



Dear Families,

I would like to welcome you to the Edgewood Early Learning Center. I hope this handbook will answer your questions about our programs and policies. Please keep this handbook as a quick reference guide throughout your time with us and feel free to contact me at any time with any questions or concerns.

Warmly,

Francesca Trial  
Program Director

## Our Philosophy

At the Edgewood Early Learning Center, we believe that a high-quality early learning program provides a safe and nurturing environment which promotes social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of young children, while responding to the needs of the families. Our program takes pride in upholding developmentally appropriate practices and has implemented a curriculum, with attention to the different needs, interests, and developmental levels of each individual child. Our teachers believe each child is a unique person and that our interactions with them should be responsive to their individual differences.

**Intergenerational Programming** is a fundamental part of our early learning program; one that is based on reciprocity and involves education and preparation for all ages. This social movement involving the youth and elderly coming together to connect, grow, create and challenge each other in an engaging and interactive way is not only beneficial to our residents, but to our young students. Exposing and encouraging these interactions helps alleviate fears children may have of the elderly and may help them better understand their own self and the aging process.

Children's cognitive abilities are developed as they build, refine, select, and interpret information using their current understanding of the world. They modify that understanding based on their life experiences. Young children are concrete in their thinking: what they see is what they know. By interacting with our residents, they gain a better, more diverse understanding of their world. We truly believe that bringing multiple generations together enhances every member involved and has exponential and everlasting effects.

*"Wherever there are beginners and experts, old and young - there is some kind of learning going on, some kind of teaching. We are all pupils and we are all teachers."  
- Gilbert Highet*

## Enrollment Information

The Edgewood Early Learning Center is licensed by the State of New Hampshire to provide care for up to 36 children, ages 6 weeks through 5 years. The Center is open from 7:00am-5:30pm Monday through Friday, year-round. Enrollment is on a first-come first-serve basis, with priority given to Edgewood employees. Prior to being offered a spot in our program, the family and child must come to the center for a tour. At time of tour, the Director will provide all necessary paperwork needed for a child to enroll into our program. This includes up to date immunizations and an updated physical from your child's doctor. Physical forms must be updated annually. A child is not guaranteed enrollment until the family has provided a registration fee, non-refundable tuition deposit, and a signed Child Care Agreement. The Edgewood Early Learning Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment at any time due to lack of payment, or for any other reason the Director deems appropriate. Please note, our infant program is exclusive to Edgewood Centre employees.

### Waitlist Procedure

When a classroom is full, an inquiring family will be given the option to be placed on our wait list. Our wait list will be updated bi-annually. When a classroom vacancy occurs, the wait list is reviewed, with priority given to employees of Edgewood. When called from the wait list, a family must schedule a tour within the next week or forfeit their spot. Once the tour is complete, the family will be given 72 hours to provide the center with a non-refundable registration fee, tuition deposit, and a completed Childcare Agreement. A child is not guaranteed a spot until these fees and agreements are received. If the center does not receive this paperwork and fees within that time, a family's spot will be forfeited and the next family on the list will be contacted. Due to priority given to employees at The Edgewood Centre, the Early Learning Center cannot make any guarantees regarding enrollment, or wait times, and no spot is ever guaranteed until a deposit and agreement is received.

### Transition Days

Transition Days are scheduled to help alleviate any anxiety or fears a child or family may have. These days also help Edgewood Staff better prepare for the child and family, to ensure a smoother transition into our program and to give both staff and families the opportunity to ask any questions prior to the first day. Transition dates and times will be scheduled between the family and Director. The first day of transition will be a 2-hour visit and the second, a 4-hour visit. These transition days are for the child, and the parent/guardian is not expected to stay. The family of an infant is expected to stay on the first transition day to guide the staff in understanding their child's cues and needs.

Classroom Transitions typically occur at the beginning of our summer programming (early July) and at the beginning of the school year(early September). Similar to when a child starts in our program, each child will be given 2 transition days, that will occur the week prior to a child's first week in their new classroom. These transition days are for the child only.

## Financial Policies

### Tuition Fee Schedule

Tuition is based on the classroom in which your child is enrolled and will be adjusted when your child moves to a different classroom and/or changes weekly schedule. Families will be given a minimum of 30 days' notice for any center-wide classroom rate changes.

### Weekly Tuition Payments

Tuition payments must be paid with check, money order, or cash by Friday of each week, for the following week's care. Any cash payments must be received in hand by the Director or Assistant Director. A receipt will be provided prior to the payor leaving the center. Cash should never be left in the tuition box, or with anyone who is not able to provide a receipt. Edgewood Early Learning Center cannot be held responsible should cash payment be misplaced, if a receipt has not been provided. If a family opts for monthly billing, then tuition is due by the last Friday of a month, for the following month.

