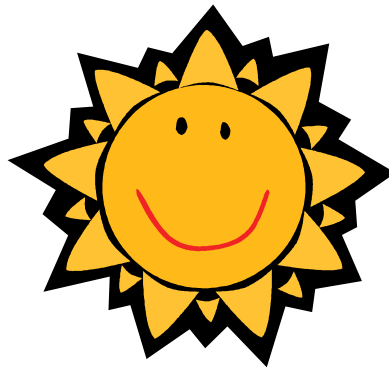


Sunshine Preschool and Childcare



Parent Handbook 2023-2024



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2023-2024

A program of the Center for Early Intervention on Deafness
1035 Grayson Street, Berkeley, CA 94710
Voice 510.848.4800

Cindy Dickeson, CEO
cindy@ceid.org ext. 301

Anna Phillips, Operations Director
anna@ceid.org 510.356.0004

Kate Glass, Development Director
kate@ceid.org ext. 330

Ina Mason, Teacher
ina@ceid.org

Alissa Torres, Teacher's Aide
alissa@ceid.org

Facility License #: 013417642

CEID & SUNSHINE PRESCHOOL

The Center for Early Intervention on Deafness (CEID) offers a unique preschool and childcare program for typically developing children at its Berkeley Center in addition to an array of programs and services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and may have additional needs. The Sunshine Preschool & Childcare program has a separate classroom at the Center, but shares a common play area, learning opportunities, encouraging peer-socialization, and communication growth strategies.

MISSION

The mission of Sunshine Preschool and Childcare is to provide an inclusive setting where children from 2 years to 5.11 years have the opportunity to build and strengthen their pre-academic, social, emotional, and language skills under the guidance of trained staff. The children will be immersed in a language-rich spoken English and sign language environment. Children who are deaf and hard of hearing also will have full access to learning and social opportunities in the classroom. Hearing children will have the opportunity to learn signs and experience diversity.

PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy is to provide a safe and educational childcare environment within the community to foster linguistic competence for all children, including children who are deaf and hard of hearing. We believe in a child-centered approach. Children will naturally show us what they are interested in learning. We will encourage exploration and curiosity, making use of teachable moments.

CURRICULUM

The Sunshine classroom is led by licensed teachers assisted by aides, providing a 5:1 student to staff ratio. An active play-based curriculum and state-of-art interactive white board equipment are used to facilitate learning. Both English and sign language are practiced as part of CEID's Total Communication philosophy. Our play-based curriculum takes into account all areas of development, including emerging literacy, language, fine and gross motor skills, academic concepts including math and science, and social-emotional development.

AGES OF CHILDREN ACCEPTED

Located in a custom designed classroom for children from ages 2 years to 5 years eleven months, our children are grouped by age for various activities. This fosters an environment where we can more closely match their abilities with each other. Differences among activities for toddlers and preschoolers depend mainly on developmentally appropriate practices designed for specific age

groups (i.e. four year olds like intricate puzzles, two year olds like to master simple shape puzzles). Our small group size offers one-on-one attention and consistent care for each child.

GOALS

- To promote development of cognitive, motor, language, and social-emotional skills in all children
- To support learning and exploration in a safe environment under the direction of caring and licensed teachers
- To provide opportunities for children to learn sign language and interact with children of all abilities

PROGRAM METHODS

The program provides both structured and non-structured activities for children to explore on their own, while adults remain nearby to facilitate dialogue, slip in explanations, and introduce vocabulary that allow children to express themselves more easily. Deaf, hard of hearing and hearing peers will also be valuable role models for each other. Social interaction plays an important role in language acquisition. Through socialization with peers, adults, parents, and caregivers, children can increase the complexity of their communication and social skills.

With this in mind, we recognize that all children do have the capacity for language development whether they are deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing. We can ensure that children are given opportunities to interact with other students and adults using both signed and spoken language. These principles of language development and diversity are strongly intertwined in our curriculum.

Language Use:

Our language philosophy for our center-based programs is Total Communication; adults simultaneously use spoken English along with Sign Language. In all activities, staff and students are encouraged to sign and/or use spoken language. Staff members strive to sign at all times when interacting with the children. They also are trained and experienced in understanding and communicating with children on the level that is appropriate for the given age group.

