



Parent Handbook



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Welcome!

Welcome and thank you for choosing Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc.

This handbook is written as a guide to our program.

We look forward to working with you to provide a secure foundation for your child.

It is our goal to provide the highest quality program. In order to meet this goal, we must have policies and procedures in place. **The Arkansas Better Chance Preschool program at Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is funded and operates separately from the Infant and Toddler and Before and After Care Programs at Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc.** This handbook will serve as a reference to the daily operations of the center and our programs. Your familiarity will help make your child's day a rewarding experience and ensure that you get the most out of the program.

Our Mission:

To offer a loving, safe, and healthy environment that will provide children with developmental enrichment activities to build strong self-esteem and develop character to prepare them for future success.

Our Vision:

Each child is an individual, with unique needs we must foster in order to meet their growth and developmental potential.

We believe that:

- Children should be protected, educated, and nurtured in a positive environment.
- Children should have consistent caregivers.
- Children should have opportunities to explore, create, and communicate with other children and adults.
- Children grow and learn best in a safe environment where their basic needs are met.
- Families should be respected and supported and viewed as a partner.

Philosophy of Education:

We strive to meet the physical, social, emotional, and developmental needs of every child. Emphasis is placed on children building positive self-concept, self-discipline, and relationships with others.

We fully believe children learn through play.

Through play, children learn about themselves, their environment, people, and the world around them. As they play, children learn to solve problems and to get along with others. They enhance their creativity and develop leadership skills, inner controls, and healthy personalities. Clearly defined limits help them recognize and accept their emotions and express their feelings as they grow and feel secure in the world around them. Language increases as a child plays and interacts with others. Play develops skills children need to learn

to read and write. Through well thought out materials, time for play, regularly scheduled snacks and meals, rest times, daily outdoor active play, and routines in physical caregiving play becomes the best foundation for success in school.

Core Values:

Diversity: respect the differences in the communities we serve

Children and Families: are special and unique, respect and support is given.

Accountability: personally take responsibly for actions and outcomes.

Accreditation:

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is a licensed child care facility with the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS Minimum Licensing for Child Care Center Compliance Reports are available in the center office and online. <https://dhs.arkansas.gov/dccece/cclas/facilityserch.aspx>

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is a Better Beginnings rated facility. Better Beginnings is administered by DHS's Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and is volunteer program in the state. Better Beginnings is a building block system developed to emphasize what define quality in childcare and early education programs. Resources and more information is available online at www.arbetterbeginnings.com

Educational Programs and Classrooms:

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. houses two (2) early childhood education programs:

- Infant and Toddlers Early Learning Programs
- Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Preschool program

In addition to these two (2) programs we offer a Before and After Care Preschool Program and Summer Preschool Program for our Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Preschool Children.

All of our classrooms are arranged and designed to be developmentally appropriate. The classroom learning environments are organized with areas for block play, manipulative toys, art, dramatic play, science, math, and reading; with space for group activities. Children have easy access to educational toys, materials, and books; allowing them to expand their learning based on individual needs.

Infant and Toddler Early Learning Program

The Infant and Toddler Early Learning Program serve children aged 6 weeks to 3 years of age. The Infant and Toddler Program consists of three (3) classrooms and operates 12 months of the year from 6am to 6pm Monday through Friday.

Infants:

Our infant classroom serves children from the age of six weeks through 18 months. The program is designed to promote feeling of belonging and loving care. Children eat, sleep, and play according to their own

schedule. We provide a creative and stimulating program which encourages visual, language, and gross motor and small motor experiences to enhance learning through their own natural curiosity.

Teachers will guide and encourage your child in every stage of his or her development. Staff prepare a daily report for parents with information on feedings, diapering, and napping.

Pre-Toddlers:

Our Pre-toddler classroom serves children from 18 to 30 months. Our pre-told classroom serves as a transitional experience for children developing and growing from infancy to becoming a toddler. The classroom is designed to provide stimulating experiences for the children where they can learn through their own inquisitiveness while providing stimulation to enhance visual, language, gross motor and small motor experiences.

Teachers continue to guide and encourage children through every stage of his or her development while allowing children to foster and develop their new found independence in their world.

Toddlers:

Our toddler classroom serves children from 30 months to 3 years of age. The toddler classroom is designed to provide stimulating experiences for the children where they can learn through their own inquisitiveness. The emphasis during the toddler years is on building self-confidence and fostering natural curiosity. Throughout the day toddlers enjoy a large variety of play materials that are readily made available to them, as well as creative centers where child can dress-up, build with blocks and experiment through the senses.

Our teachers offer deep respect for each child ensuring that your toddler will truly love her or her school environment, be comfortable and, from that, develop a long lasting love for learning.

Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Preschool

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program serves children who turned 3 or 4 years of age on or before August 1 of each program year and is provided at no cost for those who qualify. We offer four (4) ABC Preschool classrooms which operate August to May from 8am to 3pm Monday through Friday.

Before and After Care and a Summer Program is available at a fee for working parents who need child care outside of the ABC preschool day. This is filled on a first come first served basis until the class is full.

Our preschool program prepares children socially and academically, while supporting and encouraging the development of independence, responsibility, and confidence, all of which are essential for the success in kindergarten. Our program focuses on each child's social, emotions, intellectual, and physical development by offering hands-on activities, actively engaging each child in developmentally age appropriate activities exploring the areas of literacy, math, science, social studies, and the arts.

Our highly qualified and skilled teaching staff prepare curriculum that is exciting and challenging, as well as supportive of each child's own learning style.

Before and After Care Preschool Program & Summer Preschool Program:

These programs are provided as a service for working parent of our ABC Preschool children who need child care outside of the preschool day or school year.

These programs require separate enrollment from the ABC program. Enrollment is required. **Slots are limited and based on availability.**

Curriculum

Curriculum used at Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is approved by the State of Arkansas, is developmentally and age appropriate and based on Arkansas Frameworks and Standards.

Our Infant classroom uses *Active Learning for Infants and Ones* guide to set individualized activities for children based on their developmental level.

Our Pre-Tod and Toddler classroom uses *Adventures for Toddlers*, developed by DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and is available online. This curriculum is supplemented with activities from the *Active Learning for Ones and Twos* Guide.

Our Preschool Classrooms use two (2) comprehensive curriculums; *Opening the World of Learning* by Pearson Publishing and *Adventures in Learning*, developed by the DHS Division of Childcare and Early Childhood Education and available online.

Our After Care Program uses the *All About Preschool* guide designed by the authors of the Environmental Rating Scales used by the ABC Program and Better Beginnings to rate the learning environment of our classrooms. This curriculum is used to enrich and extend learning set in the preschool classrooms.

School Readiness:

Children 3 years of age will receive a Kindergarten Readiness Calendar. This calendar provides many fun activities and ideas parents can do with children to increase their preparedness for Kindergarten.

Assessments

All age groups are assessed either formally or informally to ensure that teachers plan their curriculum goals and activities to support individualized learning. A variety of methods are used by teachers to record and document children's development, participation, and learning throughout the year; observations, checklists, rating scales, and developmental milestones.

All children will be given a developmental screening to determine if there are any areas in which they would require additional help. Children in the infant toddler program will be given the Ages and Stages screening and children in the preschool are given the Dial 3.

Therapy Services

When assessment identifies possible concerns; appropriate follow-up, referral or other types of intervention services are available.

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. collaborates with In-Sync Pediatric Therapy based out of Van Buren, Arkansas to provide on-site therapy services for children of all ages.

Children ages 2 ½ and up may qualify to receive services through Fort Smith Public School District. The Fort Smith Public School provides transportation for these services.

Western Arkansas Guidance and Counseling LEAP Program is also utilized for preschool child who qualify. Transportation is also provided.

Children must qualify for each service.

Parents may also request services for their child.

Admission

All enrollment forms, documentation, immunizations, emergency contacts, authorizations, release forms, and parent orientation must be completed before admission to Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc.'s Arkansas Better Chance Preschool Program.

Custody:

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is not the determining factor in child custody or visitation matters.

We encourage parents to resolve custody and visitation issues outside of the center. If custody or visitation issues cause problems, the child may be dismissed or not allowed to stay in care until problems are resolved.

We cannot deny any parent their legal right to access to their child unless otherwise specified in writing by family court; signed and filed by a judge.

In order to follow restrictions or court mandated requirements regarding custody or visitation, documentation must be provided to the director and must be court-ordered documentation; signed and filed by a judge

Hours

Arkansas Better Chance Preschool Program operates 8am to 3pm Monday through Friday.

Classroom Doors will open at 8:00 a.m. and all children must be pick up no later than 3:00 pm.

Late pick-ups will be charged \$1.00 per minute. The appropriate agency will be notified of any child remaining after 30 minutes.

To meet the needs of working families we offer Before and After Care for a fee.

Enrollment is required for Before and After Care. In order to meet safety standards and maintain teacher to child ratios, Before and After Care space is limited. We do not offer drop in service.

Closures

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. Arkansas Better Chance preschool operates August to May and is patterned to closely follow the Public School Calendar.

Parents will be provided a program calendar outlining no class days during Parent Orientation.

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. facility will be closed in observance of the following scheduled holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Holidays to include Thanksgiving Day and the day before and day after
- Winter Break beginning prior to the Christmas Holidays and end after the New Year
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Presidents Day
- Independence Day.

If a holiday falls on Saturday the Friday before will be observed, if it falls on Sunday the Monday after will be observed.

