



St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center Employment Manual

Prepared By

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Employment Manual Version Control

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Note The content of a manual does not constitute nor should it be construed as a promise of employment or as a contract between St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center and any of its employees.

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document has been developed by the Childcare Center office and Advisory Board in order to familiarize employees with St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center and provide information about working conditions, key policies, procedures, and benefits affecting employment at St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center.

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center! We are happy to have you as a new member of our family!

The mission of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is to nurture your child's growth in a safe, Christian environment. Our caring professional staff is dedicated to providing fun, child-centered teachings that help your child to prepare for success.

1.2 History

St. Luke-Simpson Preschool had its beginnings at St. Luke-Simpson United Methodist Church on Jefferson Drive in Lake Charles in 1988. After one year at that site, the preschool moved along with the church to its new location and new church building on Country Club Road with Rev. Thomas Dunbar as its minister. Becky Davis served as the first director. The preschool started with one 2 yr. old class, two 3 yr. old classes, two 4 yr. old classes and one kindergarten class. There was one nap room with 6-8 children. After Becky Davis' retirement in 2001, Becky Hymes served as director, followed by Debbie Graybill. Jamie Fierro became director in 2005.

In August 2008, the new Child Care Center opened with Rev. Karl Klaus, senior pastor of the church and Jamie Fierro, director. The new child care center has grown to include three infant rooms, three toddler rooms, three 2 yr. old classes, three 3 yr. old classes and one pre-k (4 yr. old) classes. There are 13 nap rooms with 138 children. The current administration, management of the office and child care center includes; Kay Johnson, Director, Leann Manuel, Assistant Director, Ann Fister, Office Manager, and Mary Jean Marnich and Jonette Benoit, Afternoon Supervisors. The faculty and staff have grown in twenty years from 9 employees to 51 employees and looks forward to continued growth.

1.3 Changes in Policy

This manual supersedes all previous employee manuals and memos.

While every effort is made to keep the contents of this document current, St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center reserves the right to modify, suspend, or terminate any of the policies, procedures, and/or benefits described in the manual with or without prior notice to employees.

2 EMPLOYEE DEFINITION AND STATUS

An “employee” of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is a person who regularly works for St. Luke Simpson Preschool on a wage or salary basis.

2.1 Employment Classification

Employees of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center are classified as either 9 month or 12 month Teacher/Aide employees or as substitute employees. These employees are either “morning” or “afternoon” employees.

In addition to the above classifications, every employee is assigned an employment status classification as either full-time or part-time with most employees being part time.

2.2 Probationary Period for New Employees

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center monitors and evaluates every new employee’s performance for thirty days to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with St. Luke Simpson is appropriate. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, the employee will be considered a regular employee. At this time the employee will receive a key card to enter the building and refund of background check fee.

3 EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

3.1 Equal Employment Opportunity

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is an equal employment opportunity employer. Employment decisions are based on merit and business needs, and not on race, color, citizenship status, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, weight, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, or any other factor protected by law. Membership in this church shall not be a requirement of employment.

3.2 Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center to comply with all the relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). St. Luke Simpson Preschool will not discriminate against any qualified employee or job applicant with respect to any terms, privileges, or conditions of employment because of a person's physical or mental disability.

3.3 Immigration Law Compliance

All offers of employment are contingent on verification of the candidate's right to work in the United States. On the first day of work, every new employee will be asked to provide original documents verifying his or her right to work and, as required by federal law, to sign Federal Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification Form.

3.4 Employee Age

All center staff must be at least 18 years of age or older. However, the center may employ a person 16 or 17 years old that works under the direct supervision of a qualified staff person.

3.5 Employee Background Check

Prior to making an offer of employment, St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center may conduct a job-related background check. A comprehensive background check may consist of prior employment verification, professional reference checks, and education confirmation.

3.6 Criminal Records

A criminal record check is performed as required by law and to protect St. Luke Simpson's interest and that of its employees and clients.

3.7 Anniversary Date

The first day an employee reports to work is his or her official anniversary date. This anniversary date is used to compute the following benefits:

- Wage or salary
- Number of Time Off Days allotted per year

3.8 Periods of Employment

Each 9 month employee is employed August through May each year following the Calcasieu Parish Public School Calendar.

Each 12 month employee is employed June through May each year, closing on major holidays.

