

A Child's Garden

a special place to grow



Providing quality Early Childhood Education since 1981

Locations:

Fairfield

100 Mona Terrace, 06824
203-259-1327 ~ FAX: 203-259-7908
email: acgpreschool@aol.com

Programs: Infant/Toddler Program, Preschool & Alternative Kindergarten

Shelton

20 Ivy Brook Road, 06484
203-402-0334 ~ FAX: 203-924-2555
email: acgshelton@aol.com

Programs: Infant/Toddler Program, Preschool & Kindergarten

HOURS

7:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. ~12 MONTHS A YEAR

Web site: www.achildsgarden.net

Welcome to A Child's Garden. This handbook has been designed to help you understand the policies and procedures that have been set in accordance with regulations of the Connecticut Department of Health, Day Care Licensing, and our many years of experience providing quality care for young children. In addition, policies and procedures have been reviewed and refined by our staff, parents, health and other professionals. In all cases, they represent the best knowledge and experience we have in providing a high quality program for children and their families.

Our school admits all children, regardless of race, color, nationality or religious background. In order for our program to be a positive experience for your child and yourself, you need to feel comfortable with the policies herein. We invite your input and questions as communication is a valuable tool that helps us maintain quality care for your child.

All parents are welcome to visit their child at school at any time; however, we ask that you consider the effect the visit may have on your child. While this may be a positive visit for some children, it may be upsetting for your child.

Your comments, suggestions, concerns and compliments are important to us. Please feel free to give input directly to the classroom teacher or the Director. You are welcome to schedule time to speak privately with the teacher or the Director by setting an appointment with the business office. To better serve our families and children you will be asked to fill out a yearly evaluation.

You may address concerns with the state licensing department if you are not satisfied with the way your concerns have been handled. You will find the recent number for the licensing department posted on the parent information board in the school hallways.

Parents are expected to read this handbook as part of the enrollment process.

The hand book can also be reviewed on our website www.achildsgarden.net.

HISTORY OF A CHILD'S GARDEN - Founded by Elaine Tatem

A Child's Garden opened in August 1981 and is a private school. Craig Miklus, who is Elaine's brother and his wife Leslie have worked in the school since 1983 and have managed it since 1995. Elaine has since retired and Craig and his son Michael now own the school. Leslie and Michael's wife Sandy assist with the management. The family credits the dedicated staff and administrators for their contributions and the success of the program. The schools have taken on many changes throughout the years in order to keep up with the demands for quality early childhood programs and state licensing regulations. The original preschool location at 100 Mona Terrace grew from a two-room operation to an eight-room school with a license capacity of 160 children. Through the years the school has added programs such as Alternative Kindergarten and Summer Camp. In July of 1990, A Child's Garden opened an Infant/Toddler Program at 234 Greenfield Street in Fairfield. This program has now merged with the Fairfield preschool location. In August 2003 another location was opened in Shelton. This new location was a dream comes true for the Miklus family; to design and build a school that would meet the needs of children from infants to five years of age. The school has been rapidly growing and a Kindergarten was added to the school in August 2004.

Today, A Child's Garden has over 60 employees and provides quality early care and education for over 300 children per year

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER

CLOSINGS: HOLIDAYS, VACATION

Labor Day	Good Friday
Thanksgiving	Memorial Day
Friday after Thanksgiving	Fourth of July
Christmas	Staff Development Day
New Year's Day	Friday prior to Summer Camp
Martin Luther King Day	Two Weeks in August
President's Day	

**Christmas closings vary according to how the holiday falls.*

If Christmas falls on a...

Sunday we will be closed on Monday.

Monday we will be closed on Monday and Tuesday.

Tuesday we will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

Wednesday we will be closed Wednesday and Thursday.

Thursday we will be closed on Thursday and Friday.

Friday we will be closed Friday only.

Saturday we will be closed the Friday before. (Christmas Eve.)

EARLY CLOSINGS: 3:00 P.M.

Christmas Eve

Friday before August shutdown

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS OR DELAY INFORMATION:

Web Site: www.achildsgarden.net – Click on News & Events

Radio: WICC radio 600 on your AM channel or Star 99.9 FM.

Television: NBC 30 & WTNH 8

WE DO NOT follow school closings. We are usually open even though town schools have closed.

Safety Advisory: Please use good judgment by picking up your child early when snow starts during a school day.

We seldom close because of inclement weather, however if it is necessary to do so we regret we are not able to rebate tuition for that day.

You will be given a calendar with the specific dates of closings each year.

SECTION I – ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

ENROLLMENT: Our school admits all children, regardless of race, color, nationality or religious background. By enrolling your child at A Child's Garden you are agreeing to adhere to the policies and practices that have been established in accordance with the Connecticut Department of Health Child Day Care Licensing and those that A Child's Garden have found **appropriate**. It is the parent/guardians responsibility to read the Parent Handbook and stay informed on the written policies as well as changes that you might receive. It is not possible to have all situations covered under a written policy and special situations will be decided by the **administration**. The Parent hand book can be found on the web site (www.achildsgarden.net) if you do not have your written copy available: **A non-refundable registration fee and a security deposit of one week's tuition is due at the time of enrollment.**

THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS: Tour, parents are asked to set an appointment for a tour of the school. We ask that you schedule a time for a tour with the office to assure that the director will be available to walk you through the **school**, explain the program, answer any questions you may have and introduce you to teachers. **While you are welcome to bring your child you may find that you may want to come without children to allow yourself the time to ask questions and observe without distractions.**

Child Visit, Children need to have an opportunity to visit the school prior to being dropped off on the first day. These visits need to be scheduled and are best done in the morning. You should bring your child into the classroom and help them get settled and then step out of the classroom to allow your child some time on their own. You want to try and make this visit as realistic as possible. Visits are to be kept to ½ to one hour at the maximum.

We welcome drop in visits after the initial tour however, we cannot guarantee that the director will be available as there may be other tours or activities scheduled.

ENROLLMENT FORMS: Forms are available on our website www.achildsgarden.net

Registration - Routine Care Questionnaire (Infant/Toddlers only) - Child Information Form

Emergency Card - Tuition/Policy Agreement - Physical Form - Medical & Allergy Information Form

Classroom Information Form - Optional Pick-up

All forms must be filled out and turned in prior to your child's first day of school. Please note that two emergency contacts are required by State Licensing and Physicals are to be current within one year.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CHILDREN'S FILES: Information shared with A Child's Garden is to be used to assist with children's orientation and the care of their physical, emotional, and educational needs as well as their safety and overall well being. It is necessary that parents share any of the above pertinent information with the Director at the time of orientation and when any changes or situations arise. All information on your child's registration forms and health forms, as well as any other data added to your child's file during the period of enrollment, will be considered privileged and confidential. This information will be accessible only to the appropriate staff and administration, personnel from the State of Connecticut Daycare Licensing Unit, Department of Children and Families (DCYF), and your consultants. A parent may arrange with the **Director** to see his/her child's file at any time. Parents may add or update information to their child's file at any time. You may also request a copy of your child's file which will be provided in a timely manner. When your child leaves A Child's Garden, you may request in writing a copy of your child's record be transferred to you or another agency. If an outside agency should request information from your child's file, it will be released only after a Release of Information form has been signed and dated by the parent/guardian. A record of all such releases will be kept in your child's file.

Special Needs: It is the policy of this school to enroll all children. This being said, we expect parents to provide information on any special needs or arrangements that need to be made for their child. This needs to be discussed with the Director prior to enrollment. A plan will be devised that will best suit your child and one that must be agreed upon by the parents and administrator. In order for us to meet children's needs we need to be informed of PPT's, IEP's or any other meetings regarding the education and well being of your child. A Child's Garden will make every effort to attend these meetings. However, in the event that is not possible the parent is to provide the school with any materials or decisions regarding your child. The parents will also need to sign a release to allow A Child's Garden to communicate with any outside sources (physicians etc) involved with the child's care.

ENROLLMENT OPTIONS:

Infant – Two year olds: Minimum enrollment of two **full (2)** days to (5) five full days
Children are enrolled for 12 months

Preschool: Three & Four Year olds: Mornings only (12:20 pick up) or Full Days hours between (7a.m. and 5:30 p.m.)

Three year old enrollment requires a minimum of **two (2) half days per week**

Four year old enrollment requires a minimum of **three (3) half days per week**

Part Time – School Year program (9:00 – 12:20) closed in accordance with public school calendar and snow days

Extended day – 3:00 pick up – Shelton Only

We will also be happy to work out individual schedules; please see us for pricing and scheduling options.

Alternative Kindergarten (Fairfield only) enrollment requires (3) days per week.

Kindergarten (Shelton only): Full Days or Mornings until 1:00 p.m. – 5 days per week

Good attendance and punctuality is required.

Enrollment for Preschool – Kindergarten is for the school year which runs approximately from the last week of August to the third week of June.

Cancellation of enrollment must be made in writing 30 days prior to the child's start date or you will be required to pay 30 days tuition and your security fee will be forfeited.

RE-REGISTRATION: Is required yearly and usually takes place in December for the following fall program. Tuition obligation begins on the start date of the new school year.

Enrollment will not be guaranteed until the registration fee is paid in full and the required pre-registration information is completed.

Withdrawal - The security will be applied to your child's last week of school at the completion of the program provided 30 days written notice has been given.

School Age care: Is available during public and private school vacations on a first come first serve basis. Parents need to stop by the office to make arrangements and fill out the necessary forms. A current health form is also required. Payment is due the morning of the first scheduled day.

SUMMER CAMP (Preschool): Requires a separate enrollment form and fee. Parents have the option of keeping their children on the same schedule as the school year or to make changes. Summer camp enrollment will be taken in-house after January. You will be given a date to submit your enrollment prior to enrollment opening to the general community. It is necessary that you return the camp enrollment and registration fee by the date indicated to secure your child's space. Summer camp runs approximately from the fourth week of June to the second week of August. You may register your child for one to seven weeks of camp, please note that weeks must run consecutively. **First consideration is given to families signing up for the seven week session.** (Tuition increases take effect at this time) We are unable to offer a sibling discount for children enrolled for the summer only in our older camp.