Additional Closures:

Parents will be notified at least two (2) weeks for any non-scheduled closures, with the exception of inclement weather or other emergency situations. A calendar will be given at orientation.

Other non-scheduled closures or short days may be necessary in the event of:

- Inclement Weather
- Building Maintenance
- Parent Teacher Conferences
- Teacher Training or Professional Development*

**As part of a high quality center it is important that staff are highly qualified in the areas of child development and early childhood education. This may cause the center to close for the day or partial day in order for teachers to complete courses as they are offered.*

Inclement Weather or Emergency Situations:

In the event of inclement weather, Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. will make every attempt to open and operate as usual. However, to preserve the safety of our staff and children we will close if conditions warrant such action. Families will be notified of the decision to close by center staff through the Center Facebook page, text messaging service, and local TV station websites.

If the center is open, but because of several weather and/or road conditions warrant closure, families will be notified by telephone to pick up children. Families will be required to pick up child as soon as possible and no later than the time given for dismissal. Late fees will apply for children not picked up on time and staff will contact the appropriate agency.

If the Fort Smith Public Schools make the decision to close Lincoln Childcare Center will follow their decision and close.

In the event that the center closes, we will not credit or discount before/aftercare fees.

Attendance

Children are expected to attend class daily. We look forward to having your child in class daily and feel it is important for them to attend daily in order to benefit from the program. If your child is in the infant, pretod, or toddler room there will **not** be a discount in tuition for absences.

With this in mind the following attendance policies are in place:

Children are allowed 15 absentee days during the school year.

Absences are considered excused or unexcused based on the following:

- Excused absences are illness, family emergency, funerals, appointments, and visitations.
- Unexcused absences are anything not listed. *

*Unexcused absences in excess of the 15 days may be cause for dismissal.

Please notify the office if your child will be absent and let us know why.

Tardies:

Children in the ABC Preschool will be considered tardy after 8:15 am.

Children arriving after 8:30am will be required to sign in at the office and receive a tardy slip. (You will still need to sign your child in with the electronic sign in before stopping at the office)

3 tardies will equal 1 absence. If your child is tardy due to an appointment, please bring a note so that we can excuse the tardy.

Families

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. believes that families play an important role in the learning process for children. Families are the first and most important “teacher” a child will have. The center strives to build positive relationships with our families through regular communication enabling staff to become families with their unique characteristics, strengths, and beliefs important to each of them.

Parent Orientation:

Parent orientation is scheduled with families at the beginning of each school year where parents meet the staff, tour the center and are given information on family friendly supports. Parents will have the opportunity to also meet the director and ask any questions.

Parent Orientation will consist of the sharing of information through conversation and questionnaires. Parents will be asked about their beliefs, culture, childrearing practices, and their child’s development. All information gathered and throughout the year is kept strictly confidential in the child’s file.

Parent Communication:

We encourage parents to openly communicate with staff regarding their child. Share information with your child’s teacher during arrival and departure times. With this in mind we ask parents not to be on a cell phone at these times.

Ways we communicate with families:

- Daily or Weekly Bulletins
- Newsletters
- Telephone calls (outside of class time)
- Email
- Daily Sheets
- Notices
- Journals
- Articles of Interest and Community resources
- Center Facebook Page, Instagram, Twitter and website
- Text message alerts (require registration) *

**The center will utilize a group messaging service to send our school related text messages. Information on registration will be shared at parent orientation.*

Due to confidentiality protection laws, specific conversations regarding your child can only be shared with you. Release of Information forms are available in the office if you would like use to share information with other authorized people. Information regarding other children will never be shared by staff.

Please keep in mind that our teaching staff should focus their time in the classroom on the children, if necessary please ask your child’s teacher or contact the office to schedule a time for longer conversations.

Parent Questions & Concerns:

When a parents has a concern about some aspect of our program we will take every step to help resolve the issue as promptly as possible, keeping the safety and well-being of the children and staff as priority.

If you have a direct concern regarding your child or their classroom, please speak to your child's teacher. If you are unable to resolve your concern or need further information, feel welcome to stop by the office and speak to the center director.

The center director is available from 8 to 3pm Monday through Friday. In the absence of the center director the person in charge can immediately notify the director to contact you.

Parent Teacher Conferences:

Parent Teacher conferences offer a time for parents and teachers to sit down one-on-one and share important information about the growth and development of children and an opportunity to learn more about each other and how things are going.

Two (2) parent teacher conference will be held for children during the school year. Classrooms and programs will dismiss early in order for teacher to schedule a convenient time to meet with families. Conferences will be held between 1:30 and 5:30 on the conference day. Your child's teacher will share information on scheduling.

Preschool parents are REQUIRED to schedule a time to meet with their child's teacher.