Reductions in weekly tuition are not given for absence due to illness, holidays, or other reasons. Extended absences of 4 consecutive weeks or more may be arranged with the Director for a non-refundable holding fee equal to two weeks tuition, which will be credited to your account when your child returns to the program. An extended absence requires a thirty-day notice. **For children leaving the program, your account must be in good standing on or before the start of your child's last week in our program.**

**Attention Edgewood Employees** Tuition is billed bi-weekly using the Edgewood Accounts Receivable System and will automatically be deducted from your pay. If both parents work for Edgewood and you wish to specify which parent will receive the bill, please contact the Director. Employees are responsible for their weekly contracted tuition amount, whether their child attends or not. The only exception to this will be holidays, scheduled vacations/day off, and when a child is absent from the program, but the employee is present for work that day. The Director will contact Human Resources to verify employee's attendance.

### Registration Fee & Tuition Deposits

Upon initial enrollment, families are responsible for providing a \$40 registration fee and a tuition deposit, equal to one-week tuition. A family's one-week tuition deposit will be used for your child's last week in our program. This deposit will carry over year to year. Edgewood Employees are exempt from providing a deposit but must provide a registration fee.

### Late Payment Fee

Families will be charged a \$10 late payment fee after two (2) weeks of non-payment. Accounts will continue to accrue late payment fees until the account is in good standing. Edgewood Early Learning Center reserves the right to terminate services after four (4) weeks of non-payment.

### Late Pick Up Policy

Edgewood Early Learning Center closes at 5:30 PM. It is important that your child(ren) are picked up by 5:30, to ensure our staff can leave at the end of their shift. If you are unable to arrive on time, you must call the center so that both your child and Edgewood staff can be prepared for the delay. If you are late picking up your child, you will be charged as follows:

\$10 from 5:30-5:35

\$20 from 5:36-5:40

\$30 from 5:41-5:45

\$40 from 5:46-5:50

The fee will continue to increase by \$10 increments, every 5 minutes. There is a one-time waiver of this fee granted to every family on the first occasion they are late. Both the fee and the waiver will be reflected on your statement. Late payment fees must be paid during the next billing cycle. Unpaid late fees may result in terminations of care. Care may be terminated for continuous bouts of late pickups.

### Vacations

Families are given two (2) weeks of vacation time, to be used during the calendar year, equal to your child's contracted schedule, at time of vacation. Vacation time is to be used a week at a time and cannot be split into small vacation increments (i.e. long weekends). By utilizing vacation time, families forfeit services for their vacation week. If your child attends for any part of the week, your family will be responsible for the entire weekly tuition. Family vacation time must be submitted in writing to the Director at least two weeks prior to requested week. Unused vacation time will be forfeited at the end of the year. Families are given one-week tuition credit for the week we are closed between Christmas and New Year's Day

### **Hours of Operation & Drop Off/Pick Up**

Each family enters a childcare agreement that includes your scheduling needs, including pick up and drop off times. On the rare occasion your child will be here early or later, we ask that you call and inform the center, so that we are adequately staffed. The Edgewood Early Learning Center is open Monday - Friday, year-round from 7:00am to 5:30pm. All children must be escorted to and from their classrooms, and the teachers must be made aware of your child's arrival and leaving. If your child will be absent or arriving late, we ask that you contact the Center by 9:00am, and arrive no later than 11:00am to attend the day's program.

### **Yearly Schedule & Graduation**

Upon initial enrollment and at the beginning of every school year, we will provide you with an updated yearly calendar of closings, holidays and other days of note. Our structured Early Learning Program runs from the first week in September through the last week in June. Details of activities and special events will be provided through your child's classroom newsletter on a monthly basis. During the summer months of July and August we have a less formal activity calendar, providing the children with as much time as possible outdoors on our well-equipped playground and exploring the grounds of Edgewood. Summer activities include a variety of field trips, outdoor games, and 'cooling off' in our sprinkler area.

Each year, the Edgewood Early Learning Center hosts a formal Pre-Kindergarten graduation ceremony for the children who are moving onto Kindergarten at the end of June. This is a very special event for the

children – something they spend a great deal of time preparing for. All the children in the Pre-Kindergarten class take part in the ceremony, and as always, we encourage any and all family and friends to attend, along with the other students and teaching staff.

## **Curriculum & Assessments**

Our curriculum follows the thematic approach to early learning. The teaching staff work together to create individual classroom themes, projects and activities that are designed to inspire higher-order thinking, creativity and interest, dramatic play, confidence, and positive self-esteem. All classrooms observe the unique interests and needs of their classroom and create a curriculum to foster that interest. All activities and experiences are an important part of our curriculum, including outdoor exploration, structured activity with adults, classroom centers, and unstructured play in and out of the classroom. Throughout the classrooms, self-help and self-advocacy skills are fostered by our teachers through positive reinforcement and gentle guiding. These skills include potty training, feeding oneself, getting ready for outdoor play, and learning to effectively communicate with other children. These skills are cumulative and build upon one another as your child progresses through our program.