3.9 Application Process for New Employees

Each applicant shall submit an application form furnished by St. Luke-Simpson Childcare Center. This application will indicate the applicant's experience, training, and knowledge of the position desired. Consideration for employment includes the following: previous experience, training, manner and appearance, creativity, emotional stability and maturity, leadership capacity, the ability to interact professionally with parents, and the ability to get along with others. The results of reference and background checks also affect employment.

All qualified applicants will have a personal interview with the Director and/or the Assistant Director, and a non-childcare center staff person (i.e. SLS staff or board member).

3.10 New Employee Orientation

The formal welcoming process, or "employee orientation," is conducted by a preschool office employee and includes an overview of the preschool.

Orientation will include:

- A tour of the center
- Introduction to staff members
- Review of duties
- Review of emergency and evacuation procedures, center policies, and health and safety procedures.
- 4 days of supervised working with children
- Review of employee's written job description.

Documentation of orientation shall consist of a statement signed by the employee and

the Director or her representative stating that orientation was conducted. Orientation shall be prior to the first day of employment.

3.11 Personnel Records and Administration

The task of handling personnel records and related administration functions at St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center has been assigned to the Administration. Personnel files will be kept confidential at all times and include some or all of the following documents:

- Application & Supporting Documents
- Doctor's Statement
- Written Job Description
- Proof of Clock Hours
- Any special recognitions or write ups an employee receives

3.12 Supervision

All staff should report any and all information to the Director or Assistant Director. Order of reporting is as follows: Aides, Teachers, Director/Assistant Director, Advisory Board. Anything that can't be resolved in this way should go to the Senior Pastor.

3.13 Change of Personal Data

Any change in an employee's name, address, telephone number, or a change in the number of tax withholding exemptions, needs to be reported in writing without delay to the Childcare Center Office.

3.14 Safety

The safety and health of children and employees is a priority. St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center makes every effort to comply with all federal and state workplace safety requirements as well as Type 1 Child Care Regulations.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution and common sense in all work activities.

3.15 Building Security

Each and every employee must follow the building security rules and regulations listed here:

- Do not share your key fob with anyone that is not an authorized employee of the childcare center.
- Do not share entry code with anyone that is not affiliated with the childcare center as an employee, parent, or someone authorized to pick up a child.

Employees are not allowed on St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center's property after hours without prior authorization from the director.

3.16 Personal Property

Any personal property in any classroom at St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is considered community property and any employee who uses that room has access to these items. Any items that should not be used by other employees should be brought home.

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center assumes no risk for any loss or damage to personal property and recommends that all employees have personal insurance policies covering the loss of personal property left at the childcare center.

3.17 Health-related Issues and Requirements

All center staff shall be required to obtain three months before or within 30 days after beginning work and at least every 3 years thereafter, a written and dated statement from a physician certifying that the individual is in good health, physically able to care for children, and is free from infectious diseases. The director or any center staff shall not remain at work if she has any sign of a contagious disease. Substitute workers shall meet the same medical requirements as regularly employed personnel.

Employees who become aware of any health-related issue should notify their supervisor of health status as soon as possible.

3.18 Employee Requiring Medical Attention

Employees must report all work-related injuries and accidents immediately to their supervisor and complete report.

3.19 Visitors in the Workplace

For safety, insurance, and other business considerations, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. When making arrangements for visitors, employees should request that visitors enter through the main reception area and sign in and sign out at the front desk. A staff member should limit personal visits to the center. At no time should an employee have personal visitors with her in the classroom or nap room or anywhere else in the center where children are without the approval of the director or her representative.

3.20 Weather-related and Emergency-related Evacuations and Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, or power failures can disrupt childcare center operations. In such instances, the designated procedures should be followed.

Please see Multi-Hazard Emergency and Evacuation Plan.

4 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

4.1 General Guidelines

All employees are urged to become familiar with St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center rules and standards of conduct and are expected to follow these rules and standards faithfully in doing their own jobs and conducting the childcare center's business.

4.2 Attendance and Punctuality

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center expects employees to report to work promptly for the designated time period as set in the contract. The Center will not continue to employ any person with a record of excessive absences or tardiness.