Parent Volunteers:

Families are welcomed and encouraged to participate in class activities and school events. We encourage parents to participate in the program throughout the year.

Ways for families to be involved:

- Making things for the program
- Sharing their culture
- Sharing a talent or job
- Participating in the class activities
- Participating on Parent Committees

Speak to your child's teacher or the center director about ways you can volunteer with the program.

Volunteers shall be 18 years of age, sign in and out, complete appropriate background checks, and are never left alone with children. Parents who participate in family events and activities are not considered volunteers but should still sign in and out in the center office or the individual classroom.

*In compliance to the Establishment Clause of the first amendment of the United States Constitution prohibiting public aid for religious worship or instruction **No religious activities will occur during center operating hours.***

Parent Resources:

Our entry stands as a Parent Resource Center providing resources, informational brochures, recall information, community event listing and an attractive and cozy reading area where children are invited to choose a book to take home for reading anytime.

Information on health and developmental stages will be provided to parents throughout the school year. Information will also be shared and made available in the parent center, classroom bulletin board notices, and the center Facebook page.

Open Door Policy:

Our center has an open door policy meaning we welcome parents and approved extended family members to visit unannounced at any time. For safety reasons, we do ask that visiting families sign in and out through the office and receive a visitor pass when visiting the center outside of arrival and departure times.

Community

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is a non-profit organization. Lincoln is supported in our Mission, Vision, Philosophy, and goals by various outside individuals, businesses, and organizations. A list of these individuals, organizations, and businesses is located in the office.

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is a United Way Community Partner. We are supported annually by the United Way of the Fort Smith Area and those who give to the United Way in an effort to continue to provide the quality of services for the families and children we serve. We strive to meet the educational, health, and/or low-income needs of families in the Fort Smith area.

Volunteers

Volunteers are always welcome. Volunteers must be 18 years of age and complete required background checks, may not be left alone with children, count in staff and child ratios, or have disciplinary control over children. All volunteers must sign in and out at arrival and departure and receive a badge.

Security and Safety Measures

Education, development, and family partnerships are very important, but we know that nothing else matters if we do not provide a safe and secure environment for children. We have the following policies in place to ensure that safety and preparedness is maintained.

First Aid and CPR:

Classroom staff are certified in Pediatric CPR and Basic First Aid. At least one (1) caregiver for each classroom holds a current certification.

Child Abuse Policy:

All staff of Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment on the parent of an employee, parent, or volunteer.

Security:

Doors to the center, with the exception of the main entrance, are kept locked at all times for the safety of children and staff.

Anyone entering and exiting the building should use the main entrance facing North 9th Street and should sign in and out.

The door separating the entry way from the center requires a code to open. **We ask that you not hold or open the door for others.** The code used for signing children in and out will release and open the door. Visitors outside of these times are required to sign in and out through the office.

The door to exit requires you to press and hold the green exit button while opening the door. **We ask that parents not allow their child to press the button and open the door.**

Harassment:

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. has no tolerance for harassment. If at any time a staff member is threatened or harmed in any form, law enforcement will be notified and the family will be dismissed from the program at Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc.

Signing Children In and Out:

State regulations require children to be signed in and signed each day. The appropriate agency will be notified and their suggested steps to follow will be implemented for failure or refusal to sign a child in or out.

We utilize an electronic sign in and out time card. You are required to use the electronic time card to sign your child in and out. This will open and release the door. In order to ensure the safety of the children we service, parents should not hold the door open for other while entering and exiting. If you have experience an issue with the electronic time card machine, please seek office staff for assistance. A door bell is available if the administrative assistant is not available.

Children must be signed in and WALKED to assigned room. Children should never be allowed to walk unsupervised through the center. Children must remain with parents or a staff member when on the property of Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. The property of Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. includes the building, grounds, and parking lot.

Children must also be signed out at the end of the day.

Electronic Time Card:

During enrollment an entry code will be assigned to you. Your unique entry code will contain a 4-digit ID Code and another 4-digit password.

Directions for use:

1. Click to begin. This is found at the bottom center of the screen.
2. Enter your 4-digit ID code provided by the office.
3. Press enter on the bottom right of the screen.
4. Enter your 4-digit password provided by the office. (this screen will look just like step 2)
5. Press enter on the bottom right of the screen.
6. Click on the child or children you are signing in or out in the middle of the screen, if this step is skipped you will receive an error message, the door will not open.
7. Press return on the bottom right of the screen.
8. The door will now release. There can be a delay in the time between completing and the release of the door. The time card machine will show a grey screen and reading opening door. The door is released for a short period of time, so if the door is not opened after releasing it will re-lock. If the door does not open or the gray screen show on the time care, please see office staff to make sure that the process was complete or follow the steps above again. Staff will only open the door once they verify that your child was correctly clocked in or out.