SUMMER CAMP FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN: Our camp program begins the last week in June and runs for seven weeks. The Fairfield location accepts children up to the age of 8 years and the Shelton location accepts children up to the age of 10 years. The children enrolled in the school age camp program spend mornings three to four days per week traveling on a variety of field trips and afternoons enjoying activities planned by the counselors at the school locations. Tuition is based in part upon the travel expenses and entrance fees. Summer Camp information will be sent home in January and in-house children and siblings have top priority for enrollment. A separate non-refundable registration fee is required for summer camp enrollment. Campers will receive a camp shirt that is to be worn for all field trips. Additional shirts are available for purchase

When you enroll for any of the programs, we encourage you to start your child on the opening date to help make their transition into the program as smooth as possible. If your child begins after the start, you are responsible for tuition from the start date of the program. Families that enroll in openings that occur after the beginning of the program are responsible for tuition from the agreed upon start date.

TUITION INFORMATION: Our budget is set on a yearly basis of 50 weeks and is billed monthly according to the number of Mondays in a month. For your convenience, payments may be made monthly or weekly. Tuition is due in advance of services. At the time of enrollment, a tuition agreement and choice of payment plan will need to be completed and signed. **Tuition increases take effect on the first day of summer camp each year.** **A yearly tuition agreement is required indicating payment selection ~ Social Security number ~ License number.**

TUITION PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of enrollment.
2. A security deposit of one week tuition is due at the time of enrollment. Security will be applied to the last week your child attends the program.
3. Withdrawal requires 30 days written notice prior to the child's last day of attendance or the security deposit will be forfeited.
4. Cancellation of enrollment requires 30 days written notice prior to the child's scheduled start date or the security deposit and registration are forfeited.
5. A late pick up fee will be charged at \$15.00 per quarter hour for children picked up after the scheduled pick-up time. Habitual tardiness: Parents will be asked to make other arrangements for the pick-up of their child. If this is not possible, it will be necessary for you to withdraw your child from our program.
6. Tuition is to be paid regardless of illness, vacations, holidays and inclement weather closings.
7. Monthly Tuition is due on the 1st Monday of each month or the first day your child is scheduled to attend.
8. Weekly Tuition is due the first day of the week that your child is scheduled to attend.
9. A late charge of 10% will be added to late tuition payments.
10. Preschool/Kindergarten/Alternative Kindergarten Enrollment is based on the school year and a separate registration is required for summer camp. Infant/Toddler Enrollment is based on 50 weeks.
11. Holidays and school closings, including inclement weather, are considered when the tuition budget is set; therefore, regardless of these closings, regular tuition is due.
12. Returned checks will be charged \$20.00. If we receive more than two returned checks, future tuition will need to be paid in cash, money order or a certified check.
13. Children with unpaid tuition will not be permitted to attend school and their space will be filled unless arrangements for payment have been made with the business office.
14. Should collection become necessary, it will be the family's responsibility to pay any legal or collection fees as per our tuition agreement.
15. With the exception of tuition deposit, we do not give refunds on tuition or enrollment fees.

Enrollment Changes:

1. Decreased time requires a 30 days written notice or you will be required to pay original tuition for 30 days.
2. Increasing enrollment requires placement on the waiting list until an opening becomes available. Every effort will be made to accommodate you as soon as possible.
3. Switching days or make up days due to lost time are not permitted.
4. Extra days will be charged on a separate fee scale and may only be done when space is available. A request form for extra time is available in the office and will need to be filled out in advance of the requested day or days.

VACATION OR SICK DAYS: Tuition is our only source of income and our staff is hired according to enrollment. Therefore, it is necessary for tuition to be paid regardless of time missed from school, whether it is vacation or illness. **Before leaving on vacation, your child's tuition is to be paid in order to avoid a late charge and to secure your child's place.**

DISENROLLMENT: Our program may not be appropriate for all children. Children with special needs may require expert care that we are unable to provide. We are willing to work with parents and outside agencies to accommodate special needs, provided that we are kept informed of all issues, and included in any meetings regarding the care and education of the child. In the event that we cannot accommodate the child's needs, we will make every effort to supply alternative options.

If a child frequently displays severe behavioral problems, the teacher will contact the parent to discuss the behavior and possible solutions. Our school works with outside experts and will make recommendations to assist the parents and the teacher to develop a plan to modify the behavior. The school may refer the family to a behavioral therapist, child psychologist or the Special Education Department in the town the child resides. In order to provide the appropriate care and education for the child, the parent must agree to share all assessments and recommendations made by outside sources. A plan will be put in place for the child's continuation in the program and the parents must agree and follow through with all recommendations for the child's enrollment to continue.

If it is determined that a different type of environment is needed for the child, the school will make every effort to assist the parent in finding a more appropriate program.

A Child's Garden reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time we deem necessary at the sole discretion of the administration. Reasons that a child may be dismissed:

- **Excessive disruptive behavior by the Child**
- **Excessive disruptive or uncooperative behavior by the parent**
- **Failure to pay tuition on time**
- **The child is considered a threat to other children**
- **Excessive tardiness in picking up the child**

In the event that a parent does not conduct themselves appropriately, or uses inappropriate language or behavior towards any member of the staff or administration, we have the right to disenroll the child from our program.

SECTION II - HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

MEDICAL RECORDS/PHYSICALS

State regulations require us to maintain a medical record on each child every year. No child will be permitted to attend school without proper **immunizations**. Medical forms must be completed before your child begins attending school or he/she will not be admitted. As your child receives additional immunizations it is necessary that a Doctor's note be brought in to update our records.

A complete physical is required yearly for children enrolled in the Toddler through Kindergarten programs. School age after Kindergarten requires physicals every two years.

Infant & Tiny Tot physicals should be updated during well child visits. Infant/Toddler immunizations are required at: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months and 24 months. Children whose immunizations or physicals are not updated in accordance with the Connecticut Department of Public Health schedule will not be permitted to attend school.

ALLERGIES: Our school is not "peanut free". We are, however, "peanut and allergy aware". Some children have such severe allergies that the slightest sensation of peanut oil to his/her skin is enough to send the child into an anaphylactic shock. Any trace of oil on the tables, sinks, toys, and on hands or around mouths of the other children, can be enough to harm the child with the allergy. In order to ensure the safety for any child with an allergy such as a severe peanut allergy we will take any or all of the following steps.

- The classroom would be made Peanut Free. – Notes would go home to all families with children enrolled in the child's classroom stating that it is a Peanut Free room.
- A Peanut Free sign (or any other necessary food elimination) will be posted outside of the classroom as well as any necessary instructions prior to entering the classroom.
- If your child or you have eaten any peanuts or foods containing peanuts or peanut oil we ask that you wash their/your hands and mouth thoroughly before entering the classroom.
- It will be necessary that you be very careful as to what your child brings for lunch. Check all labels on the packaging of all snack and lunch foods to be sure that it does not contain traces of peanuts. This includes foods processed in companies that also process foods with peanuts.
- Any special snacks such as for birthday celebrations must first be scheduled with the classroom teacher and all ingredients must be provided.

***Please note that in some cases children's allergies may not require complete elimination however, it is necessary that you inform the teacher if any traces of the food allergy is in your child's lunch or snack so they can be seated away from the allergic child. Parents will still receive a note informing them of the allergy so that precautions will be taken.**

Parent Responsibility: As with any health concern or allergy, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the administration verbally and in writing. (Forms for this are provided at the time of enrollment or can be picked up at the office at any time) Parents need to submit a medication form that has been filled out by the doctor and parents for the use of any necessary medication for allergic reactions. It is also the parent's responsibility to inform the administration of any changes or updates **concerning** children's health or allergies.

ALLERGIES CONTINUED:**Teacher Responsibility:**

1. Wash all tables and chairs after meals and snacks
2. Empty trash cans
3. Monitor hand washing to be sure it is being done properly.
4. Monitor **seating so that** children with restrictions are not seated with children eating foods that may contain the food restriction.
5. Provide a peanut free or allergy free table if necessary
6. Trained staff will administer medication such as Benadryl or Epi-pen in the event of an allergic reaction.

FOODS THAT CONTAIN PEANUTS/NUTS/SESAME OR ANY TRACES OF THESE FOODS:

Breton Thin Wheat crackers
Cheese Nips and Reduced Fat Cheese Nips (use peanut oil)
Famous Amos Cookies
 Golden Graham Treats (Peanut traces)
 Goldfish Cheese Trio and Toasted Wheat Crackers
Keebler Cookies; Chocolate Chip Animals, E.L. Fudge Cookies, Frosted Animal Cookies, Fudge Strips, Elfin Cookies, Soft Batch Chocolate Chip, Soft 'n Chewy Chips Deluxe (most Keebler products are run on lines with peanut products)

Kudos (granola bars) – M&Ms (Any cookies or bars made with plain or peanut M&Ms)

Nabisco cheese sandwich crackers with peanut or cheddar cheese (run on peanut product lines) Nabisco Twigs (sesame and cheese sticks)
Nestles Milk chocolate Chips, Nutter Butter cookies and bites (all varieties)
Old Tyme Popcorn form BJ's (package peanuts on same lines, but not noted on label)
 Pepperidge Farm snack sticks and hearty wheat snacks – Pepperidge Farm cookies (all run on same lines) and hearty fruit and grain bars
Quaker Chewy Granola Bars and Quaker Rice Cakes
 Rice Krispie Treats (Peanut butter) – Ritz Bits sandwiches (cheese and peanut butter) –

Snack Well's hearty pepper crackers, mint cre'me cookies, double chocolate chip and regular chip cookies, etc, hearty fruit and grain bars
Stop & Shop animal crackers, bitesize chocolate chip cookies, crispy sugar cookies, oatmeal and iced coolies, sugar wafers, cre'me-filled sugar wafers, chewy granola bars
Sunshine Cheeze-it Party Mix, Snack mix etc, Cre'me Filled Sugar Wafers,
 Twix candy bars (carmel and peanut)
Wheatworth stoneground crackers.

This is only a partial list to assist you when shopping – please refer to package ingredients and warnings for all products

SMOKING: Our schools and property are smoke free environments. No smoking is permitted on school grounds.

SICK CHILDREN: Sooner or later all children will become ill. As a parent you will want to have alternative plans so you will be prepared when this occurs. Our health policy is based upon state regulations, the physical and emotional welfare of your child and the physical and emotional welfare of all the children. A doctor's note does not dismiss **our policies**.

If your child becomes sick while at school you will be called to pick them up. For your child's comfort as well as the well being of all the children, we **expect** sick children to be picked up within one (1) hour of the time of the telephone call. If you are unable to pick up your child in this time frame you will need to call one of your emergency contacts. If a parent or guardian has not arrived in the one hour time frame we will then contact your emergency contacts. In the event that we cannot reach the parent or guardian within 45 minutes, we will call the person(s) listed on your emergency contact card.