If a child enrolled in Sunshine Preschool is learning language for the first time, or English for the first time, our staff is sensitive to making communication as meaningful as possible. Hearing children who do not know sign language will learn along with their deaf peers.

The staff recognizes that the use of two forms of communication is not a detriment to children's linguistic development. In fact, the development of both modalities can be enhanced. Hearing children who are just learning to sign will be able to learn quickly. Even toddlers can learn several languages simultaneously without much effort. The more languages one knows, the more opportunities the person has access to achieve educational, social, and personal goals.

Inclusion:

An important aspect of programming at Sunshine is our school model of inclusion. Sunshine students have the unique opportunity to interact and learn alongside children who are deaf/hard of hearing and have special needs who are in our CEID Toddler or Preschool Classrooms. The majority of our schoolwide activities (music time, field trips, holiday celebrations) include children and staff from all three classrooms. We also include Sunshine students in special activities within each of the CEID classrooms and Sunshine welcomes CEID students into their classroom for mainstreaming opportunities.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

CEID does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of students, volunteers, and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our students, staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, and vendors.

ADMISSION POLICY

To be eligible for admission, children must be between the ages of 2 to 5 years old. Admission is based on availability of space and determination by the staff that a child is ready to benefit from the environment. Children who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or hearing with a deaf family member are given priority as are siblings of children currently or previously enrolled in any of CEID's programs.

Prospective families are asked to take a tour of the program before completing a waiting list form. Prior to the first day of enrollment, families must visit the program on two other occasions with their child allowing for a smoother transition to the classroom. This time also allows the staff and parents to see their child's reaction to the environment and to encourage comfort with the staff and the space.

Community Care Licensing (CCL) requires that you submit a current medical form, including a health evaluation and immunization record signed by your child's pediatrician indicating that your child is in good health and up to date with doctor recommended vaccinations. If a family chooses not to immunize for personal reasons, a waiver must be signed. This waiver can be signed prior to January 2020, otherwise, Sunshine Preschool will comply with SB 277 and require that all children be immunized prior to admittance. We encourage COVID vaccination at 5 years of age.

In addition, at least **one week before** your child's first day, we will need completed and signed copies of the following forms:

- Admissions Agreement or Re-Admissions Agreement
- CEID's Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
- Walking Field Trip Form
- Consent to Release Information & Photograph/Video Consent
- Sunshine Preschool & Childcare Pledge Form
- Sunscreen Consent Form
- Notification of Parents Rights (LIC 995)
- Personal Rights (LIC 613A)
- Identification and Emergency Information (LIC 700)
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment (LIC 627)
- Child's Preadmission Health History-Parent Report (LIC 702)
- Physician's Report (LIC 701)
- Immunizations Records

If your child is a toddler, a plan will be developed that will include potty learning. We welcome input when your child is ready to begin.

Tuition for the month your child enters our program will be due on the first day of school. Fees will be pro-rated from the starting date.

Once your child begins the program, please plan on spending some extra time with them during the first days of transition.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Sunshine Preschool and Daycare is open **8:00am-5:00pm Monday through Friday**, except for school holidays and staff development days. A program calendar is published each year indicating the days the center is closed.

We offer a variety of flexible scheduling options for families including 2, 3, 4 and 5 days/week schedules.

Full-Time

Full day Program: 8:00am-5:00pm

Part-Time

Morning Program: 8:00am-12:45pm

FEES

Our 2023-2024 **Tuition Rates** per month will be as follows:

<u>Number of days a week</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
Full-time (<i>participating in Morning and Afternoon Program</i>)	\$1,830	\$1,525	\$1,190	\$855
Part-time (<i>participates in only the Morning or only the Afternoon Program</i>)	\$1,080	\$945	\$760	\$590

Tuition fees are due on the first childcare day of each month. Checks can be turned in at the Sunshine Preschool classroom or to the CEID Administrative Office. Checks should be made out to CEID/ Sunshine Preschool. If you would prefer a card to be charged monthly, connect with our Operations Director to set this up. Tuition will not vary to adjust for absences.

Waiting List/Registration Fee: A \$50 fee is required to place your child on our waiting list. When your child is accepted into the program this fee supports the administrative costs of program admission and registration.