Please do not give out the entry code to others. Each authorized pick up will be given their own code after their initial visit to the center, a Photo I.D. is required and will be kept on file.

There is a door bell near the time card machine should you need assistance.

Release of a Child:

A child will ONLY be released to parents and individuals list as authorized pick-ups/emergency contacts. Children will only be released to adults. We will not release a child to another child.

Proper photo I.D. will be required for anyone we do not recognize who comes to pick up a child.

Staff will not release a child if it is found to be in the opinion of staff that the pick-up person appears to be impaired, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, do not have proper child seats, or may pose a safety risk. If necessary, the appropriate agency will be contacts for assistance or guidance.

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. staff have the right to refuse the approval of an authorized pickup if it is found in the opinion of staff that the person may pose a safety risk to children, families, or staff.

Emergency Contacts:

The center must be able to contact at least (1) additional person at all times that a child is in our care. Staff will contact the appropriate agency when you or your emergency contact cannot be reached. Children will not be able to remain in care when you or an emergency contact is not available. During the enrollment

process you will be asked to list emergency contacts and authorized pick-ups other than yourself for your child.

Your emergency contacts will be contacted in the event that you are unable to be reached. Please be sure to notify the office when information changes. Change forms are available in the office. Emergency contacts will be considered authorized pick-ups, unless written requests state otherwise.

Your emergency contact should know that they are responsible for your child in the event that they need to be contacted. A child must be picked up within a reasonable time (30 minutes) after being contacted for pick-up. Failure to pick up a child after 30 minutes will result in staff contacting the appropriate agency.

Authorized Pick-Ups:

Only emergency contacts and authorized individuals listed by you will be allowed to pick up children.

Children will only be released to the people names on this list. You will need to include the person's first and last name, telephone number, relationship to the child, and any other information you feel is important for identification.

If another adult comes to pick up your child, even if they have a code, if they are not listed on your pick-up list we will not release your children until we have authorization from you.

We understand that things occur and you may need to send someone not on your authorized pick-up/emergency contact to pick up your child. We can accommodate your request with your authorization.

Written authorization is preferred. Written authorization may be faxed to 479-782-8373.

If you choose to use this person again in the future, you will then need to add them to your authorized pick-up/emergency contact list. Forms are available in the office. Only parents will be authorized to make changes.

Authorized pick-ups must be an adult and have a Photo I.D.

Parents are asked to keep staff up-to-date on changes to your pick-up list. Change forms are available in the office.

Children will only be released from the classroom or the location the children currently are (playground etc.).

Children will not be allowed to walk alone to their parent or be brought to a pick-up location. Staff are responsible for a specific number of children limiting their ability to walk a child to a parent or authorized pick-up. Please make arrangement with the center director if assistance or accommodations need to be made.

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. staff have the right to refuse approval of an authorized pick-up if it is found in the opinion of staff that the person may pose a safety risk to children, families, or staff.

Parking:

There is limited parallel parking available in front of the building along North 9th Street. We ask that you follow all laws in regards to parking and be considerate of others. Do not park in the Handicap Loading/Unloading area (marked in blue), in the street along the side of other parked vehicles, in areas marked no parking, or in front of the parking lot entrance. Additional parking is available in the side parking lot and parallel along North "N" Street.

We also ask that you not leave car motors running with loud music or leave other children unattended in your car when you enter the building.

In Case of Injury:

Minor accidents (bumps/bruises) are common for young children as they explore the world around them. Staff will supervise children at all times and be prepared to prevent accidents before they occur.

In the event of an accident or injury, basic first aid will be performed. In the event of a serious injury, a parent will be notified. If the parents are not available, the emergency contact will be called.

Accident and injury reports will be completed by staff and required to be signed by parent.

Emergency Preparedness:

An emergency preparedness plan is available and posted in each classroom and on file with the Sebastian County Department of Emergency Management and Public Safety.

Fire and tornado Drills are practiced monthly. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom.

In the event that the children and staff are safer to remain indoors, we will shelter inside the building. In the event that the building is "locked-down" entering and exiting the building will be prohibited until it is determined safe.

In the event that the building must be evacuated children and staff will be relocated to a predetermined safe place located near the center. If an event calls for the local area to be evacuated a predetermined safe place outside of the local area has been set. These predetermined locations are known by DHS and other emergency personnel. Staff have been trained on the procedures in place. It is not our desire to keep these locations a secret, but for the safety of children and staff we do not make these locations public. In the event that someone plans to cause harm, we feel it best to evacuate and not make our location known, except to those who are "in need" to know. In the event of an evacuation parents will be called and notified of our location and requested that the children when deemed safe, are picked up as quickly and safely as possible. For cases where parents cannot be reached we would begin to call your emergency contact numbers.