Returning after illness: If your child has missed school or been sent home due to illness, you need to stop by the office prior to bringing them to the classroom. Whenever possible, please give your child some extra time for recovery. Even a shortened stay on the first day back pays off in the long run as children have a better chance at a full recovery. We recognize that when your child is ill, it creates additional stress for your family and you may be forced to take time off from work. However, the extra time may help prevent future illnesses. *Children should be fever free 24 hours before returning to school.*

It is not acceptable to give a child a fever reducing medication and then bring them into school. If your child has a fever they must remain home until they are fever free for 24 hours.

Please remember; we go outside everyday **weather permitting**. Our position is that if children are too ill to go outside they are too ill to be at school.

A Child's illness often needs to be handled on a case by case basis. A child's eligibility to attend school will be determined by the administration.

WE CANNOT ACCEPT CHILDREN IN SCHOOL IF THEY SHOW ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

RASHES: If your child comes to school with a rash or breaks out with a rash while at school the following will take place:

- The rash will be bandaged to prevent **spreading to other children..**
- You will be called to pick up your child to have the rash checked by a doctor.
- If the diagnosis is contagious you need to contact the school so other parents can be informed. Your child will need a doctor's note to return to school

Fever : Children who have run a temperature should be kept home for 24 hours after the temperature breaks and becomes normal.

Pink Eye: If your child is sent home with pink eye they may not return to school the next day and must have completed three doses of the medication before returning to school. If the eye is oozing the child must remain home until there is no longer a discharge.

Ear Infections: Three doses of medication is required before the child returns to school. This is for the child's own comfort and exposure to further illness.

Diarrhea and or vomiting: If your child is sent home with either or both of these conditions they must remain home the next day. Children should remain at home until they are free from vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.

SICK CHILDREN CONTINUED:

Strep throat: If strep throat is suspected a 24 hour culture is required and the child may not return to school until the culture is determined negative or medication has been administered over a 48 hour period.

Head Lice: Head lice are very common and have NOTHING to do with cleanliness. Anyone who has head lice can pass it to others through close contact, contaminated clothing or other belongings.

The following must be done if your child develops head lice:

- Children will be excluded from school until they have received at least one treatment with an effective pediculicide and NO active infestation is found. Non-active nits or eggs should slide off the hair shaft with ease using fingertips or the comb provided in most treatment kits. It is the parent's responsibility to remove these eggs to prevent reoccurrence. Nits that are bound to the hair may still be live.
- The belongings of the infected child as well as all of those of children in the classroom will be bagged and sent home.
- A signed form will need to be filled out by the parent upon the child's return to insure they have completed the treatment on their child as well as sprayed, vacuumed and bagged all items in their house and car. Every two days you will need to look for and remove any nits to prevent new growth. This will normally take care of the problem if all requirements are followed.
- We require that a second treatment be done 7 to 10 days after the first treatment. This treatment will also have to be documented and signed by you.
- If a second case of head lice is found on your child, A Child's Garden then requires that you consult your physician for a prescription and your child will need a doctor's note to return to school.
- If a third case occurs, A Child's Garden requires that you follow the procedure as in the second case. We will then enforce a no nit policy as well as the doctor's note.
- A Child's Garden will inspect the heads of all children that may have been exposed to a case of head lice. We will bag all stuffed animals, dolls, etc. and vacuum and spray infected areas of the school.

NOTIFYING PARENTS: When an enrolled child comes down with a contagious illness we will post a sign outside the classroom door so that you will be alerted to check your child for symptoms. In most cases parents will receive a copy of an informational memo regarding signs, symptoms and length of exclusion. These memos are meant to be a guide and you should check with your child's physician if your child shows any symptoms of the illness.

Other: There may be illnesses not listed that may require omission from attendance and A Child's Garden reserves the right to determine this on a case by case basis.

Our intention is to reduce the spread of illness while considering the comfort and well being of the ill child and all other children enrolled in the program.

Some illnesses require medication and children should be kept home until the medication has the chance to reduce the symptoms of the illness.

In some cases a physician's note may be required for a child to return to school.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY: TO INFORM THE SCHOOL IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO OR COMES DOWN WITH ANY CONTAGIOUS DISEASE.

Reminder: Parents need to keep us informed of health concerns, allergies and specific information on symptoms and treatment. If your child will not be attending school due to illness a telephone call is required.

MEDICATION POLICY: Parents must inform the school of any medication their child is **taking** regardless of the medication being administered at school or at home. This is for your child's protection if the child shows signs or symptoms of an allergic reaction. It is the policy of this school to give medication only when ordered by a physician. To reduce the chance of an allergic reaction to medication the following guidelines **MUST** be met:

1. Medication must be ordered on the state approved form.
2. **The medication** form must be completely filled out by the doctor and the parent.
3. The first dose of any medication must be administered by the parent at home.
4. Only afternoon medications will be given at school. Parents are required to give morning medications before leaving their child for the day.
5. All prescription medications need to be in a prescription bottle and match the doctor's order.
6. Refrigerated medications must be placed in the locked box in the refrigerator in your child's room after being checked at the office. All other medications should be put in the locked box in your child's room except for an epipen.
7. **Epipens** are to be given directly to the teacher
8. Parents must provide a spoon or dropper marked for the appropriate dosage.

Whenever possible, parents are requested to use medications that can be timed to be given twice a day.

MEDICATION SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS: In some cases children may require special arrangements for administration of medication due to chronic illness. These arrangements need to be discussed with the administration so that proper arrangements can be made.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD MEDICINE BE PUT INTO A CHILD'S LUNCH BOX, DIAPER BAG, FOODS OR LIQUIDS.

OTHER: The following will be administered upon written request of the parent and does not require a doctor's approval: all over the counter topical ointments including sunscreen, teething gel, lotions, creams and ointments to prevent and clear up diaper rash. Each ointment must be on a separate form and be specific to the brand name and strength or we are unable to apply it. (Example Coppertone SPF25) All applications will be documented on the permission order form.

SUN BLOCK – Sun block needs to be greater than SPF 15, water proof and have a six hour protection. It is necessary that parents apply sun block prior to bringing their child to school each day. Sun block also needs to be provided by the parent to be reapplied in the afternoon by the child's teacher.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

Parent forms filled out at enrollment give permission for children to be treated

INJURIES: There will always be someone available that is trained in First Aid and CPR. In all cases, one teacher will tend to the injured child and the other teacher will tend to the other children. The administration will be notified to give further assistance.

Children participate in a variety of activities and at times may incur an injury. A written accident report will be made out for the parent to read and sign. If medical attention is required, it is expected that the parent use their medical insurance to cover the cost of medical expenses. This is also the case if damage is done to personal property, such as eye glasses.

MINOR INJURIES: Scrapes, cuts, abrasions, bites, etc. will be cleansed with warm water and soap. The wound will be covered with a band-aid or sterile pad. Ice packs (Boo Boo Bears) will be used to reduce swelling and make the injury more comfortable. Before the parent picks the child up, an accident report will be completed and be ready for the parent to sign. Every effort is to be made by the teacher to first verbally inform the parent of the injury, how it occurred, and what first aid procedures were taken.

SERIOUS INJURY: If a child appears to be disabled: i.e. broken bones, head injury or unconscious, the child will not be moved and 911 will be called. Children will be transported to the closest hospital (parent preference will be taken into consideration; however the attending EMT'S will determine if this is possible)

Shelton school children will be transferred to Griffin Hospital

Fairfield school children will be transferred to Bridgeport or St. Vincent Hospital

One staff person will accompany the child and remain at the hospital until a parent arrives. Administration will call the parent and notify them.

CPR/FIRST AIDE – There are staff trained in CPR and First Aide on the premises at all times.

INFORMING PARENTS: Depending on the type of injury, this may vary. For minor injuries, the parent will be informed at pickup time by a classroom teacher. The Director may decide to call the parent ahead of time if she feels it is in the child's or parents' best interest. We may also request that the child be seen by their physician to rule out any serious injury, at which time the parent will need to pick up their child.

In all circumstances, an accident report will be filled out. Parents need to sign the report to document that they have been notified of the injury. For any serious injury, the parent will be notified by telephone and given information as to where the child has been taken,

SERIOUS ILLNESS: In the event that a child is seriously ill, the parent will be immediately notified. Depending on the seriousness of the illness, it will be determined if the child will remain at the school until the parent can pick up the child and take them to the doctor or hospital. If it is determined that the illness is life threatening then 911 will be called and the child will be transferred to Bridgeport Hospital or St. Vincent Hospital for Fairfield students and Griffin Hospital for Shelton students. Consideration will be given to the parents listed hospital preference. However; we will take the advice of the Emergency Medical Technicians as to the hospital destination.

SAFETY

SECURITY: Our outside doors are locked and entrance requires punching in a code on a key pad. This code is for the parent/guardian and should not be given out to others. Please do not let anyone unknown to you into the building. There is a doorbell for entrance for people who do not have the code.

PICKING UP CHILDREN: Parents must sign their children out on the appropriate sheet. Our school is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day to accommodate the various hours that families work. However, parents are expected to pick-up their child at the end of their work-day. We urge you to consider the long hours your child spends at school and not overextend them unless it is necessary. Teachers are not required to take responsibility of children before 7:00 a.m. Half-day pick-up is after lunch as follows: Three and four year olds, and Alternative Kindergarten - 12:20 p.m. Kindergarten Half-day pick-up: 1:00 p.m. Extended Day pick-up (Shelton only) 3:00.p.m. Late pick-ups for any of the enrollment schedules will be charged \$15.00 per quarter hour. ***Habitual tardiness: Parents will be asked to make other arrangements for the pick-up of their child. If this is not possible it will be necessary for you to withdraw your child from our program.***

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE SAFETY: Children must be under the supervision of an adult at all times. Children should accompany you to the classroom and may not leave the classroom without you or the person responsible for pick-up at the end of the day. Please keep siblings with you during pick-up and drop off times as well.