All tuition rates will be evaluated each year to project the new rate. Parents will receive a 30 day notice prior to any tuition or fee increases. Tuition is carefully monitored and will be competitive with the prevailing childcare rates in the area.

LATE FEES

Fees are due on the 1st childcare day of the month. If payment is not received by the 5th childcare day of the month, a \$25 late fee will be assessed. A pattern of late payments may result in your child not being accepted into our center.

DONATION POLICY

As a private, tuition-based program, Sunshine offers competitive tuition rates meant to be affordable to families. Expenses for the Sunshine program are not subsidized and run higher than income received through tuition. To meet those expenses while maintaining affordable rates, CEID offers Sunshine families the option to make an annual tax-deductible contribution that will be used in support of the Sunshine program.

Each Sunshine family is requested to commit to either **give or solicit** support toward an annual contribution at the suggested amount of \$400 per academic year (September 1 through August 31). If the \$400 donation goal per family is not reached by July 31 of each academic year, the family will be asked to pay an assessment of \$400 before August 31.

Families who opt to make the annual tax-deductible contribution may pay that contribution in full at the start of each academic year or may pledge to pay the contribution in installments per the attached Family Pledge Form. Other options to satisfying this contribution include: corporate matching gifts, business sponsorships, donations from family and friends or any service clubs or organizations you may belong to. For example, a Sunshine family might donate \$200 and ask for it to be matched by their employer or friend or family to be able to meet or exceed the \$400 requirement.

Our annual Walk-A-Thon is a great way to participate in fundraising for CEID/Sunshine and to meet your donation goal by fundraising within your community.

Amounts are subject to review and change each year and will be amended in this policy accordingly.

Please see our Development Director for more information and other opportunities to help with fundraising. We welcome your ideas and inspirations for how to give back to the program.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Drop-off: Sunshine Preschool opens at 8:00am. Children will not be accepted before this time. Our staff arrives at 7:30am to check messages and prepare classroom activities and projects.

Pick-Up: Morning program children must be picked-up by 12:45pm. After this time, we are preparing the other children for rest/nap time and late pick-ups are disruptive for all of the children.

We begin preparation for closing at 4:45pm and close promptly at 5:00pm. We ask that parents respect this schedule and pick up their children on time. We respect our teachers' commitment to working full days and ask for your partnership and consideration in helping them to leave promptly at 5:00pm. In addition, we believe children are sensitive to watching other children leave on time.

Late Pick-up: Parents who are late picking up their child(ren) will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute. Excessive lateness (3 late pick-ups) will be cause for a parent conference or potential termination of childcare services. A warning and fee notice will be given for each late pick-up.

VACATION TIME

Vacation/Absences: Parents may take children out of school for vacation with prior notice, but must pay the regular fees in order to retain the child's slot. In addition, no adjustments to fees will be made for absences due to illness or any other reason.

If this vacation policy poses a financial hardship to any family, please contact our Operation Director.

WITHDRAWALS/REFUNDS

In the event that you wish to withdraw your child from school, you need to give **one month's written notice** in advance or pay one month's tuition. Notice of withdrawal must be in writing and directed to the Program Director and Sunshine Lead Teacher.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally we may take field trips to local businesses, parks, and museums. A field trip is an exciting off-campus activity for the children. You will be given a letter about the trip in advance with the times of departure and arrival back to the program. We will need your permission for your child to participate. Field trips require more supervision than is required in the regular classroom. To that end, we will ask parents and/or volunteers for help with supervision. Staff will drive children or public transportation will be used. Parents may drive their own child but cannot drive other children unless the parent is present and in the same vehicle. Drivers need a valid driver's license, a safe driving record, proof of insurance, a safe vehicle with working seat belts, and age appropriate car seats. Without enough volunteers to keep the children safe, the field trip may be cancelled. We will let you know in advance if there is anything you need to supply for the field trip such as money, a change of clothing, or a special item.

PARENT LIBRARY

We have a variety of resources for parents to check out in our library. Please take advantage of the resources we have to offer! You may check out items for up to 2 weeks. Come to the front office for more information.