Discipline

At Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. discipline means the methods used by staff to manage a child's behavior. The intention of discipline is to teach and help children learn how to behave according to the established rules of conduct. In order to be effective, we recognize the need for the support and assistance of our families.

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. staff are trained in the Conscious Discipline approach.

Discipline Methods Used:

- Redirection: Children who are having difficulty for any reason will be re-directed to another activity with teacher assistance.
- Brief separation from the group (time-out): if behavior continues to be a problem, the child may be separated briefly from the area or learning group for up to one minute per age of the child. The child will always be left in an area in full view and supervised and supported by staff.
- Parent Contact, as a last resort a parent or guardian will be called.

In the event that a child's behavior is likely to result in harm to the child, others, property, or serious disruptions to the class or group, parents will be contacted to come and sit with the child at the center. After multiple occurrences parents will be required to meet with the teacher, director and a behavior specialist through DHS a behavior plan will then be put into place.

Any method of discipline which threatens, frightens, demeans, or humiliates a child is prohibited on the property of Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. Any form of physical punishment is prohibited on Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc.'s property by staff, parents, or family. Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc.'s property is defined as the building, grounds, and parking lot.

Personal Belongings

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is not responsible for loss or damage of personal items.

All personal belongings should be marked with your child's name.

We ask that personal items from home to be left at home, so as not to be lost, broke, or envied by others. If necessary, a stuffed animal or doll may ease the transition from home and comfort the child may be brought, but must not pose harm to children.

Every child is provided a space for personal items. We ask that diaper bags, tote bags, and backpacks, etc. are not brought or left at the center.

Bags brought into the center to be left are subject to search by staff to ensure contents do not pose harm for children. Any items found will be removed and locked in a secure location.

Meals

Children are provided breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack daily at no cost as part of the USDA Child and adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and prepared onsite. A food program enrollment application will be completed during Parent Orientation.

Outside foods or snacks should not be brought into the center.

Breakfast is served between 8:30 and 9:00 am. We ask that children arriving later, to have already eaten at home, if circumstance cause for a child to be served after the scheduled meal time, parents will be asked to sit with the child while they eat.

Lunch is served between 11:30- 12:00. Snack is served at between 1:45-2:00.

Monthly menus will be posted on classroom parent information boards.

Milk is served to all children daily.

Parents must inform the center of any special dietary requirements, including food allergies. A physician's statement must be on files. Please notify staff of allergies immediately.

**All foods brought into the center must be store bought and in the original unopened packaging.*

Special Food Days:

Special food days (holiday parties, etc.) may be scheduled by the classroom teacher throughout the year for the purpose of parties and celebrations.

Food brought in for special food days must be store bought and in the original unopened packaging.

Birthdays:

We are happy to help celebrate your child's birthday. Please visit with your child's teacher to plan the special day and ask about any classroom allergies.

Birthday celebrations will be held at the end of the day during snack time and may consist of cupcakes or cookies and a drink. Cupcakes or cookies must be store bought and in the original unopened packaging.

Candy, gifts, treats, balloons, and other decorations are not allowed.

Clothing

Children play hard and need to be comfortable. We ask that children be dressed in clothes suitable for art, playground, and climbing activities.

Children arriving wearing any of the following may not be permitted:

- Children are very active during the day; shoes should be secure to the child's foot.
- Closed-toed shoes are preferred to protect feet.
- Heeled shoes will not be permitted. Flat shoes should be worn.
- Hats and do-rages are not permitted and should stay home. *Winter hats or billed hats in the summer will be allowed outdoors to protect children from the weather.*
- Children should not wear scarves.
- Children should not wear jewelry, except small "stud" earrings in the ears.
- Clothing with alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, or obscenities in writing or illustration or disruptive to the classroom environment will not be allowed.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Shorts should be worn underneath dresses and shorts.
- Sagging clothing will not be permitted.

****We ask that parents dress in a manner appropriate to children when at or visiting the center.***

Make sure that children have the necessary items, coats, sweaters, hats, etc. appropriate for the days' weather.

A full set of extra clothes should be kept at the center, even for the oldest children. When accidents of play, feeding or toileting happen, we know you would want your child to be comfortable. Extra sets will need to be replaces as soon as possible when your child used them.

All clothing should be labeled with the child's name.

Rest Time Provisions

Children have scheduled nap and rest time daily.

Children will be provided a blanket and sheet for napping and an individual crib or cot. Bedding will be washed on a weekly basis or as needed. Children are not permitted pillows or to cover their heads while sleeping.

Sleeping children will be monitored by staff.

Tuition Policy for Before and After Care

There is no charge for families who qualify for the Arkansas Better Chance Program.