SHOES: Infant and Tiny Tot parents may not enter the classroom with shoes on. This is to avoid small debris that could come off shoes and pose a choking risk as well as for sanitary purposes. You may want to keep a pair of slippers handy or paper shoe covers. Bare feet are also not permitted

AUTHORIZED PERSONS FOR PICK UP: Anyone responsible for picking up your child should be noted on the optional pick-up information form in your registration packet. The office should be notified IN WRITING of any changes of authorized persons for pick-up immediately. ANY AUTHORIZED PERSON PICKING UP YOUR CHILD SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SHOW A PICTURE ID. On occasion you may be asked to show identification to your child's teacher until we are all familiar with you as the child's parent. For your child's protection we will not allow them to leave with any person not previously authorized in writing by the parents or if the assigned person does not have proper identification.

CUSTODY/PARENTS: It is our policy to not interfere with the custody relationships of a child's parents. Therefore, we assume that both parents and or guardians have equal rights to pick up, drop off, visit or request documents concerning a child. Should this not be the case, it is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to provide court documents outlining the rights and responsibilities of each parent or guardian. We will follow the most recent dated court document without prejudice to either parent or guardian. We expect parents, guardians, and staff to keep children out of the legal entanglement or other custodial issues and resolve these in another forum. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disenrollment.

CHILDREN NOT PICKED UP: In the event that a child is not picked up by 5:45 p.m. and no contact has been received from the parents, the following procedure will be followed by the closing administrator:

1. We will make calls to locate parents or emergency contacts.
2. We will make calls to all numbers provided by the family.
3. At 7:00 p.m., if we have been unable to reach the parents or emergency contacts we will contact the Police Department, Youth Division.
4. Once the Youth Division is contacted, we will follow their instructions.

PLEASE NOTE: In accordance with State Regulations, two staff members will remain with the child in cases of late pick up.

PARKING LOT SAFETY RULES: (Parents are responsible for their children's safety)

1. Always enter and exit the parking lot slowly.
2. Never leave your car running when you are not in it.
3. Do not block the drive way as fire regulations require entrance for emergency vehicles at all times.
4. Please watch for children and parents behind cars.
5. Always hold your child's hand and do not permit them to run around the parking lot or any areas not fenced in.
6. Never leave a child unattended in the car. If you need assistance when picking up we will be happy to help.
7. Do not park in the striped white lines.
8. Children are not permitted to play or run around in the parking lot.
9. When parking at the Fairfield location please be sure to follow the one way lines.

CAR SEAT SAFETY: In accordance with Connecticut State Law. After October 1, 2005 children must ride in a proper child restraint until they are over **6 years of age AND 60 pounds! (Both the age and weight requirements must be met)**

After children outgrow their car seat, they must ride in a booster seat using a lap and shoulder belt.

The law also now requires that infants remain rear-facing until they are 1 year of age AND 20 pounds!

The law also states that violators will be fined and required to attend a car seat education class

For More Information Call:

CT Department of Transportation- 860-594-2173

CT Department of Public Health – 860-509-7791

Please note that state regulations require us to report any children who are not secured in proper car seats.

WEAPONS – in accordance with State Child Care regulations, no person with the exception of a peace officer may enter the premises with a dangerous weapon, **firearm** or facsimile of a firearm.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN – It is not the policy of this school to take children off the premises for field trips in classes lower than Kindergarten/Alternative Kindergarten **during the schools year.** **In cases when we do take children out for field trips children will be transported by a local school bus company and accommodations will be made by the bus company for any special needs of children.** There are occasionally some exceptions to this when there are a small group of children and they can be transported by car. **Other circumstances may require children being transported to or from the school for special services** such as speech or physical therapy. A teacher or administrator will accompany the child to the bus and remain with them until they are safely aboard the bus. Children who arrive at school by bus will be met by a teacher

or administrator and accompanied to their classroom. It will be the responsibility of the bus company to make accommodations for any special needs of children.

SECTION III ~ RELATIONSHIPS ~ PARENTS ~ STAFF ~ ADMINISTRATION

COMMUNICATION: We want to hear from you and encourage your input, suggestions and ideas. There will be times throughout the year for you to participate in activities and events at the school. Good communication between you, the teacher and administration is vitally important to the success of the program and your child's adjustment and progress. You will also have an opportunity to evaluate the program yearly. The school/teachers will use a number of means both verbal and non verbal to communicate with parents. General verbal communication may be done during drop off and pick up times, although at these times conversations are limited as the teachers first responsibility is to the children. If a parent needs additional time to talk with a teacher, time may be scheduled via the office. Teachers will post upcoming events and sign up sheets outside their classroom doors. When necessary, memos will be left in children's individual parent pockets located inside the classroom. Parents will receive theme calendars and newsletters at the beginning of every month. This information will allow you to know in advance the happenings throughout the school. Infant through toddler parents will receive a personal "My Day" form daily, **reporting about your** child's day. Parent information tables and bulletin boards are also located in the hallways and provide community information and brochures and handouts on health and developmental issues that parents are welcome to take a copy of. When a child appears not to be themselves you may be given an FYI call if the teacher feels they may be coming down with something. Information on monthly events is also available on the web site www.achildsgarden.net
Email the school – Fairfield: acgpreschool@aol.com Shelton: acgshelton@aol.com

COMMUNICATION WITH NON ENGLISH SPEAKING FAMILIES: Parents are welcome to have a family member or some person that they are familiar with to designate as an approved person for us to convey messages, concerns, and information. Whenever possible, we will provide written information in your native language. Parents will also be given a form to provide some common words in their native tongue that we can use to help your child transition into the school and classroom. Through the years we have had numerous children begin a classroom unable to speak or understand English. We have found this to be a positive experience for all. Young children learn quickly to communicate with each other. While the new child is learning English other children learn words in new languages to help them communicate and broaden their cultural experiences. Please feel free to come into the classroom to share stories, crafts, cooking projects from your country or family traditions. Information of upcoming events, calendars, school closings, forms and other school information can be attained through our web site www.achildsgarden.net
Email the school – Fairfield: acgpreschool@aol.com Shelton: acgshelton@aol.com

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY: Communication between the parents and staff is vitally important in meeting the individual needs of children. This is a responsibility that is to be shared by both the parents and the staff. Parents are expected to sign their children in and out as they arrive and depart from school. Charts are provided for infants. Parents need to fill out information regarding their child's feeding, sleeping and health. If there is any other significant information that is pertinent to their child's well being it should be noted on the charts of the Infants or put in writing for older children. Parents have a right to ask for a conference time to discuss confidential information or general concerns about their child. Parents are responsible for providing their child's food and personal supplies such as clothing, bedding, diapering and toilet needs. Parents are also responsible for keeping information updated on health concerns, allergies, telephone numbers, emergency contacts, and parent employment telephone numbers. Parents will be asked to complete a yearly survey informing us of how well you feel we are meeting the needs of the children and families. This will allow us to continuously evaluate our program for improvement or to implement new ideas. Families will receive a report of the findings which will also address any areas needing additional information or attention.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES: It is the responsibility of the staff to promote communication with each parent, in an informative, respectful manner. Staff is responsible for providing for your child's basic needs in a nurturing and safe environment. Staff is required to document Infants, Tiny Tots, and Toddlers care throughout the day on the appropriate charts. Parents of Infants, Tiny Tots and Toddlers will be given a daily report at the end of each day. Parents of preschool children are able to read about their child's day on the Daily News Board located outside each classroom. Parents of preschoolers will also receive a weekly newsletter with notations specific to their child.

WEB SITE: Our web site provides updated information, a copy of this handbook, calendars, forms and resource web sites as well as other important information. The web site may also be used to communicate with either of the schools by email. www.achildsgarden.net

EMAIL US: If email is more convenient please feel free to email the school directly.
Fairfield: acgpreschool@aol.com Shelton: acgshelton@aol.com

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE – As previously stated communication is vital to your child's success. Should you have a concern about your child, the classroom or the school in general, we suggest that you first discuss your concern with the classroom Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher is unable to satisfy your concern or is not available, please stop by the office to see a Director or to set an appointment to meet with the Director and/or teacher. Please feel free to call the Director to discuss your concerns as well. We have found that most concerns are resolved with honest open conversation and respect for each others opinions. If your concern is a safety issue we ask that you notify the Director immediately.

Complaint Procedure - State of Connecticut

This procedure is for Child Day Care programs which are licensed under the authority of Connecticut General Statutes 19a-79-1a through 19a-79-13. Most problems within a Child Day Care Center are non-life threatening and can be resolved by:

1. Discussing the problem with the classroom teacher.
2. Discussing the problem with the program director.
3. If the problem is not resolved you may contact the Department of Public Health.

In case of an emergency, notify the Department of Public Health as soon as the emergency is under control.

In case of abuse/neglect or life threatening situations, contact the Department of Children and Families at 1-800-842-2288 and the Department of Public Health - Child Day Care Licensing Unit.

ALL INSPECTION REPORTS AND COMPLIANCE LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR INSPECTION AT THIS CHILD DAY CARE PROGRAM OR BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH - CHILD DAY CARE LICENSING UNIT AT:

410 Capitol Avenue-MS#12 DAC 1-800-282-6063 - P.O. Box 340308 1-800-439-0437 - Hartford, CT 06134-0308 (860) 509-8045

THE SAME PROCESS WORKS FOR COMPLIMENTS AS WELL!

PARENT PARTICIPATION: Parents are an important part of our program, not only to the staff and administration, but particularly to your child. Parent participation helps us broaden children's understanding of different traditions, cultural backgrounds, careers and life experiences. Parents are invited to **help at school** in anyway that is convenient for them. Sign up sheets will be posted at various times throughout the year and will offer opportunities to help in specific areas.

Below is a list of suggested ways in which you might participate:

1. Telephone committee for special events.
2. Telephone reference list for new parents.
3. Hospitality - Open House
4. Fund Raising
5. Family Picnic
6. **Helping or sending in needed items for Holiday Events**
7. Family Picnic
8. End of Year Picnics
9. Equipment Repair
10. Special Snacks – **Must include a list of ingredients for allergy purposes.**
11. Special classroom project – **see** classroom teacher to schedule
12. Visit classroom to read a story
13. **Craft or classroom donations for learning centers - Writing Centers: envelopes, stamps, ink pads, small paper pads - Dramatic play: travel posters, travel brochures, posters that display work sites, buildings, countries, people from various cultures, dress up clothing - Art Centers: recyclable materials such as egg cartons, plastic meat containers, small boxes, business paper, check with classroom teacher for needs and ideas.**
14. Teacher appreciation day events

Parents are encouraged to act as a committee chair for any event, particularly larger events such as book fairs, family picnic. Please see the Director if you are able to chair or co-chair an event.