4.3 Absence and Lateness

From time to time, it may be necessary for an employee to be late or absent from work. St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is aware that emergencies, illnesses, or pressing personal business that cannot be scheduled outside work hours may arise. It is the responsibility of all employees to contact all affected parties if they will be absent or late as well as to locate a substitute. A substitute list may be obtained from the office.

If an employee will be absent from work, the employee should fill out a Request for Time Off form and have the substitute sign the form. The form should be placed in the employee's direct supervisor's box. If the supervisor is someone other than the director, the form will be passed to the director to sign after the immediate supervisor has approved the absence. The director will sign it then the form will then be placed in the binder in the front office labeled "Employee Request for Time Off." Teacher and Aide from the same class may not be off on the same day without approval from the director.

4.4 Unscheduled Absence

Absence from work for two (2) consecutive days without obtaining a substitute or notifying management will be considered a voluntary resignation.

4.5 Harassment Policy

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center does not tolerate workplace harassment. Workplace harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to, words, signs, offensive jokes, cartoons, pictures, posters, e-mail jokes or statements, pranks, intimidation, physical assaults or contact, or violence.

4.6 Sexual Harassment Policy

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center does not tolerate sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or

other unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. Such conduct creates an offensive, hostile, and intimidating working environment and prevents an individual from effectively performing the duties of their position and will result in disciplinary action and time off without pay.

4.7 Violence in the Workplace

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center has adopted a policy prohibiting workplace violence. Consistent with this policy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center or which occur on St. Luke Simpson UMC property, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action and time off without pay.

4.8 Confidential Information and Nondisclosure

By continuing employment with St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center, employees agree that they will not disclose or use any of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center's confidential information, either during or after their employment. This includes any information about children attending the center and their families via spoken words, printed words, or social media. St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center sincerely hopes that its relationship with its employees will be long-term and mutually rewarding. However, employment with St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center assumes an obligation to maintain confidentiality, even after an employee ceases employment at the preschool.

4.9 Dress Code

Employees of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center are expected to present a clean and professional appearance while performing work duties. Dressing in a fashion that is clearly unprofessional, that is deemed unsafe, or that negatively affects St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center's reputation or image is not acceptable.

Dress should be professional yet comfortable and casual with the following regulations:

1. Pants must not expose inappropriate body parts or undergarments. No sweats or pajama pants.
2. Shirts must not show exposed inappropriate body parts or undergarments or display inappropriate pictures, advertisements, etc. No tank tops, halter tops, or spaghetti strap shirts.
3. Shorts must be Bermuda length.
4. Dresses or skirts should be long enough that interaction with children is not restricted.

5. Shirts worn should be appropriate for a day care setting – no vulgar language, pictures, advertisements, etc.
6. Clothing advertising other day cares are not permitted.
7. All piercings should be not more than a small stud with the exception of one pair of earrings. Large earrings are not recommended. Excessive piercings are not allowed.
8. Eccentric hair colors (ex. Pink, blue, green) are not allowed nor are eccentric hair styles.
9. All tattoos must be completely covered.

4.10 Use of Equipment

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center will provide employees with the equipment needed to do their job. None of this equipment should be used for personal use, nor removed from the physical confines of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center—unless it is approved for a job that specifically requires use of company equipment outside the physical facility. This includes employees consuming food that belongs to the childcare center.

4.11 Use of Computer, Phone, and Mail

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center property, including computers, phones, and electronic mail, should be used only for conducting company business. Incidental and occasional personal use of company computers, phones, or electronic mail systems is permitted, but information and messages stored in these systems will be treated no differently from other business-related information and messages.

Personal phone calls received and made should be limited to emergency calls or those that cannot be made after working hours.

Personal computers are allowed to be used only during nap time when all children are sleeping.

4.12 Cell Phone Use

Cell phones are not to be used during a staff member's working hours. If there are occasional extreme circumstances, discuss this with your supervisor. It should never be used while a parent is in the room. Texting may occur during nap time as long as all children are sleeping.

4.13 Use of Internet

Employees are responsible for using the Internet in a manner that is ethical and lawful. Use of the Internet must not interfere with employee productivity.

Internet should only be used for leisure when all children in nap room are sleeping.

4.14 Smoking Policy

The use of tobacco is not permitted on the premises of St. Luke Simpson Methodist Church or Childcare Center.