In addition, our curriculum lays foundational work for school readiness, with pre-math, pre-reading, and pre-science skills. Our pre-reading instruction encompasses letter recognition, letter/sound association and letter/word formation. Our pre-math program is a hands-on experience with various activities to develop and reinforce early mathematical concepts. The pre-science program utilizes your child's power of observation and their curiosity of the world around them as a foundation for discussions, activities, and experiments designed to provide a basic understanding of how the things in our world work and relate to each other.

Assessments are done bi-annually, in mid-November and mid-May. Our teachers observe, record and work one-on-one with your child to complete your child's Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). Families will also be given an ASQ to complete at home, to provide a more well-rounded assessment of your child. This tool helps drive our curriculum and show areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered the weeks following an assessment. These conferences will be scheduled with the Director and family but will only include a child's teacher(s) and guardians. The Director will be present during the conference if requested.

## **Communication**

We believe that effective communication with parents is the essential key in scaffolding your child's development. We make every effort to keep you up to date by sending home monthly newsletters, along with daily electronic communication through KidReports. As an enrolled family, you will be added to the Director's email group and receive monthly updates of center happenings and updates. We have an open-door policy and encourage you to visit, attend special parties or functions, and family events. We ask that families refrain from visiting between 12:30-1, as this is a busy transition time from lunch to nap, where children are cleaning up, taking bathroom turns/changing diapers, setting up their mats and relaxing bodies. If you would like to visit during that time, we ask that you assist your child during this transition time!

## **Behavior Management & Aggressive Behavior between Children**

Our staff works hard to create an environment where children are successful both socially and emotionally. The daily schedule is planned to accommodate children's needs for balance in planned group projects, one-on-one activities, active and creative play, rest, and nourishment. Positive behavior is continuously reinforced, and inappropriate behavior is discouraged through explanation and redirection. Our staff help children learn socially appropriate behavior by providing guidance that is consistent with the child's level of development. On a case by case basis, if a child's behavior becomes increasingly difficult and unmanageable in a classroom setting, to the point the child becomes a one-on-one, the Director may choose to send them home for the remainder of the day.

Some of the hardest work of childhood is developing impulse control. Young children may bite or otherwise hurt another child out of frustration, experimentation, or simply by accident. Depending on the age of the child, this may be considered age appropriate, but is always addressed and discouraged. When a child is injured by another child, the teacher completes an Accident Report form for the family of the injured child to sign. A family may request a copy of your child's accident report at any time. The family of the child who has caused the injury is also made aware of the situation, and the confidentiality of both families is maintained. If a child bites 3 times or more in a day, that child may be sent home at the Director's discretion.

### **Aggressive Behavior**

The Edgewood Early Learning Center wants to provide support for all families that attend our program, and we believe terminating a child's enrollment should be the very last resort. In the unlikely event that a child's behavior is putting the safety of other children and/or staff in jeopardy or the behavior becomes a pattern, the following steps will be taken:

1. The classroom teachers will make the child's family aware of the situation and begin documenting the incidents as they occur.
2. Three incidents documented over the course of the day, or one incident that results in serious injury may warrant a phone call to the child's parent/guardian to have their child picked up for the day. This decision is made by a member of the leadership team and is not decided by a classroom teacher.
3. Prior to the child returning to the program, a meeting with the family, Director, and classroom teacher must take place, where a plan addressing the behavior will be created and implemented.
4. The child will be given two weeks to adjust to the new plan. All plans will be carried out in a positive and encouraging manner.
5. If the child continues to put other's at risk for injury and needs to be sent home more than 3 times as a result, the Director may make the decision to terminate the child's enrollment.

### **Child Safety & Nutrition**

Only persons authorized in writing by parents/guardians may pick-up or visit a child. For safety reasons, we will not release your child to anyone without authorization, and all persons picking up a child will be asked for a valid license or picture ID. Please have this available until we recognize your face and name. Persons not on the authorization form will not be permitted to pick up or visit your child.

If the person picking up your child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will not allow the child to leave with this person. For your clarification, if a staff member can smell alcohol, the child will not be released from the Center, and another authorized person must pick up the child.

Edgewood conforms to all fire regulations as designated by the New Hampshire State Fire Marshall and fire drills are conducted once a month for all children and staff. Emergency exit routes are posted inside the entrance of each classroom.

Families are required to provide a packed lunch to school and a daily water bottle. A cold lunch should be kept with an ice pack, and a hot lunch kept in a thermos. Please have all food ready to serve and pre-cut if necessary. We will not serve whole grapes or whole cut hot dogs to children under 3 years old. We ask that there is no candy or soda included in your child's school lunch. Edgewood Centre provides milk at breakfast, AM snack and lunch time. Water is provided for PM snack. Edgewood Early Learning Center will provide breakfast (to all children who arrive before 7:30 AM), AM and PM snack. Families will receive a copy of the rotating menus upon enrollment and when any updates are made. The menu for each week will also be posted on the main bulletin board. All meals met the U.S.D.A Child Food Program Requirements.