The following policies are in place for Daycare and Before and After Care:

Tuition rates are charged for the services offered and enrollment slots at Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. There will be no refunds for days missed while the child is enrolled, or when a child drops from the program.

Tuition rates are charged on a weekly basis regardless of attendance status. Tuition fees are charged for each week your child is enrolled. A deposit of one week is required at enrollment.

We do not offer part time or drop off (as needed) services.

Tuition may be paid by cash, check, or money order payable to Lincoln Childcare Center Inc.

Cash is not kept onsite, therefore, change cannot be made. Any excess payment received will be applied to your ledger.

Returned Check Fee is \$25.00. The fee plus the amount of the returned check is due once we receive notification from our financial institute. Cash payment will be required from that point on for a period of twelve (12) months.

Tuition is due at the beginning of each week. **Due on Monday.**

- A reminder will be sent home if payment is not received on Monday.
- If fees are not received by Friday, care will be suspended until payment is collected.

Parents needing to make arrangements to pay every two (2) weeks will be required to pay 2 weeks of tuition every other Monday. If payment is not received on the Monday it is due, the above procedures will remain in place.

We want to make every effort to work with families to provide child care services needed. Please communicate with the director so that we can provide any assistance in order to make sure tuition fees are paid and services are available for your child.

DHS Vouchers are accepted. Parents are held responsible for any tuition fees not covered through their DHS Voucher. DHS Voucher applications are available and granted through the Department of Human Services.

Health Policies

The risk of childhood illness is increased when children are gathering into groups because of the close physical interactions. Illness among young children is frequent causing a struggle for staff and parents to determine when a child's illness required exclusion.

The health policies of Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. are designed to best meet the needs of children, parents and staff in order to reduce the spread of illness.

We base our exclusion policies on the risk of others catching the illness and the demand of increased adult attention; **Keep in mind that center health policies may differ from your child's physician's recommendations or what another center or school may have in place.**

The following policies and procedures are in place to help reduce the spread of illness.

Signs/symptoms of illness include: fever, rash, breathing difficulty, discharge from the nose, ears, or eyes, diarrhea or vomiting. Should any of these symptoms present themselves children will be excluded until medical evaluation allows including. A doctor's note must be submitted stating that the child is not contagious and indication the date that they can return. The date of the office visit must be recent (within in the last few days)

Children displaying signs of any other following may be excluded from care until illness is ruled out or symptoms are gone:

- Listlessness or Lethargy
- Fevers
- Severe Colds
- Abdominal Pain
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Untreated Ringworm
- Severe Diaper Rash
- Mouth Sores
- Open or oozing wounds
- Conjunctivitis
- Pediculosis (Head Lice)
- Contagious Childhood Diseases (*chicken pox, hand foot mouth, etc.*)

Daily Health Checks:

Staff will perform a daily health check on each child upon drop off every morning. The daily check will examine whether or not the child has; fever or elevated body temperature, skin rashes, or unusual spots that should be noted.

Parents should prepare enough time to ensure the daily health check is performed by center staff prior to leaving their child. This time allow the parents and staff to communicate any necessary information regarding the child.

The following symptoms will require exclusion from the center:

Listlessness or Lethargy:

A child who is unable to participate in regularly scheduled activities, including outdoor play, may be excluded from care. Due to the need for greater care than that staff can provide without taking from the health and safety of other children.

Unusual lethargy (severe sleepiness), undefined irritability, persistent discomfort or crying, or difficulty breathing.

Fevers:

A child who has been sent home with a fever of 101 or higher or 100 displaying other signs of illness will be sent home and may not return to the center after the minimum 24 hours' time period without any fever or medication has passed. An infant under 6 months with any increased temperature will be sent home for medical evaluation before returning. Children excluded with fever will not be allowed to return until administrative staff have checked for increased temperature. Any increase in temperature after returning will be reason to extend exclusion.

Severe Colds:

Colds with extreme symptoms of excessive coughing, sneezing, nose drainage that is yellow or green and that interferes with a child's ability to eat, sleep, or play are reason for exclusion.

Abdominal Pain:

A child who displays or complains of stomach pain lasting longer than 2 hours, not subsiding after meals or bathroom needs, may be excluded.

Diarrhea:

Bowel movements that are extremely loose, watery and frequent are reasons for exclusion. A child should be free from diarrhea for 24 hours after eating meals before returning to the center. Secondary symptoms of crying, pain, refusal to eat, etc. must be considered.

Vomiting:

Vomiting is a reason for exclusion. As with diarrhea, 24 hours should pass after eating meals without an episode of vomiting before a child returns to the center.

Rashes:

Unknown rashes must be physician diagnosed for a child to be in the center.

A child with a severe diaper rash with no signed of improvement with treatment will be excluded. Diaper rash oozing or bleeding will be cause for exclusions and medical evaluation.