4.15 Alcohol and Substance Abuse

It is the policy of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center that the workplace be free of illicit drugs and alcoholic beverages, and free of their use. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs is just cause for immediate dismissal.

4.16 Complaint Procedure

Employees who have a job-related issue, question, or complaint should first discuss it with their immediate supervisor. If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, the employee has a right to express a complaint to the Director of the childcare center or to the Advisory Board. This complaint must be in writing with the staff member's signature.

Employees who observe, learn of, or, in good faith, suspect a violation of the Standards of Conduct of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center should immediately report the violation to the director or assistant director.

In the event of a lack of agreement on procedure between members of the staff, the Director will make the final decision. In the event of lack of agreement on procedure between members of the staff and the Director, the Director will consult with the Advisory Board for a final decision.

4.17 Corrective Procedure

Unacceptable behavior that does not lead to immediate dismissal may be dealt with in any of the following manners: (a) Oral Reminder, (b) Written Warning, (c) Suspension, (d) Termination.

Any warning notice(s) will become part of the employee's personnel file. This notice will be dated with written reason(s) for the warning given and signed by the Director and/or Assistant Director and the employee. A copy will be given to the employee.

4.18 Crisis Suspension

An employee who commits any serious violation or alleged improprieties of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center policies at minimum will be suspended without pay pending an investigation of the situation. Following the investigation of the alleged improprieties, the employee may be terminated without any previous disciplinary action having been taken.

4.19 Causes for Immediate Dismissal

- **Use of alcoholic beverages:** Drinking on the job, reporting to work under the influence of alcohol, or reporting to work in a condition prohibiting efficient work due to prior use of alcohol shall be just cause for immediate dismissal.
- **Drugs:** The use of illegal drugs that alter behavior, reporting to work under the influence of drugs, or reporting to work in a condition prohibiting efficient work due to the prior use of drugs shall be just cause for immediate dismissal.
- **Abuse:** Physical, emotional, verbal, and/or psychological abuse of a student, staff member, or parent regardless of motive shall be a just cause for immediate dismissal.
- **Discussion of Wages:** Under no circumstances is it necessary to discuss wages earned with other employees, parents, or members of the community. Discussion of wages or any other financial matters of this center shall be considered unprofessional and shall be just cause for immediate dismissal.
- **Breach of Confidentiality:** Failure to treat all information regarding members of St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center (to include children, parents, families, staff, and volunteers) with strictest confidence shall be cause for immediate dismissal.

4.20 Employment Termination/Resignation

After the application of disciplinary steps, if it is determined by management that an employee's performance does not improve, or if the employee is again in violation of St. Luke Simpson Preschool's practices, rules, or standards of conduct, employment with St. Luke Simpson Preschool will be terminated.

An employee wishing to terminate employment during the contract year must do so in writing to the Director at least thirty days prior to termination. If an employee will not be returning for the fall session, she must notify the Director prior to April of the current school year.

If a significant drop in enrollment occurs or budget cuts must be made, employees may be terminated with 30 days notice. This termination would not be a reflection on the employee's performance.

4.21 Return of Company Property

Any St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center property issued to employees, such as keys or key fobs, must be returned to St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center at the time of termination. Employees will be responsible for any lost or damaged items.

5 COMPENSATION POLICIES

5.1 Base Compensation

It is St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center's desire to pay all employees wages or salaries that are competitive with other employers in the marketplace and in a way that will be fair and equitable. Compensation may vary based on roles and responsibilities, years of experience, prevailing minimum wage, the holding of an education degree, and/or job classification.

5.2 Timekeeping Procedures

By law, St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is obligated to keep accurate records of the time worked by employees. Each employee must sign in upon arriving to work and sign out upon leaving work. All time is checked by employee's schedule. Only the Director has the right to make changes.

5.3 Payroll and Paydays

Pay periods for hourly employees are every two weeks. Salaried employees are paid monthly.

5.4 Performance Reviews

A yearly evaluation interview shall be arranged between the employee and the employee's direct supervisor. This evaluation takes place after the supervisor has observed the staff member in her classroom for a minimum of one yearly observation. Observations can be added as needed.

5.5 Opportunities for Advancement—Progression and Promotion

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center would like to provide employees with every opportunity for advancing to other positions or opportunities within the school. Approval of progression moves or promotions depends largely upon training, experience, work record, and business need. However, St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center reserves the right to look outside the school for potential employees as well.