VOLUNTEERS: When participating as a volunteer at an event it is necessary that you follow the school policies and guidelines. You will be given an agenda for special programs or the classroom teacher will let you know what is needed. Your child must continue to follow the rules as well so that the classroom can maintain a safe and appropriate atmosphere. Parents should not sit on tables, talk loudly, and need to practice safety at all times. We are not able to accommodate siblings during these times.

FIELD TRIPS: Our school does not take children enrolled in our Infant through Four year old programs off the premises during the school year for field trips. We bring in a variety of presentations of educational and entertainment value throughout the year. Children enrolled in our Alternative Kindergarten and Kindergarten children may participate in scheduled field trips with parental written permission. Children enrolled in our older camp program will travel out for field trips with parental written permission. All children will travel in a school bus hired from an outside source.

CHAPERONE RESPONSIBILITY: **School year** field trips are taken with children in our Alternative Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Older Camp Programs. Responsibility may vary somewhat from trip to trip but basic responsibility is listed below. If you choose to participate as a chaperone then you must agree to follow teacher instructions in regard to safe guarding and regulations for all children including your own. Siblings are not permitted on field trips.

- Count heads frequently
- Never let a child go into a restroom or anywhere else unattended
- Your child must follow all school field trip rules
- Ask one of the teachers for assistance if you have any difficulty

FUND RAISING: Our school has two major fund raisers each year; Innisbrook (holiday paper and gifts) and the Scholastic Book Fair. Occasionally we do some other forms of fund raising, but the holiday paper and book fair is our primary source of funding that is used for toys, indoor and outdoor equipment, special events, and teacher appreciation week. Other than some funds for teacher appreciation, all money earned goes directly for the benefit of the children. It is not mandatory that parents participate. We greatly appreciate the support of the families that are able to do so.

SECTION IV – ROUTINES & SUPPLIES

GETTING A POSITIVE START: The list below is made up of suggestions, considerations and reminders to assist parents in making school a positive experience for you and your child. They reflect our collective knowledge of child development and years of experience in caring for and educating young children and **establishing a respectful relationship** with their families.

1. Give your child an opportunity to visit.
2. If at all possible, we suggest that you make your child's first day 1 to 5 days before you must start work. This will help both parents and children be more relaxed and less rushed on their first day.
3. Infant parents may want to spend some time at the center getting to know the staff and routines. During visits, we suggest that you allow the staff to hold, feed and interact with your child to begin to get to know them and their needs.
4. In most cases, children do well with just a few tears in the beginning. However, if your child has a difficult time making the adjustment, we will be happy to meet with you to devise a plan that will help your child feel secure and safe in their new environment.

ROUTINE VS. RIGIDITY: Routines are essential for children. They help define the day in a way that young children can understand. They help children understand time by activities/events to predict what comes next just as adults use the clock and the calendar. However, some variation on occasion helps keep the routines of life from becoming monotonous. For example: Pick your child up a little early on occasion for some extra relaxed time at home. Don't confuse routine with rigidity. Children need some time off on occasion, just as adults do. Elaborate vacations are not necessary; a "home day" goes a long way in providing some respite from the ordinary stresses of life.

ARRIVAL: Parents must sign their children in upon arrival on the appropriate sheet.

Children must be signed in by the following times Infants/Tiny Tots: 10:00 a.m. Toddlers – Preschool: 9:15 a.m. Alternative Kindergarten: 9:00 a.m. (Fairfield only) Kindergarten: 9:00 a.m. (Shelton only)

Upon arrival, take your child directly to his or her room. Help them put away their coat, lunch box, etc. Parents need to sign their child in on the appropriate chart. Infant/Toddler parents should note feeding, sleeping, toileting, medication and or other pertinent information regarding their child's care on the charts provided. Preschool parents should put any information necessary for their child's well being in writing. Please understand that we offer a fully enriched program with a curriculum and are not a babysitting service. When your child arrives, he/she enters a free-play time. Free play is a very important part of your child's day where he/she develops social and language skills, establishes friendships, role-plays and learns how to make choices. If your child arrives after free play, he/she comes into a structured circle time or a teacher directed activity and it is disruptive to the class. It also makes it harder for your child to join in and he/she may feel left out.

If you arrive while circle time is in progress you will have to wait with your child until it is completed.

Kindergarten: Children enrolled in the kindergarten classroom are to be dropped off at the classroom door. We want the children to prepare for the changes that will occur when they leave A Child's Garden. As part of their daily routine children will sign in, put away their belongings and check in with the teacher. A message center is located outside the classroom if parents need to leave a message for the teacher. Parents are also welcome to stop by the office if you have an immediate need or concern. You may also leave a message for the teacher to call you.

APPOINTMENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS: While we appreciate that it may be necessary to schedule doctor, dentist or other professional appointments during the school week we ask that the parent make every effort to make appointments early morning prior to arriving at school. If you pick your child up early for an afternoon appointment we consider the child signed out for the day. **It is necessary to make arrangements with the administration if you require a later arrival time than 11:00 a.m.**

We are sensitive to emergencies and special exceptions, but no child will be admitted late unless previously approved by the office.

SEPARATIONS AND REUNIONS: Separation is not a developmental milestone, accomplished then passed; it is a fact of life. The goal is for children to learn to separate independently and develop the capacity to cope with their feelings. It is often stressful, even for adults. In order to help children cope with separation some simple rules apply.

Establish a routine with your child. Children like to know what to expect and that you mean what you say. NEVER SNEAK OUT: that erodes trust and will lead to problems. Determine how long you have to stay, give your child a warning about a minute or so before you must leave and offer a choice of activities that have an obvious end (e.g. "When you're done with the story it will be time for me to go"). When it's time to go, say good-bye and leave. Dragging it out only prolongs the agony and confuses children. Our staff is experienced in assisting children to cope with separations and helping them get involved with activities and play.

- **Avoid long discussions with teachers during separations and reunions:** Children get the message that you and the teacher are not available to them and will usually find ways to get attention, often in a *negative way*. Additionally, conversations about children in front of them or other children should be avoided. A **conference** time can be set with teachers and/or directors if you would like to discuss your child.
- **Parents are responsible for their children once they arrive.** When parents arrive at the school, the boundaries are very often a little shakier as children test out who's really in charge. Many children can have difficulty staying in control after a long day and when parents "hang out" too long, problems occur. Keep rules consistent with the rules of the school (i.e. opening and closing doors are the teacher's or parent's job and keep children safe).
- **Avoid socializing with other parents within the room** as this is disruptive for the children and makes it difficult for the staff to keep the room safe and activities going.
- **Avoid using food (including bottles) as a transitional object.** Children need to learn to rely on their own capabilities.

VISITING CHILDREN: Our school has an open door policy and parents are welcome at any time. That being said, we ask that you consider the effect that visiting your child and separating again may have on them. These situations can also be disruptive to the classroom and we ask that you consider the other children as well. Occasionally arriving early for pick up may be more appropriate. This will also allow your child the opportunity to show you around the room and share classroom projects with you. When you do visit your child, we expect them to follow classroom rules, and that you do not take your child from the classroom without notifying the classroom teacher. If your child is enrolled in Kindergarten, we ask that prior arrangements be made with the classroom teacher as visits may disrupt the teaching instructions and classroom schedule.

Please limit separations each day: Try to schedule appointments for *your* child early mornings or late afternoon rather than bringing them in, coming back to pick them up and returning again later in the day. It is stressful for children and often disruptive to everyone

WHAT TO BRING FOR INFANTS, TINY TOTS & TODDLERS - ALL ITEMS MUST BE LABELED.

CLOTHING:

3 sets of clothing including socks, pants, shirts, underwear
Jacket – light weight or winter weight according to season
Hat – sun or winter
Boots
Mittens & snow pants as needed

Supplies:

Diapers
Wipes
Diaper ointment (Form Required)
Disposable spoons for feeding
Crib sheet (24x36) for crib or cot
Small Blanket
Favorite Stuffed animal or doll

All bedding must be stored in a nonporous zippered bag, labeled with child's name and brought home to be laundered weekly or as needed- NO PLASTIC BAGS

FOOD: Breakfast If eating at school - **Snack:** Morning and afternoon for Infants and Tiny Tots only (Toddler snacks are provided by the school. Snack foods must be labeled with the child's name and date.

Lunch: Toddler lunches need to be in a lunch box labeled with their name and with ice pack inside and a thermos for heated foods. Refrigeration and cabinet space is available for Infants and Tiny Tots.

All food is to be sent in cut into a size that can be swallowed whole.

BABY BOTTLES: We prefer the style with liners – No glass unless shatter proof – No solid foods in bottles including cereal without a doctors note. All bottles must be labeled and dated. Bottles are discarded after one hour if not finished at feeding.

FORMULA: Canned premixed labeled with child's name and date (extra should be provided for emergencies)

INFANT AND TINY TOT PARENTS: Parents are to provide all formula, milk, food and juice for their child. All foods need to be labeled with the child's name and date. A log will be kept on your child indicating his or her food intake while at school. It is important that parents note any feeding your child may have had before arriving at the school, so that the teacher can continue the child's appropriate schedule.

PLEASE NOTE: As new foods are introduced to your child's diet, they must first be served at home. This is to avoid the risk of a reaction to a food while the child is at school. As new foods are introduced to your child's diet it is the parent's responsibility to inform the teacher. You should always consult your babies pediatrician prior to introducing new foods.

For suggestions on when to introduce new foods to your baby go to web site wholesomebabyfoods.com

The school will not supply or offer any foods to children in the Infant or Tiny Tot classrooms.

Please check your supplies for the start of each week. Teachers note when supplies are running low, however it is the parent's responsibility to provide adequate supplies. **Parents will be called at home or work if adequate supplies are not on hand and will be required to bring them in.**

NOT ALLOWED: Soda, candy, raw peas/carrots, raisins, gum, balloons, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, peanut butter including crackers and sandwiches – Please note that as we are advised of choking hazards additional food and items may not be permitted. You will be informed of any changes by your child's classroom teacher. See getting a positive start page 18

CLOTH DIAPER POLICY: IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE CLOTH DIAPERS, PARENT RESPONSIBILITY IS AS FOLLOWS:

- To provide daily cloth diapers sufficient to meet your child's needs. (Minimum of 10)
- To provide disposable diapers to be kept on hand in case of shortage of cloth diapers (Minimum of 6)
- To provide rubber pants that will securely cover the entire diaper area (Minimum of 6 pair)
- To provide and airtight plastic lined diaper pail (suggested dry gear can be found in camping supply store)
- To bring home diaper pail daily. Remove soiled diapers which will be in separate plastic bags un-rinsed. We are not able to **rinse** diapers. The diaper pail must be washed and disinfected with bleach and water and returned on the child's next day

BREAST MILK: Our program supports breast feeding under the following policy. Mothers are welcome to breast feed in the infant room if comfortable doing so. If you would prefer a private space to nurse: Shelton – Feel free to use the library. Fairfield – Please see an administrator for use of an available office. Our Breast Milk Policy is adapted from the Center for Disease Control. By following safe preparation and storage techniques, nursing mothers and caretakers of breastfed infants and children can maintain the high quality of expressed breast milk and the health of the baby.