What's available to check out:

- Children's Books (English and Spanish) on a variety of topics
- Movies (documentaries, sign language, family fun, and more)
- Reference Books: child development, sign language, Deaf culture, education, etc.
- Cochlear Implant Surgery Preparation Kits

FOOD PROVISIONS AND POLICY

Sunshine Preschool will provide nutritious snacks and drinks for the children once in the morning and once in the afternoon after naptime.

Full day and part time morning students eat lunch at Sunshine. Parents are responsible for providing lunch food for their child, as well as a water bottle. Each child should bring a lunch from home containing nutritious food. We encourage healthy nutrition habits and ask parents to be mindful of the sugar content of foods.

If your child has a food allergy, it is important that you let us know so we can inform other parents not to send these foods in their child's lunch and we can prepare alternate snack foods.

CEID and the Sunshine Preschool will promote healthy eating by providing a well-balanced and nutritious diet for all children attending. We encourage the overall well-being of the children via nutritional and lifelong healthy eating practices as well as a positive approach towards food in partnership with parents. We recognize the various dietary needs of children and strive to meet each individual and cultural needs. We constantly monitor and review our healthy eating policy, making changes if necessary.

During meal times, Sunshine Staff will encourage healthy eating practices by observing the following:

- Providing healthy snacks during the morning and afternoon snacks
- Encouraging parents to pack healthy and a diverse lunch.
- Banning fizzy drinks, sugary snacks or juices, chips, etc.
- Encouraging fresh fruits, yogurt, vegetables, grains, and cheese.

To make meal times and cooking activities an interactive and healthy experience, Sunshine Preschool staff will:

- Sit with staff and encourage conversation between adults and other children
- Encourage children to make healthy choices during snack and lunch time, and feed themselves independently
- Provide opportunities to discuss nutrition and healthy eating
- Encourage social opportunities between peers

If your child has a special dietary or cultural requirement, please inform the staff immediately. All dietary requirements will be respected and followed. Parents will need to provide details of foods eaten or not eaten by their children.

BIRTHDAYS

At Sunshine we celebrate a child's birthday on a day close to or on their special day. We ask the parent what they may like to do to celebrate their child. Children often love to share a favorite food or make a special healthy bread or muffin to share. In advance of the celebration, parents also give photos for each preceding years' birthday to show how the children change over time.

We share these pictures during circle time and have class rituals that go along with this celebration. Each child receives a birthday crown and the class sings to them during snack time.

NAPPING

Your child will be given a mat with a sheet on which to take a nap after lunchtime. Please send your child to school with a light blanket and/or stuffed animal. The blanket is kept at school and used throughout the week. We will send the blanket home on Fridays for washing.

Naptime starts at approximately 1:15pm and continues until approximately 3pm. We will provide a comfortable, supervised environment for your child to rest. Should they wake up before the nap period is over, a teacher will provide quiet activities for them to do separate from the other children who are still asleep.

POTTY LEARNING

Potty learning is a collaboration between school and home, and we appreciate knowing what you are doing at home so that we can provide consistent guidance at school. Please provide diapers and diaper creams if needed for your child if they are not completely toilet trained. For children who are in training, we provide potty seats for the toilet and a small potty chair. We understand that all children have occasional accidents. Make sure to send an extra set of clothing, including underwear and socks, in case your child needs to change. We will send the soiled clothes home with your child for you to launder. Please replace the extra set of clothes as soon as possible.

ILLNESS POLICY

We are a center for “healthy children.” A child who does not feel well can cause children and staff in the center to contract illnesses. Also, an ill child will not fully benefit from our program. If you are unsure about your child’s health, please keep your child at home and contact your family doctor.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified immediately, and we will request you pick up your child. If feasible and warranted, we will isolate your child until they can be picked up.

In the case of an urgent medical emergency, 911 will be called and you will be notified immediately.

As we continue to be observant and diligent about COVID-19 or any other communicable diseases, we ask that parents be mindful of their child’s health prior to sending them to school.

Please notify CEID or your child’s teacher as soon as possible if:

- Your child tests positive for COVID

- Your child has an illness that can be contagious (i.e. Hand Foot Mouth, Pink Eye, Pinworms)

CEID will comply with all requests for information from the City of Berkeley Public Health Officer Unit regarding communicable disease outbreaks and reporting. CEID will continue to follow all current guidance from the CDC and Berkeley Public Health regarding best courses of action and policies to implement. CEID will notify Parents of any changes and updates to guidelines as needed and adjusted.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, **please keep them at home**, or make appropriate alternative childcare arrangements. It will be necessary to pick your student up from school as soon as possible if they show any of the following symptoms at school. A sick child is best comforted at home with a parent or caregiver. If we cannot reach you, we will call your emergency contacts.