5.6 Purchases of Classroom Supplies and Teaching Aids

A monthly allotment for classroom supplies is included in the center's budget. These supplies include such things as construction paper, art supplies, classroom toys and manipulatives, teaching aids, library books, etc.

The approval to purchase classroom supplies rests with the Director. If a staff member needs something for her classroom, she must first have the purchase approved by the Director. This should be done after it has been determined that this needed item has not

already been purchased or is not currently available to her by another teacher or is in stock. By having the purchase approved, the status of the monthly budget can be monitored. If a teacher purchases items not previously approved, she may not be able to be reimbursed for those items.

6 OTHER WORK RELATED OFFERINGS

6.1 Health Insurance

Employees working over 32 hours per week will be offered health insurance with employee paying the full premium.

6.2 Worker's Compensation

All employees are entitled to Workers' Compensation benefits paid by St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center. This coverage is automatic and immediate and protects employees from work-related injury or illness. If an employee cannot work due to a work-related injury or illness, Workers' Compensation insurance pays his or her medical bills and provides a portion of his or her income until he or she can return to work.

6.3 Social Security

The United States Government operates a system of mandated insurance known as Social Security. As a wage earner, employees are required by law to contribute a set amount of weekly wages to the trust fund from which benefits are paid. As employer, St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center is required to deduct this amount from each paycheck an employee receives.

6.4 Training and Professional Development

Some employees are required to receive CPR instruction according to the current state requirements for those employed by childcare centers. Each employee is required to receive Health and Safety training hours as currently required by the state. Each employee is required to attend additional training sessions. If an employee has registered to attend a seminar for which a fee has been charged and fails to attend that seminar, the staff member must then get the training completed on their own. They will then be responsible for payment of such training.

7 TIME-OFF BENEFITS

7.1 Holiday Policy

The childcare center calendar will follow the Calcasieu Parish School calendar for major holidays and closures due to inclement weather. The childcare center will NOT close for public school teacher in-services. The preschool reserves the right to vary the schedule according to our needs.

7.2 TIME OFF

Both hourly and salaried workers:

After 1 year of continuous employment, one hour of paid time off is earned for every 50 hours worked.

After 3 years of continuous employment, two hours of paid time off is earned for every 50 hours worked.

After 8 years of continuous employment, three hours of paid time off is earned for every 50 hours worked.

Up to five days of time off can be carried over to the next year. Days are equal to the normal hours worked on a normal day. Time off hours not used at the end of employment will not be paid.

Time off cannot be taken during the first month of the fall session or the first week of the summer session. It is the responsibility of the staff member to find substitutes for the time she will be gone.

7.3 Absences and Substitutes

All absences from work must be documented by an "Absence from Work" form. It is the staff member's responsibility to see to it that this form is filled out correctly. It is each staff member's responsibility to find a substitute for the work period missed and to orient that substitute to all duties performed, to leave a detailed lesson plan, to have on hand all needed supplies, and to share information concerning any special needs or allergies of the children in her care. Failure to provide an appropriate substitute is grounds for suspension and/or termination.

8 EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF MEMBERS

8.1 Professional Attitudes

We are role models for young children and their families. We accept all people and give unconditional acceptance. In an effort to support the families we serve, the following will be observed:

- Do not discuss children or their parents with other persons.
- Never discuss a child when other children are present.
- Never discuss a child within his/her hearing.
- Never discuss one parent's handling of a child with another parent.
- Never discuss other staff members or confidential center affairs with parents or the community.

8.2 Classroom Scheduling

- The room is in readiness before children arrive. Supplies are on hand for all activities. Before the children arrive, quickly check to make sure that outlet plugs are covered, cleaning supplies are locked away, and the room is free of hazards.
- Snack time should be a time when the teacher interacts with the children in discussing table manners.
- Each child's day should have times for quiet activities, story times, and physical activities.
- Movie-watching should be kept to a minimum and should pertain to a subject or topic being studied. Reading books to children or allowing them to use manipulatives or games is much more appropriate than using movies as a babysitter.