SAFELY PREPARING AND STORING EXPRESSED BREAST MILK:

Storage: Refrigerated - (Use within 48 hours) Frozen - (Use with 3 months) Thawed then refrigerated - (use within 24 Hours)

Preparation:

- **Be sure to wash** your hands before expressing or handling milk.
- When collecting milk, be sure to store it in clean containers, such as screw cap bottles, hard plastic cups with tight caps, or heavy-duty bags that fit directly into nursery bottles. Avoid using plastic storage bags or formula bottle bags, as these could easily leak or spill.
- Clearly label the container with the child's name and date that **it** was expressed (the oldest milk will be used first)
- Transport in a cooler.
- Do not add fresh milk to already frozen milk within a storage container. It is best not to mix the two.
- Do not save milk from a used bottle for use at another feeding.

Once a baby stops feeding the breast milk can not be saved. We suggest starting with small amounts that can be increased as the child's appetite grows. (Once the feeding starts the milk becomes contaminated. The baby's saliva creates an environment that can lead to bacterial growth)

INFANT SLEEP POLICY: This policy is to reduce the risk of Choking and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. For more information go to www.sids.org

1. Infants will be put down to sleep on their backs.
2. Any positioning device that restricts movement may only be used if a physician orders it in writing.
3. If a different sleep position is requested, the parent must get a note from the physician.
4. All pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskin, stuffed toys and other soft products shall be removed from the crib.
5. Infants requiring a blanket shall be placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant's chest.
6. The infant's head shall remain uncovered during sleep.
7. When the children can turn themselves from the back to the stomach, they shall be put down to

sleep on their back, but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep.
All children sleep in plain view and are monitored by the staff.

**WHAT TO BRING: FOR PRESCHOOL, ALTERNATIVE KINDERGARTEN,
 KINDERGARTEN - ALL ITEMS MUST BE LABELED**

CLOTHING:

3 sets of clothing including socks, pants, shirts, underwear (especially for three year olds)
 Jacket – light weight or winter weight according to season
 Hat – sun or winter

Boots

Mittens & snow pants as needed

Extra sneakers (sneakers or rubber soled shoes are required for use of outside equipment)
 Pull ups: young three's classroom only and must be previously discussed with an administrator.
 Please refer to toilet training policy below)

SUPPLIES:

Cot sheet (24x36 crib sheet works well), small blanket, small pillow, favorite stuffed animal or doll
 2 books optional

All bedding must be stored in a nonporous zippered bag, labeled with child's name and brought home to be laundered weekly or as needed- NO PLASTIC BAGS- DUE TO LIMITED STORAGE, we request that personal SUPPLIES ARE KEPT TO A MINIMUM.

FOOD: *See meals on page 25 for further information.* - **Breakfast:** If eating at school **Lunch:** A lunch box labeled with child's name ice pack required, thermos for heated foods.

In the event that a child does not have adequate supplies, food or clothing parents will be called at home or work to bring them in.

NOT ALLOWED: Soda, candy, raw carrots, raisins, gum, balloons, pacifiers, baby bottles. Children under four years of age; no hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter – Please note that as we are advised of choking hazards additional food and items may not be permitted. You will be informed of any changes by your child's classroom teacher.

TOILETING POLICY: Our three year old program recognizes that toilet learning is a milestone that not every child meets at the same age. With that in mind we accept children into our program that have not fully met this milestone. It is not the position of the school to teach the children toilet skills but to support the efforts made by the parents at home.

It is necessary that we keep a realistic goal in mind to allow children the time to achieve success. Upon enrolling parents need to understand that we expect children to be toileting successfully by the age of 3 years 4 months. Progress will be noted and evaluated throughout the months. Provided progress is adequate and parents are working with the child at home, we will continue enrollment up to 3 years 6 months. Any child who has not **achieved success** by 3.6 years would have to withdraw from the program. The exception to this would be documentation of a physical or developmental delay that would keep the child from reaching this timeline. Once you determine that your child has begun to show signs of readiness, the process is to be started at home over the weekend. If you determine that your child is ready after your home trial, you will need to discuss this with your child's teacher so you can coordinate your efforts. Below is the policy for toilet learning that must be agreed upon and signed for your child to be enrolled in the three year old program.

- 1) My child will start school in pull ups until they have begun training at home and accidents are infrequent. Once some toilet success has been met. I will provide thick cotton training pants and plastic pant covers.
- 2) My child will wear loose fitting clothes for ease in pulling up and down. *Pull on pants, sweat pants etc. are acceptable. Clothing with cumbersome buttons, one piece outfits and T-shirts that snap between the legs are not acceptable. Dresses are also not acceptable at this time as girls have difficulty seeing to pull down the underwear and holding up the skirt to sit on the toilet.*

- 3) I will provide sufficient extra clothing in my child's cubby at all times including socks and shoes.
- 4) Once my child is successfully using the toilet I will provide regular underwear for my child. (Outer clothing styles should still be considered until the child is proficient in dressing and undressing to avoid accidents)

MEALS: BREAKFAST - Tiny Tots, Toddlers, Preschool, Alternative Kindergarten and Kindergarten children who arrive early will gather in assigned breakfast rooms. Children are welcome to bring a snack or breakfast. Breakfast foods should be set out by the parent upon arrival. **Please note that breakfast clean up is 8:00 a.m. Infants are fed according to individual schedules.**

LUNCH - Lunchtime is a time for socialization, healthy eating habits and self help skills. Children enrolled in our two year old program through kindergarten will need to bring their lunches to school in a lunch box labeled with their name. A freezer pack must be included for any perishable foods. A thermos may be used for heated foods. We ask that you send in self serving lunches as your child will be getting their lunch boxes and bring them to the table to unpack. Teachers will be at the lunch tables to assist children. Foods that infant parents provide must be labeled with the child's name and dated. In accordance with Ct. Department of Health and Federal standards parents are expected to provide nutritious and well balanced meals. State licensing requires that teachers monitor children's lunches to be sure they are being provided nutritious meals. Please refer to allergies for special dietary needs on pages 7 & 8,

PLEASE NOTE: We are not permitted to serve children any foods that are beyond the expiration date. These foods will be sent back home or discarded and the parent will be informed. All policies regarding the storing, food preparation and serving are written in accordance with the policies and guidelines of the Department of Health and FDA as well as recommendations from our health and nutritional consultant.

SNACKS: The school will provide snacks in the morning and afternoon for children enrolled in our two year old through five year old programs. Snacks will follow the regulated menus in accordance with the Health Department and Nutrition guidelines. Snacks may also be a cooking project prepared by the classroom. Multi-cultural snacks are also served to provide children with different culinary experiences. Snack menus are posted in each classroom two weeks in advance. If for some reason the snack is changed the teachers will make a notation on the menu. Parents of children enrolled in the Infant and Tiny Tot classrooms will need to provide snacks for their child. Each child will have a dry bin storage labeled with their name provided by the school for parents to store dry snacks such as cheerios, or other packaged snacks. All snacks must be labeled with the child's name and date.

SECTION V - CURRICULUM ~ LEARNING ENVIRONMENT ~ ASSESSMENTS

OUR PHILOSOPHY is to provide care for children in a warm, nurturing environment where parents can feel secure about the safety and well being of their children. We will encourage the **children to learn through play** with a variety of developmentally appropriate activities.

OUR GOAL is to encourage independence, individuality, creativity and a positive self-image for every child in our care.

OUR MISSION is to create a safe, healthy environment for children, that will foster curiosity, and creativity, support their independence, nurture their self worth, spark their desire to learn, and model respect for the uniqueness of others.

OUR CURRICULUM is designed to meet the needs of the whole child. We use *The Creative Curriculum and the Developmental Continuum Assessment System* to meet the Benchmarks developed by the Connecticut State Board of Education to prepare children for kindergarten.

Study Areas are used to help build activities with a goal to provide children **with learning** opportunities in a variety of ways that consider the learning styles and abilities of all the children. Classroom planning will be done to assist **the development of each child** in the key areas of Social/Emotional, Physical, Cognitive, and Language.

Curriculum planning will include topics and activities such as:

- Awareness of the world around them and **to** inspire their curiosity about the outside world
- Family and life experiences
- Current events and the world at large
- Safety issues – how to handle emergencies and how to keep themselves and their families safe
- Self control - how to handle conflicts
- Making friends
- Good manners
- Sensitivity towards other people's feelings

Infant/Toddler Curriculum: Teachers provide activities appropriate for their individual developmental stages. Parents will receive a daily "My Day" report that will inform you of activities as well as individual information about your child.

ASSESSMENTS: PARENT/ TEACHER CONFERENCES: (Preschool – Kindergarten) - We are using The Developmental Continuum and Assessment System. This particular Curriculum and Assessment System assists teachers in linking curriculum and assessment. It considers what to expect from children at a given stage of development. As teachers assess children they are able to identify areas of the classroom planning that may need strengthening for the needs of a group of children or an individual child. Teachers use the following methods to analyze children during normal daily activities. **Some methods used are; observation, documentation and a collection of children's work.** Children's progress is assessed in the areas of Social/Emotional Development, Physical Development, Cognitive Development and Language Development. Parents will be provided a copy of the written assessment. Assessing children accomplishes multiple purposes such as arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated, identifying children's interests and needs, describing the developmental progress and learning of children, improving curriculum and adapting teaching practices and the environment, planning program improvement and communicating with families.

