025 St. Louis Child Development Center Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained within.

Child(ren) Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____