8.3 Record Keeping

- If you have concerns about a child's development, keep examples of the child's work and/or notes describing the behavior not age-appropriate for that child.
- If a child is injured, that injury must be recorded in the accident log book located in the office. Send home an injury report form to the parents if a call was not made.
- Biting incidents must be recorded and phone calls made to both sets of parents. The names of the children are not shared with either parent. Do not write the biter's name on the injury report.
- Head injuries – anything above the neck – must be recorded and a phone call made to the parent.
- Before calling parents to pick up an ill child, discuss with the office staff. If a child is sent home, fill out an illness report.

- Calls made to a parent concerning a child's behavior must be recorded in the behavior documentation book.

8.4 Greeting and Dismissing Children

- Each child should receive a personal greeting upon arriving at school. Parents are also to be greeted if they are with the child. Arrival is a good time to do an assessment of the child – touch them to see if they are feverish, observe their general appearance to detect signs of illness or injuries.
- If a staff member notices an injury on a child when he/she arrives, the form "Injuries Noted Upon Arrival" must be filled out. These include injuries such as bruises, serious burns, cuts, or any wounds. Noting these injuries protects not only the center but the child.
- Only persons listed on the child's registration form may pick up a child from the center. If a parent needs to have someone else pick up the child and that person is not on the list, the parent may fax or email a permission note to the center. Permission may not be given over the phone. It must be in writing.
- No child will be released to a parent or other person who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

8.5 Diaper Changing

- Changing table paper must be used and a new sheet used for each child.
- Children should never be laid on the floor to change diapers or clothes.
- Staff must wash their hands after each diaper change and new gloves worn.
- Diapers must be disposed of correctly.

8.6 Guidelines for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Each morning teacher (twos through fours) is expected to have at least one in-house conference per year. Teacher should stay in contact with parents throughout the year by using newsletters, calendars, personal notes, and/or telephone calls. The following suggestions may be helpful when you meet with parents:

- Be prepared for the conference. Take note of specific behaviors and/or developmental concerns you have. Have examples of the child's work to share with the parent.
- Open and close conferences on a positive note.
- Help parents bring up concerns they may have about their child or about school. A good question to ask is "How does John feel about school?"
- Do not alarm the parents needlessly. If there is a real problem, you must tell the parents about it, but, when possible, emphasize that it is a common problem of children this age. If the problem concerns the child's behavior, tell the parent that it is the behavior you disapprove of and not the child.
- Help the parents come up with suggestions that may help the child. "How do you handle this at home?" or "Have you found a technique that works for you?"
- If the parents press you for suggestions, always give at least 2 suggestions while emphasizing there may be more ways of handling the behavior. Encourage them to search for answers in books, on-line, or in discussion with the child's doctor.

- Choose a time and place for the conference when you will not be interrupted or feel uncomfortable.
- Do not waste parents' time. Stick to the subject and close at a preset time.
- End the conference with a summary statement emphasizing the suggestions that were made. Set a time to evaluate the situation.

8.7 Child/Staff Ratios

By Louisiana State Law Type 1 Regulations, the required ratio for child to staff ratios is as follows:

| CHILDREN | STAFF |
|--|-------|
| 6 (infants under 12 months) | 1 |
| 8 (toddlers, 12 months to 23 months) | 1 |
| 12 (2 year olds, 24 months to 36 months) | 1 |
| 14 (3 year olds, 36 months to 48 months) | 1 |
| 16 (4 year olds, 48 months to 5 years old) | 1 |

8.8 Guidance and Discipline

Discipline is necessary for all of us to live in this world together. Without discipline, we wouldn't be able to accomplish all of the things necessary to our daily lives. An important part of our teaching task involves helping children develop inner discipline. Teachers must provide rules, logical consequences for breaking the rules, and be willing to give more responsibility to the children as they are able to assume it.

The first step toward a disciplined classroom is to know what to expect. What is reasonable behavior for the age and development level of the child in your care? Make sure that the children know what the rules are for your classroom and to be consistent in enforcing them.

Time-out is used as a discipline at our center. A time-out limit is set according to the age of the child—2 minutes for a 2 year old; 3 minutes for a 3 year old; and 5 minutes for a 4-5 year old. Never leave a child in time-out longer than these times. When getting the child from time-out, explain to him/her what the infraction was and what the correct behavior should be. At no time should the entire class be put in time-out nor should a child be left alone anywhere.