Ringworm being treated by an antifungal will not require exclusion, unless no signs of improvement are shown or multiple children are showing signs of ringworm. The ringworm must be covered with a bandage.

Mouth Sores:

Mouth sores with drooling are reason for exclusion, unless the child's physician states the child is non-infectious.

Conjunctivitis:

Pink or red eyes with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, and including a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye in reason for exclusion. A child may return to the center 24 hours after medication is began.

Pediculosis (Head Lice):

Head lice is a common childhood illness, especially in young children due to close contact with others. **Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. is a NIT FREE facility.** This means children must be without visible nits. Children excluded due to nits or lice will not be allowed to return until administrative staff have performed a head check.

Contagious Childhood Disease:

Some childhood illnesses are required by law to be reported to our local health department.

Parents should notify us if their child have been exposed to Flu, Measles, Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis (pink eye), Impetigo, Pediculosis (head lice), RSV, Bronchitis, Strep Throat, Hand Foot and Mouth. Exposure does not necessary mean a child should be excluded. Being aware of exposure allows us to inform parents in the event that other children may be exposed or are showing signs and symptoms.

In the case of a contagious illness in your child's class we will post a notice.

To be cleared to return after a contagious disease we need:

1. The child to be seen by doctor.
2. A note from the doctor stating: a diagnosis, that the child is not contagious, the date that the child may return to care.
3. A child will continue to be excluded if the appropriate note is not received before the child is brought to school.

IF Your Child Becomes Ill at the Center:

If your child becomes ill while at the center, we will call you, if you cannot be reached your emergency contact will be notified and asked to pick up your child. Please make sure your emergency contact is aware that they have been listed on your emergency contact list. Someone must be available to be reached by phone in order for a child to be in care.

Children need to be picked up within a reasonable amount of time (30 minutes) to limit their exposure to the other children and staff.

Special Health Needs:

Parents should notify staff at enrollment and during parent orientation of any special health needs.

Special health needs are health conditions or needs that occur on a regular basis, such as asthma, allergies, seizures, etc.

Children with special health needs will be required to have a completed action plan prior to attendance. Forms are available in the office.

Immunizations:

Documentation of immunizations are required from the child's physician or Health Department prior to attendance. Children due immunizations will have 15 days to verify that the immunization has been given. If immunizations are not current your child will be excluded until they are or an appointment card is on file.

During enrollment parents are asked to give written authorization for the center director to access the state immunization records online. This will help the director verify the correct immunizations are due or when immunizations are complete.

Medications and Prescriptions:

Lincoln Childcare Center Inc. staff will only administer medication when it is absolutely essential and required during hours of care. Medication which can be given outside of hours of care will not be given. The director will approve the administration of medication.

In order for medication to be approved it must contain:

- Child's Name
- The date of determine expiration date
- The type of medication and drug name
- The time and dosage
- The length of time medication will need to be given
- What the medication is given for (symptoms)
- Medication must be in original container with a child resistant cap.
- Completed parental permission to administer medication, available through the office. Authorization can only be given by the custodial parent.
- If any of the required information is missing, medication administration will be declined. Please inform your child's physician of the required information.

We also ask that the medication information sheet provided by the pharmacy is included so that we are aware of possible side effects. Medication dose will only be given as directed by the physician. Any new medication should be given at home for 24 hours before a child attends.

All medications will be stored in a locked storage box out of the reach of children, in which only staff have access to.

Over the Counter Medications:

Lincoln Childcare Center, Inc. are not authorized to administer any over the counter medication to children, with the exception of topical ointments, such as sunscreen lotion, diaper rash ointment.

To protect children from exposure of the sun written authorization to apply sunscreen will be provided to parents during the enrollment process and parent orientation. Staff will follow the manufacturer's directions for administration.

Rescue Medications;

Children with special health care needs, such as asthma, seizures, diabetes, allergies or require scheduled or urgent medications shall have a care plan completed and signed by their physician prior to the first day of attendance, along with all necessary medications.

Care plans must have clearly stated directions and symptoms requiring medications. Care plans are to be updated each year or as needed due to changed.

Heath Care:

Information on AR Kids First Insurance and Medical Homes is available in the Parent Resource Center.

Supplies

We strive to provide necessary supplies for learning in the classroom. Your infant, pretod or toddler will need to provide wipes and diapers or pullups. Infants also need a bottle, pacifier if needed and formula or breastmilk if ours is not used.

We ask that you provide a change of clothing for your child.

Please check your child's cubby daily to ensure that they have the needed change of clothing.

When a change of clothes is needed:

1. Staff will give parents a notice.
2. If we do not have access to a change of clothing during the day you will be called.

Please communicate with the center director if for any reason you have trouble providing a change of clothing for your child, resources may be available to assist.