If your child has special dietary needs or food allergies, please see the Director.

### **Toys from Home**

We have a strict 'no-toy' policy at the Center, this includes toys in a child's cubbies. Please leave all toys at home or in the car. We do have an exception for sharing days, if your classroom teacher has implemented a sharing program. We do ask that you do not send in expensive or irreplaceable items. A small soft animal for rest time is not considered a toy from home, but children are limited to one small animal to be left in the nap area.

### **Nap Time**

We are required by the state to provide all children at least 30 minutes of quiet, activity-free rest. Our rest time is between 1:00 and 3:00 PM. If after 30 minutes your child is not asleep, they will be allowed to read quietly or engage in a quiet activity on their mat. After 60 minutes, all awake children will be given the opportunity to do quiet activities away from their mats. Families are responsible for providing a crib sheet and blanket for rest time. These items will be sent home to be laundered. If you would like to bring in a pillow, we ask that it be a toddler size pillow. Infant families are not required to provide a crib sheet but must provide a wearable blanket or swaddle (up to 3 months).

### **Clothing**

Each child should have 3 complete seasonal appropriate changes of clothing (socks, underwear, pants/shorts, and shirts) to keep at school. If spare clothes are borrowed and brought home, please wash them and bring them in the following school day. Please label all clothing, including boots and shoes. We require that children always wear shoes, and during the cold winter months, families are asked to provide indoor shoes for their child (not slippers) to be left at the center. Please remember that our day is often messy, and we do our best with smocks and bibs to protect clothing, but we ask that children be dressed in easily laundered play clothes.

## Physical Exams and Immunizations

Prior to enrollment, all children must have a NH State Child Health Form (or comparable document filled out by the child's physician) on file at the Center, accompanied with an up-to-date immunization record. These forms must be updated annually.

## Illnesses

If your child is absent due to illness, we ask that you promptly inform us so we can be alerted to the illness. This enables us to look for symptoms in other children and take extra measure in cleaning and sanitizing classrooms.

The Center will temporarily exclude a child or send the child home as soon as possible if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the Center activities
- The illness results in a greater need for care than teachers can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- Fever of 100 degrees, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness – children must be fever free for 24 hours, without the aid of fever-reducing medication, before returning to the program
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs) until medical evaluation allows inclusion
- Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours). A child may not return until 24 hours after their last vomiting episode.
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a healthcare provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease

\*\*Per NH state regulation – it is considered unreasonable and inappropriate for early childhood educators to attempt to determine which illnesses with fevers may be serious. The child's parents or legal guardians, with the help of the child's healthcare provider, are responsible for these decisions. Because of this reason we will promptly inform you when your child is found to have a fever while under our care and supervision.

## Head Lice

If head lice are identified by the Director or a teacher, the child's parent or guardian will be notified immediately. Prompt and proper treatment of this condition is in the best interest of the child and the center. We ask that the child is treated with a head lice medication and be lice and nit free prior to returning to school. Upon the child's return, an Edgewood employee will check for any nits or live that may have been missed. If found, the child will be sent home again for another treatment. We understand the inconvenience this may put on families and ask that families use great attention and diligence when treating lice at home.

## Conjunctivitis

Any child with suspected conjunctivitis will be excluded from the Center until they have consulted with a healthcare provider and have been approved for re-admission; with or without treatment.

## Medication

Any medication taken at school requires a physician's note. If your child needs to receive medication during their time in the Center, it must be properly packaged and labeled, and a medical consent form must be filled out. Please give any medications to your child's teacher for safe storing.

For any other questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the Director.

Office: 603-766-2371

Email: [francesca@edgewoodcentre.com](mailto:francesca@edgewoodcentre.com)

Fax: 603-766-2339

----- Please cut below and return -----

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE FAMILY HANDBOOK

The Family Handbook contains important information about the Edgewood Early Learning Center, and I understand that I should consult the Director regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

By signing below, I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it. I further agree that if my child remains at the Edgewood Early Learning Center following any modifications to the handbook, I thereby accept and agree to such changes.

I have received a copy of the Edgewood Early Learning Center Handbook on the date listed below. I understand that I am expected to read the entire handbook. I understand I will be notified when a new version of the family handbook is available and can access the most up to date family handbook online at [bit.ly/ELCFamilyHandbook](http://bit.ly/ELCFamilyHandbook). I can also request a paper copy at any time.

Additionally, I will sign this Acknowledgment of Receipt and return one copy to the Director. I understand that this form will be retained in my child's personnel file.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date