Adequate planning is a major factor in developing a disciplined classroom. Children who are bored will always misbehave as will children with too much stimulation.

There must be the use of positive, constructive directions: For example:

- Say "Sit on the swings" instead of "Don't stand on the swings".
- Say "Use walking feet in the building" instead of "Don't run in the building".
- Say "Please share the toys" instead of "Don't take that away".

Be consistent. Make only those rules needed for the welfare of the class. Then, consistently enforce them. Sometimes exceptions must be made—a child has something going on at home or is not feeling well.

Be loving, but do not confuse loving with license. Love involves high expectations from and toward the person who is loved. They have a right to expect our best, and we have a right to expect their best.

Listen to the child's point of view. Teachers do not always see and hear it all. Many times our job is not to pass judgment but to give each person a hearing and help them to work it out.

Appreciate each child's point of view. "I know you don't want to come inside, but it's time for lunch."

Share ownership and responsibility with the children. Use the words "our room" or "our toys".

Routines need to be established and followed when possible. Rules are made and enforced because they benefit the group. The children need to see the benefit in following the rules and developing inner control.

Summary: Not all discipline problems will be solved by the above methods. The majority of children will respond to what has been suggested. Most children want to please adults who are meaningful to them. Sometimes, though, there is a child who resists all efforts to integrate into the life of the group. The child may be extremely aggressive, lashing out physically and verbally at people. The child may be destructive or may completely withdraw.

Problems such as these are the joint responsibility of the teacher, the Director, and the parents. With love and concern, they need to explore all the possible causes for the behavior. Is this behavior typical at home? In other groups of children? In neighborhood groups? Is this behavior typical of the child or untypical? Professional help may be needed to address these issues.

Decisions must be made to continue working with the child, to recommend that the child be taken out of the classroom, or to refer the child for professional help. The best interests of the child, the family, and the rest of the class must be considered.

8.9 Health and Safety

When a Child is Ill

When a child becomes ill during the day, the teacher, aide, or office staff will contact the parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the child will be isolated from the other children until a parent or other authorized person can be reached. An illness report must be filled out.

Symptoms of Vision Problems

- Frequently rubbing eyes and complaining that eyes hurt
- Being unable to locate and pick up a small object
- Holding books, pictures, or toys too close or too far away
- Lack of enjoyment of books by age 2

Symptoms of Hearing Problems

- Failure to turn when called by name from behind
- Continuous use of a loud voice or monotone
- Turning the ear toward the same sound regularly

- Frequent ear infections or ear aches
- Failure to enjoy music or stories by age 3
- Turning the speaker's face toward him/herself in order to pick up lip cues

Symptoms of Impaired Language Development

- Inability to name people, toys, and/or objects in picture books by age 2
- Incomplete sentences by age 4
- Cannot be understood by people outside of the family by age 4
- Infantile grammatical patterns such as "him can" or "me won't" by age 5

Symptoms of Delayed Motor Development

- Inability by age 3 ½ to walk up and down stairs, one foot to a step
- Inability by age 5 to balance on one foot
- Inability by age 5 to place one foot directly in front of the other and walk a taped line on the floor
- Inability by age 4 to catch and throw a medium sized ball
- Inability by age 5 to sit still in one place for a reasonable length of time (4-5 minutes)

Symptoms of Emotional Problems

- Deliberately hurting animals or people, especially after age 3
- Lack of enjoyment in playing with other children, inability to take turns and share by age 4
- Frequent crying and depression for no apparent reason
- Fears beyond the norm for the age group
- Excessive anger or aggressive behavior for no apparent reason

8.10 Playground Procedures

Playground safety is an important focus for all staff members. Several steps are necessary to accomplish the reduction in the number and severity of accidents.

- Encourage the children to develop safe habits. Make sure that they understand the playground rules and then be consistent in enforcing them.
- Be aware that it is the teacher's and or aide's responsibility to supervise the children at all times. When your class is on the playground, it is not the time to be getting papers ready or working on crafts unless you have an aide there whose responsibility it is to supervise the children. Do not expect another teacher to watch your class for you.
- Be involved with the children on the playground. If you sit down, you must be facing the children and be able to see all of the children.
- Be actively involved in playground safety. Monitor the children and immediately deal with children who are not following the rules.
- The number of children on the playground must not exceed 34 on the 2's playground and 58 on the 3's, 4's.