The assessment will be provided prior to parent/teacher conferences for your **review. This will give you an opportunity to form questions, comments and goals that you would like to discuss concerning your child.**

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Parent teacher conferences provide parents an opportunity to discuss information that may be sensitive to them, discuss their observations of their child's strengths as well as areas needing additional growth. Conferences also allow the teacher to learn about the family and cultural desires for their child in regards to their ongoing education. Parents and teachers will review and discuss goals for their child that can be used both at home and at school. Assessments will become part of the child's confidential file. Parents may schedule a conference with a teacher at any time if you have a concern about your child. You will need to go to the main office to set an appointment for a conference so that coverage for the classroom can be arranged.

(Consult the **Year At A Glance** calendar for specific dates that conferences are held)

CONSULTANTING WITH OTHER RESOURCES: In some cases it may be determined that it would be beneficial to have a professional in a particular area (i.e. speech, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc) to observe a child. In these cases it will be necessary for the parents to sign waivers for information to be shared with the outside resource. We will also expect the parent to sign waivers for the outside assessments to be shared with the administration and classroom teacher. While all information will be held confidential, it is necessary that we be kept informed so that we can plan and provide appropriately for the child.

We will also require being included in any PPT, IEPs or meetings to discuss planning and goals for the child.

WHAT CHILDREN LEARN IN THE:

BLOCK AREA:

- Concepts of shape, size, length and location
- To exercise imagination and creativity
- To create and repeat patterns
- To express ideas
- To cooperate with others
- To solve problems
- Counting
- Concepts related to people and how they live

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – When you take a walk in your neighborhood, point out roads and interesting buildings. Make a set of blocks out of milk cartons, which come in different sizes - Find a place where your child can play with blocks safely - Add interesting objects such as cars, people, plastic animals and other items that will extend their play and inspire new ideas.

DRAMATIC PLAY AREA:

- To exercise imagination and creativity
- To solve problems
- To make decisions
- To improve and use things in a symbolic way to represent something else
- To carry out ideas with the cooperation of others
- To try out different adult roles
- To develop language skills
- To sort and organize

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Place a sheet over a table to create a house or hide-out - Use a large empty cardboard box to become a pirate ship, castle, train, etc... - Collect some old clothes that your child can use for dress-up - Save food cartons - make some play money and play store - Read stories together and involve your child in acting out different parts of the story

LIBRARY AREA:

- Letters written on a page represent words
- That learning to read is important and enjoyable
- The meanings of many words
- To express thoughts, feelings and ideas
- To interpret pictures to represent ideas
- To listen to spoken language
- To make up stories
- To handle books with care
- To recognize words when seen in print

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Spend at least 15 minutes a day reading aloud to your child - Encourage your child to talk about the stories that you read - Ask questions such as “I wonder what will happen next?” - Try to relate the story to something in your child’s life - Visit the library and check out books that interest your child - Give your child paper, pens, pencils or markers and let him experiment with writing - Discuss the author, illustrator and other parts of a book

WRITING/ART AREA:

- Strengthen their fine motor control.
- Use communication skills
- Connect the written word with the spoken word
- Use their imagination as they “write” notes or label their work.
- Teachers encourage children to “write”, draw and manipulate the provided resources
- Use their imaginations to be creative and explore different materials.
- A natural vehicle for children to express their feelings.
- Reflect their thoughts and emotions through their choices of color, texture and media.
- Express their originality and individuality
- Small muscle development is defined
- Fosters vocabulary development as children learn and use related technology

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Provide children supplies such as pencils, markers, crayons, finger paint, envelopes, tape, stickers, folder games, magazines, letter tiles, number tiles, clip boards, magnet letters, etc., to encourage writing at home.

SCIENCE AREA:

- New vocabulary
- Concepts of texture, color, weight, size, shape, volume
- Sorting objects into categories to observe likenesses and differences
- Make predictions
- Observe changes
- To appreciate nature and develop a sense of wonder
- To solve problems
- Eye-hand coordination

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Take a nature walk - Bake cookies - Make bubbles - When your child is exploring, ask questions such as...“What do you think will happen if...” “I wonder why...” “and “How do you think we can find out?” - Talk about the weather - Plant a garden - Take care of a pet - Feed the birds

SENSORY: (Sand & Water)

- Learn concepts such as soft, hard, wet, dry, heavy, light, warm, cold, and sizes and shapes.
- Strengthen their small muscles as they mold and scoop
- Encourages scientific exploration and engage children in making careful observations and in classification, comparison, measurement and problem-solving
- Expand their language and learn words such as grainy, sprinkle, shallow and sieve.

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Provide children supplies such as play dough, clay, finger paint, water, sand to encourage sensory exploration at home. Blowing bubbles with your child, bring in a bin of snow, build sand castles at the beach etc.

COOKING is also a sensory experience and a great way to provide your children opportunities to enhance their skills in math, literacy and science. In addition, cooking sets the stage for life long healthy eating habits.

TOYS AND MANIPULATIVES:

- Eye-hand coordination
- Concepts of shapes, sizes, colors and locations
- Number concepts
- To create and reproduce patterns
- Sorting
- Problem solving
- One-to-one correspondence
- Concepts of addition and subtraction

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Count the steps as you walk up and down stairs - Identify shapes all around your home - Practice using puzzles, peg boards and string beads - Create patterns with blocks or pieces of cereal - Make a counting book - Have your child paste pictures on each page - Name colors of the fruits and vegetables at the grocery store

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT AREA:

- Balance and coordination
- To distinguish sounds
- Vocabulary
- Memory skills
- Concepts of fast, slow, loud and soft
- Sequencing
- Awareness and identification of cultures
- To be conscious of the moods and rhythms of music
- Self-expression

PARENTAL HOME SUPPORT – Make your own musical instruments out of cardboard tubes and paper plates - Sing directions to your child during clean-up time and other transition times - Dance with your child and move to music on the radio and TV - Vary the speed of the music and change the rhythms - Sing nursery rhymes, songs and fingerplays everyday

TRANSITIONING CHILDREN TO NEW CLASSROOMS: Typically children are enrolled in classrooms for the school year. Infants may be the exception (see additional information below). The children enrolled in our program have many opportunities to get to know teachers from other classrooms during shared activities, outside time and other events. We also work as a team so there are times when teachers cover for each other in classrooms. Children in the preschool classrooms move at the beginning of the school year. Children attending summer camp may have some regrouping but are usually with at least one teacher they had during the school year and many of the children they have been with. Children will be given opportunities to visit new classrooms and meet teachers. Teachers also visit classrooms and read stories to children getting to know them prior to moving.

Parents can help children have an easy transition by staying positive. We understand that there is always some anxiety on the parent's part when your child is faced with a new situation, and it is important to realize that children pick up on this anxiety. Parents can help by visiting the classrooms to become familiar with the classroom and the teachers. (Unfortunately we are not able to finalize classroom assignments prior to the end of the school year) Let your child know you have visited and are excited about the new activities they will have, things in the room, etc.

INFANT TRANSITIONS: For the most part infants remain in the infant room through the school year and possibly the summer. As children become more mobile, we make changes in the room to accommodate their growth and development. At the beginning of the school year (end of August), an infant may be as old as 6 months and by January be very mobile. The process of moving a child from the Infant Room to the Tiny Tot classroom depends on the child's readiness and availability. If we feel a child is ready to move, the teachers will discuss this with the parents. The child will then begin visiting the Tiny Tot room with one of the infant teachers and eventually on their own. Once the child is feeling comfortable in the new environment, the move will be made permanent. Tiny Tot teachers will also visit the Infant room and often teachers help each other out in classrooms. Parents are asked to visit the new classroom prior to the move to meet the teachers. Once parents have met the teachers, we hope that you will also visit with your child so they may interact with the teachers while you are there.

SUMMER MOVES – INFANTS, TINY TOTS, AND TODDLERS – During the summer some toddlers are able to move into a transitional three year old classroom for summer camp. They must be three prior to the start of summer camp in accordance with state regulations. We may also move Tiny Tot and Infants who are ready for a change and new challenges. Children will have opportunities to visit the new classrooms prior to the move, spend time, and get to know teachers. Parents are encouraged to stop in and visit the classroom and meet the teachers prior to the move.

In all cases where children are moving, we make every effort to prepare the children by visiting classrooms, room swaps with old and new teachers, combining for activities and helping children feel positive and excited about the changes ahead.

DISCIPLINE:

"Discipline is a slow, bit-by-bit time consuming task of helping children to see the sense in acting in a certain way" ~ Dr. James Hymes ~

We recognize that young children are learning self-control and the ability to interact with peers and adults on a daily basis. We believe that self-discipline is best and we have established our environment to encourage children to develop respect for others, self control and social adjustment.

The staff are expected to:

- Recognize and reinforce positive behaviors.
- Redirect children to choose alternative choices **when behavior is unacceptable**
- **(This is especially important with infants and young toddlers)**
- **Initiate problem solving, determine and discuss appropriate behaviors with older toddlers and pre-school children.**

At times, children are unable to control their behavior and it may be necessary to provide a separate activity away from the group until the child is calm. Teachers will sit with and talk with older toddlers and preschoolers helping them to recognize and verbalize their feelings. Staff shall not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others.

BITING: Our school recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program, and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right thing to do, we know that children bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Our program does not focus on punishment for biting, but rather on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting.

When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

1. Care for and help the child who was bitten.
2. Help the child who bit learn other ways of dealing with their frustration and feelings.
3. Observe the child who bit and document a possible pattern or reason for his or her biting.
4. In circumstances of chronic biting, it may be necessary for the parent to pick up the child and/or agree to a management plan until the child passes through this stage.

Our teachers will express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child who bit, learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there are episodes of ongoing biting, we develop a plan of specific strategies and techniques to address it and it is shared with the parents. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water. Then we call the child's parent and inform them of a bite with broken skin.

When children bite, their parents are informed the same day. When children are bitten, their parents are informed personally at pick up and given a copy of the accident form to sign. We keep the name of the child

who bit confidential to avoid labeling and give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting. Documentation is kept on all biting incidents with the names of all children involved should the information be needed for any medical reason. **We frequently attend workshops on this issue and provide new or updated resources on biting when available for staff and parents.**

SECTION VI – ADDITIONAL POLICIES

BABY SITTING POLICY: It is our position that A Child's Garden discourages employees from making independent child care arrangements with the center families. However, in the event that you enter into an arrangement with an employee of A Child's Garden to baby-sit for your family, these arrangements must be made away from the school. Our employees are expected to arrive on time to work, be on call to come in early or adjust their hours and be prepared to remain in their classrooms if ratios or situations arise requiring them to work longer hours. Therefore, making arrangements for employees to drive children to or from school or baby-sit while parents are out of town, is discouraged and could have an adverse effect on the employee's evaluation should your private arrangement interfere with their work schedule. Furthermore, A Child's Garden cannot be responsible for its employee's actions away from the **school**, outside their working hours and will not be liable for their act or omission when not on A Child's Garden time. Should you enter into an independent agreement with an employee of A Child's Garden which results in the person leaving our employ, the parent will forfeit their tuition deposit and the employee will not be eligible for rehire or future recommendations.