- **Fever:** temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Child must not return to school until 24 hours have passed without a fever and without using fever reducing medications in that 24 hour period.
- **Vomiting:** child should not return to school for 24 hours following the last episode of vomiting.
- **Lice, scabies:** Children may not return to school until they have been treated and no live lice are present. Children with scabies can return to school after treatment with a Doctor's Clearance letter.
- **Diarrhea:** child should not return to school for 24 hours following the last episode of one watery stool in a 24 hour period, especially if the child acts or looks ill.
- **Chronic cough and/or runny nose:** continual coughing and greenish nose discharge. Conditions may be contagious and may require treatment from a health care provider.
- **Sore throat:** especially if paired with fever or swollen glands in the neck.
- **Rash:** body rash, especially if paired with fever or itching. Child may return to school when fever resolves, rash is improving, and/or a message from a primary care provider is submitted.
- **COVID-19:** If your child tests positive for COVID-19, they are to remain home and isolate for 5 days following the day that they test positive (day 0). They may return to school on day 6 given there is no fever, and symptoms are improving or have resolved. They will need to wear a mask in indoor settings until day 10 has completed.
- **Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease:** may return to school after fever resolves, and symptoms improve (typically 3-6 days). If blisters appear, they need to be dry before returning to school.
- **Ear infection:** Without a fever, the child can attend school, but the child may need medical treatment and follow-up. Untreated ear infections can cause permanent hearing loss. If a child's ear infection is paired with a fever, they must stay home.

- **Eye infection:** Eye infection: pink eye (conjunctivitis) or thick mucus or pus draining from eye. This usually requires treatment from a health care provider prior to returning to school.
- **Unusual appearance, behavior:** abnormally tired, pale, lack of appetite, difficult to wake, confused or irritable. This is sufficient reason to exclude a child from school.

Masks are not required for our students on a regular basis unless your child has been directly exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID. If your child is considered a close contact, a mask is to be worn in indoor environments for a 10-day period.

MEDICATION POLICY

If your child requires medication (such as allergy medication like an Epi-Pen), you must send it in its original container with the doctor's instructions clearly written on the label. We have a Parent Consent for Administration of Medications form that you will be required to fill out, providing permission for our Sunshine Staff to administer medications. We will then administer all medications according to the doctor's written instructions. The doctor's telephone number must be clearly written on the container. We will work together with you to administer the medication correctly and in a timely manner. If medication is given when a medical condition arises, we will inform you either before, during, or after, according to your preference. This must be stated on your child's medical information for our files.

SIGN IN AND OUT

Parents are required to list the names of adults who have permission to sign their child in or out of school. Children must be signed in and out each day by an adult designated by you as authorized to drop off and pick up your child. Authorized adults must **PRINT** their full first and last name upon arrival and dismissal each day, per licensing regulations. This way we can make sure of your child's hours and attendance, and make sure they are being released to a person a parent has designated as safe.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Sunshine Preschool does not permit corporal punishment. If a child is displaying undesired behavior, we will do our best to explain to them the reasons why their behavior is unacceptable. We believe in intervening in a way that is in alignment with the child's individual social/emotional development and level of understanding. If a child is endangering themselves or others, we will remove them from the situation until they are calm and ready to join the other children again. We do not believe in prolonged isolation. We will inform you of your child's behavior if it becomes an unduly distraction to the learning environment, and may hold a conference with you to discuss and design a behavior plan. If the disruptive behavior becomes a

continuous problem which endangers others, your child may be asked to leave the program, or seek professional assistance.