Instructing the Children About the Use of the Equipment

Swings: Tell the children to:

- Sit in the center of the swing, do not stand or kneel

- Hold on with both hands
- Stop the swing before getting off—no jumping from the swing
- Allow the swing to stop on its own—do not kick the mulch unnecessarily
- Walk around a moving swing
- Avoid pushing anyone on a swing and do not allow anyone to push you
- All face the same way
- Avoid climbing or playing on the swing frames
- Avoid swinging empty swings or twisting the chains

Slides: Tell the children to:

- Hold on with both hands as they go up the steps of the slide
- Slide down feet first, sitting up, one at a time
- Be patient. Do not push or shove from behind
- Move away from the bottom of the slide after they have gone down.

Accident and Emergency Procedures

We hope that accidents never happen, but children are active, unaware of environmental hazards, and naturally prone to do things that may result in injury, despite the finest supervision. To be ready for an emergency, the following will be observed:

1. There will be a plan of action in place.
2. The parents' written permission for emergency treatment will be in each child's file.
3. The Director of her representative will contact a local physician, clinic, or hospital.
4. If necessary, the local emergency rescue squad or ambulance service will be contacted. A vehicle will always be available for transportation if emergency services are not available.
5. Emergency telephone numbers are kept in well-defined areas.

In the event of an accident or emergency, it is important to remember that children will react as we do—calmly or frantically.

Warning signs that could indicate a serious injury:

- Persistent vomiting
- One pupil larger than the other
- Sleepiness at inappropriate times

8.11 Infection Control Practices and Disease Prevention

Hand washing is very important for both staff and children. Hands should be washed upon entering the center, before preparing and eating snacks and meals, after toileting and changing diapers, or anytime hands become soiled. Procedures shall ensure that staff teach the use of running water, soap, and single use of disposable towels. Hands shall be washed at least 10 seconds with soap and running water.

Noses shall be blown or wiped with one-use tissues that are discarded correctly. Draining or oozing sores shall be covered.

Procedures for handling blood or other bodily fluids:

- For spills of vomitus, urine, or feces—floors, walls, bathrooms, table tops, toys, and diaper changing tables shall be cleansed and disinfected.
- When blood is evident, gloves shall be worn and shall be disposed of correctly.
- Mops shall be cleaned, rinsed in sanitizing solution, and then wrung dry as possible and hung to dry.

9 EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

9.1 Open Communication

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center encourages employees to discuss any issues they may have with a co-worker directly with that person. If a resolution is not reached, employees should arrange a meeting with their direct supervisor. Any information discussed in an Open Communication meeting is considered confidential, to the extent possible while still allowing management to respond to the problem. Retaliation against any employee for appropriate usage of Open Communication channels is unacceptable.

9.2 Staff Meetings

In order to keep the communication channels open, St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center implements staff meetings at various times throughout the year. Attendance is mandatory and if a meeting is missed, the employee must meet with their supervisor to discuss what was covered in the meeting.

9.3 Suggestions

St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center encourages all employees to bring forward their suggestions and good ideas about making St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center a better place to work and enhancing service to St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center's parents and children. Any employee who sees an opportunity for improvement is encouraged to talk it over with management. Management can help bring ideas to the attention of the people in the organization who will be responsible for possibly implementing them. All suggestions are valued.

9.4 Closing Statement

Successful working conditions and relationships depend upon successful communication. It is important that employees stay aware of changes in procedures, policies, and general information. It is also important to communicate ideas, suggestions, personal goals, or problems as they affect work at St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center.

10 ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center Employment Policies, and I do commit to read and follow these policies.

I am aware that if, at any time, I have questions regarding St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center policies I should direct them to the administration.

I know that St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center company policies and other related documents do not form a contract of employment and are not a guarantee by St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center of the conditions and benefits that are described within them. Nevertheless, the provisions of such St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center company policies are incorporated into the acknowledgment, and I agree that I shall abide by its provisions.

I also am aware that St. Luke Simpson Childcare Center, at any time, may on reasonable notice, change, add to, or delete from the provisions of the policies.

Employee's Printed Name

Position

Employee's Signature

Date

11 APPENDICES

11.1 Emergency and Evacuation Procedures Appendix A