OUTSIDE TIME: Except on rainy days or in extreme cold, children go outside EVERY DAY and should come to school appropriately prepared (jackets, hats, mittens, boots, snow pants). If you do not feel your child is well enough to be outside, he/she should not attend school that day. **ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.** Our playgrounds are protected by fencing and playground equipment is maintained yearly and as needed. Teachers are required to report any equipment that is in need of repair and take it out of use until the repair has been made or discard small toys and equipment that may not be able to be repaired. The school does not use pesticides or herbicides when children are at the facility. We use the least hazardous means of controlling pests and unwanted vegetation. Any applications required are done when the school is not in session.

NAP/REST TIME: Each child will be provided with his/her crib or age appropriate size cot. Infants and Tiny Tots will sleep according to their individual schedules. Toddlers, three, four and five year olds will have a group rest period for a minimum of one hour. Toddlers needing an earlier rest time or two naps will be given the opportunity to do so. We discourage parents from asking us to wake children before they are ready, as they need the rest after their busy morning. When we wake children early, they are often tearful and this usually makes their afternoon very difficult. This can also be disruptive to other children. Although your child may not nap at home you may find that they will nap at school after their busy morning. We do not require that children sleep and children who do not fall asleep will be provided books or a quiet activity after an appropriate rest period.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS: Our focus is on what the holiday means, i.e.: family togetherness and the joy of giving and caring for one another. Families are welcome to share their holiday traditions with us. Sign up sheets will be posted for special events for volunteers, supplies, and special snacks.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES: Please keep them simple. Children have no preconceived ideas, they learn from their experiences. Please have consideration for the nutritional values of other families in making choices for birthday treats. Believe it or not, muffins and a rousing "Happy Birthday to you" can go a long way. All treats sent in must be accompanied by the list of ingredients to protect children with food allergies. Often several children have the same birthday and you may be asked to coordinate your treats with the other families. If you intend to send in food for a celebration of any kind, the teacher must be given advance notice so that sufficient planning can be made for any children with food allergies and to be sure that no one else is sending in a treat that day. We suggest that you send in cupcakes, muffins, etc. that have been commercially prepared and that provide a complete list of ingredients. If you choose to bake, a list of ingredients must accompany any foods sent in. If you are a parent of a child with a food allergy, you will be made aware of any special snacks or foods that will be served. If your child is able to consume the food that will be served, your written permission will be necessary. If your child is not able to consume the food, an alternative appropriate food will be served. See meals for information regarding allergies. Please note that as a safety precaution, balloons are not permitted at school. Party favors and goody bags are discouraged. Not every family is in a position to purchase them nor does every family agree on what is appropriate for their children to eat or play with. Please be considerate of children's feelings and do not place party invitations in children's mailboxes at school unless you are inviting the whole class.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PUBLICITY: Photographs of the children participating in our program may be taken from time to time and may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures or other publicity materials. Written notice is required if you do not wish to have your child's picture displayed in any of the displays mentioned above.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION – Parents of children enrolled in our Four Year Old, Alternative Kindergarten, & Kindergarten programs

It is not our policy to have a "Graduation" at the completion of these programs. Our focus is on providing the children with a fun opportunity for farewells. Each group will have a picnic/field day that is geared to activities that the children can enjoy. With the exception of Kindergarten, picnics are held during a regular school day. Kindergarten Farewell will be held in the evening for parents to attend.

SECTION VII – ABUSE & NEGLECT POLICY

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION: State law mandates A Child's Garden to report any evidence or suspicion that a child or children are being or have been abused or neglected. We are required to report directly to the Department of Children and Families. We accept our charter as a "mandatory reporter" without equivocation.

In order to protect the children in our care the following is done.

- 1) We check every child every day upon arrival. We seek explanations for injuries and complaints from the children.
- 2) Staff is attentive to changes in children's behaviors, moods, attitudes and expressions. Unusual patterns are noted and shared with parents.
- 3) We have an open door policy with regards to parental visits.
- 4) Administrators do not have classroom responsibilities and are available to monitor rooms, visitors and activities.
- 5) Children may not be removed from the school except by duly authorized persons who have been positively identified.
- 6) Telephone calls are not accepted for pick up changes for children.
- 7) We encourage parents to use child safety seats, sunscreens, appropriate clothing and appropriate discipline.
- 8) We encourage families having difficulties with their children to consider competent counseling and provide referrals on request.
- 9) We provide parent information on child rearing, nutrition, health issues, etc. on bulletin boards and as handouts.
- 10) Children's departure will be monitored and identification will be checked.
- 11) Children will not be permitted to leave if we feel the parent or adult picking up is incapacitated in any way.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of this school that at all times children will be treated with love and respect. Our school maintains a zero tolerance for abuse and neglect. Every effort will be made to assure the safety of the children and guard them against abuse or neglect. Professional and properly trained staff that understands that abusive, neglectful, humiliating, frightening or corporal punishment will not be tolerated will supervise children. The children shall receive appropriate positive guidance, redirection and limit setting from the staff at all times. The school shall be operated in accordance with the terms of its license and the regulations as issued by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH). The Department of Children and Families (DCF), in keeping with the State of Connecticut Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Laws, names employees of child care facilities mandated reporters of suspected cases of abuse and neglect. It is the policy of this school that employees must report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to DCF. In addition, it is the policy of this school that all employees will report suspected cases of abuse or neglect to a school administrator. All staff shall be free from discrimination or retaliation for making required reports of abuse or neglect should it ever occur at the school.

DEFINITIONS AS REGULATED BY DCF IN POLICY NUMBER 97-319

PHYSICAL ABUSE: is defined as anyone who inflicts injury intentionally not accidentally, on someone under 18 years old. The reporter of abuse or neglect should notify his employer if the observations leading to the report were observed during one's employment

NEGLECT: is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention or supervision.

SEXUAL ABUSE: Any sexual activity between an adult and a minor is illegal and constitutes sexual abuse. If the adult perpetrator is not a stranger, but the person responsible for such child's care, health and welfare, DCF will be notified. If the adult perpetrator is a stranger, the police should be notified as well as DCF.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: is a vague category of abuse, but DCF accepts emotional abuse as a legitimate reason for reporting abuse to them. One way of viewing such abuse is that the child is being emotionally abused if the behavior of his guardians or caregivers undermines or halts his/her development. For example, a pattern of ongoing spousal abuse could cause the child to become anxious and/or depressed, have nightmares and become virtually unable to learn in school. Report such domestic violence situations to DCF if there are children in the home.

REPORTING: To report suspected abuse or neglect, the reporter should immediately report to DCF by telephoning 1-800-842-2288. This telephone report should be followed within 12 hours by a written report to DCF. Documentation of the initial phone report, as well as a copy of the written report, should be put in a confidential file with written assessment including the names of DCF staff that took the report. Throughout this statement, the word "suspect" is the operant word. You don't have to be certain there is abuse or neglect. Determining certainty is the job of DCF and the Court. You must report incidents that "suspect" abuse or neglect. If you and the administration are uncertain whether a matter should be reported, phone DCF, describe the situation and ask DCF if it should be reported. Make the report and DCF will decide if it is legally sufficient to accept or not. The administrator will consult with DCF to determine how parents should be notified.

SAFE GUARDING CHILDREN: In the event that a staff member is accused of child abuse or neglect one the following steps will be taken. If the Director feels there is validity to the accusation, the staff member will be terminated from our employment. In the event there is uncertainty of the accusation, the staff member may be relieved of duty in the classroom and work in the office until the validity of the accusation has been determined, or the staff member will be put on leave until the validity of the accusation has been determined. Recommendations will also be considered from DCF and the Dept. of Health Day Care Licensing Division.

MEDICAL ATTENTION: Should the child require medical attention, every effort will be made to contact the child's physician. If this is not possible, the child will be taken to Immediate Health Care or the emergency room (Bridgeport Hospital or St. Vincent for Fairfield children and Griffin Hospital for Shelton

children). If the injuries are serious, it may be determined that emergency medical services be contacted by calling 911.

TRAINING: Staff will receive annual training each year on abuse and neglect policies, procedures and the safe guarding of children.

DOCUMENTATION: Staff will be responsible to monitor the health and well being of children as they arrive and throughout the day. Notes will be kept regarding changes in behavior of the children. All injuries that occur at school are to be written on Accident Reports that will be given to the parent to read and sign. Staff is expected to ask parents about any injuries they notice when children arrive at school and these injuries and the parent's response will be noted in the AM/PM books.

GENERAL DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN: Staff shall not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others. Staff will set clear limits for children. Positive reinforcement will be given for appropriate behavior. Teachers will attempt redirection away from negative behavior. With children 2 years of age and younger, an alternative activity will be offered. Teachers will attempt to encourage correct responses and positive attitudes, discuss feelings and encourage problem solving with children three years and older. If a child becomes out of control and is harmful to himself or another child, a teacher should remove the child from the group. This is not to be done as a means of punishment but to protect other children in the group and to allow time for calming down. The teacher will spend time with the child and encourage them to talk about what he is feeling. If a child's behavior becomes continuously disruptive or aggressive, all or some of the following may be done; discuss the situation with the Head Teacher or Director, set a conference with the parent, provide referral agencies, plan alternative actions or provide alternative child care possibilities. In extreme situations the parents may be asked to withdraw the child from our program.

MANDATED REPORTING: We are mandated reporters and must call DCF (Department of Children and Families) for any suspected incidents of abuse or neglect. According to DCF it is not the responsibility for A Child's Garden to have proof and we must report any suspected incidents to DCF to determine the need for investigation. Reasons for calling may include but are not limited to unexplained injuries, neglected medical attention; safety issues such non-use of car seats, suspected use of alcohol or drugs. In some cases it would also be necessary for us to contact the Police Department.

A Child's Garden

a special place to grow



A NOTE TO REMEMBER

*It's more important
to pave the way
for children to want to **know**,
than to put them on a diet of facts
that they are not ready to assimilate.
First catch their interest,
then their motivation to learn should be great!*