The following are some examples of discipline techniques our staff use:

- Ignoring insignificant negative behavior
- Redirecting the child's attention from the disruptive behavior to an acceptable activity
- Discussing outcomes of negative behavior, with a teacher sitting or kneeling at the child's level
- Mediating disagreements between children to help them express their thoughts into words
- When a child needs frequent redirection, a teacher will require that child to stay under the close supervision of a teacher.
- In certain circumstances, when other techniques are not successful, a child may be given a break or time to calm down, often with a staff member

STEPS TO DISMISSAL OF A CHILD

We will do our best to resolve, in a professional manner, any issues that could lead to dismissal. If it is determined that the situation cannot be resolved and your child must be dismissed, we will give you two weeks notice so that you can make other arrangements. The following are possible grounds for dismissal:

- Failure to pay tuition by the 3rd day of daycare for the month
- Chronic late pick-ups
- Severe biting, hitting, swearing, or ongoing unsafe behavior
- At the director's discretion, provided that the rules of the handbook were not being followed and conflict resolution was not successful

POLICY FOR BEHAVIOR THAT CAN CAUSE INJURY TO ANOTHER CHILD

The staff strives to teach children to be socially competent and respect other children and their bodies. Occasionally a child has difficulties learning the rules and injures another child. We understand that it is typical for children to have some behaviors that may push boundaries or reflect a physical communication strategy (e.g. hitting or biting) as they are learning to navigate social relationships.

Our curriculum incorporates discussions of acceptable behavior, turn taking, and what to do if a child finds themselves as the recipient of another child's undesirable behavior. When a child hurts another child for attention, we let that child know that it is not a successful strategy by removing them from the activity for a few minutes, as well as talking to them about how to make

a different choice. Attention is also focused on the child who was hurt; we make an effort to process the child's feelings and then reengage them in play.

If an incident occurs at Sunshine Preschool where your child hurts another child, we will send you a written incident report. We will do the same for the child that was hurt.

If your child's behavior continues to be disruptive or dangerous to self or others, you will be asked to come in for a meeting where we will discuss the circumstances which led to the behavior, and we will set up a one-on-one behavioral observation to document what is causing the situation. We will also brainstorm strategies that families can use outside of school and that we will use inside of school to assist with curbing negative behaviors.

CEID reserves the right to ask parents to immediately come pick up their child for unsafe behavior.

Most of the time, the previous steps can eliminate negative behavior. We will work with you as a team to try to help your child adjust and function in a positive way in the classroom. If the injurious behavior becomes a pattern regardless of the attempts to change the behavior, your child will face a possible dismissal from our school. We will do this to protect other children and allow you to find a program that is a better fit for the needs of your child.

COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING PERSONAL RIGHTS

We believe that each child is an individual, with rights that shall be ensured. Each child will be treated with dignity in relation to staff and others; be afforded safe, healthful, and comfortable accommodations and equipment to meet their needs; be free from corporal or unusual punishment, humiliation and ridicule; have their authorized representative informed regarding complaints and given the address and telephone number of the Community Care Licensing Department's complaint unit.

Each child will be treated as such, with care, and will not be locked in any room, building or center premises by day or night. The provider may lock exterior doors for safety reasons, provided the children can exit the center. No child will be placed in a restraining device.

All licensed childcare programs are periodically evaluated for licensing compliance. During those visits the licensing official may interview children at the facility without giving notice to parents/guardians.

COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING PARENTAL RIGHTS

We welcome the participation and assistance of our parents. Parents/guardians have the right to enter and inspect the center without giving prior notice to child care providers. This right may only be exercised during normal operating hours or any time that the child is receiving care in the center.

Parents/guardians have the right to review licensing reports of facility visits and complaints against the facility. Only information available in the public file of the local licensing agency is to be made available to parents/guardians. Public information about inconclusive complaints is only to be made available at the local licensing agency.

Parents/guardians have the right to file a complaint against the facility with the licensing agency. The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parent/guardian, should the parent/guardian choose to inspect the facility or file a complaint against the facility.

Parents/guardians have the right to request in writing that a non-custodial parent not be allowed to visit their child or take the child from the center, provided they have shown a certified copy of a court order.

Parents/guardians have the right to receive from the licensee the name, address, and telephone number of the local licensing agency.

Parents/guardians have the right to be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the center of any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.

Parents/guardians have the right to receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

POLICY CHANGES

These policies are subject to change. Alterations to policies will be presented in writing in advance of the effective date of applicable changes. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please contact our Management Team, or the Sunshine Lead Teacher.