



EMORY VALLEY CENTER

MAXIMIZING HUMAN ABILITIES

**Emory Valley Early  
Learning Center  
&  
Little Learning Lab**



**Parent Handbook**

Dear Parent(s),

Welcome to the Emory Valley Early Learning Center (EVELC)/ Little Learning Lab (LLL). We are delighted that you have chosen one of our centers to provide care for your child and are looking forward to getting to know you and your child.

Our philosophy is that learning and growing should be a joyful experience for the young child. After all, playing is a child's "work", so we do everything within our power to create a safe and secure environment in which your child can enjoy learning and developing.

We consider communication between your family and our staff a vital part of our program that will benefit you and your child. We have developed this handbook to serve as a general guide. We hope it will answer most of your questions and help you to understand our operational procedures. Please feel free to discuss any other questions or concerns you have with our staff.

The environment and program of the Emory Valley Early Learning Center and Little Learning Lab have been carefully planned to be what you would want for your child...a comfortable, caring environment where children can play, learn, develop, and grow safely and happily.

Welcome to our family!

Sincerely,  
Kiersten Wilkerson  
Center Based Preschool Director  
Emory Valley Early Learning Center  
865-294-7202 ext. 100  
[Kiersten.Wilkerson@evcmail.org](mailto:Kiersten.Wilkerson@evcmail.org)

After Hours Emergency Number:

865-201-4699

Sincerely,  
Brittany Webb  
Center Based Preschool Director  
Little Learning Lab  
865-294-4607 ext. 4607  
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After Hours Emergency Number:

865-201-4699

Emory Valley Center (EVC) is a nonprofit that has been supporting children and adults with disabilities in East Tennessee since 1955. Founded by parents seeking better opportunities for their children with disabilities, EVC now serves adults while still prioritizing children's needs.

The Emory Valley Early Learning Center (EVELC) and Little Learning Lab (LLL) offer high-quality, inclusive preschool programs for children from 6 weeks to kindergarten. Our standout features include expert staff with degrees in early childhood education, a focus on comprehensive child development, and developmentally appropriate classrooms. We emphasize:

- Social and emotional growth
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Cognitive and language development
- Adaptive/self-help skills

Our center values inclusiveness, active parent involvement, and regular developmental screenings to ensure excellence in early education.

### **Enrollment**

All completed enrollment forms and an up-to-date immunization form must be provided to the director two days prior to admission into the program. A \$100 enrollment fee is required as well as an annual fee of \$100 due each July.

### **Hours of Operation LLL**

Our center is open from 6:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. **Your child must be in attendance prior to 9:00 A.M, unless we have been notified in advance of a doctor's or therapy appointment.** Children must be dropped off by 9am to best plan for staffing patterns, ratios, activities and routines for all children. We close promptly at 6:00 P.M. We will provide a 10-minute grace period. After that we will charge a \$1.00 per minute late fee. If tardiness becomes an ongoing issue the director will give you a warning, and if it persists after that then you will lose the right to have your child enrolled at the LLL.

## **Hours of Operation EVELC**

Our center is open from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. **Your child must be in attendance prior to 9:00 A.M, unless we have been notified in advance of a doctor's or therapy appointment.** Children must be dropped off by 9am to ensure they will be counted for our lunch order and to best plan for staffing patterns, ratios, activities and routines for all children. Please try to avoid picking your children during naptime (12:00 - 2:30). It typically disrupts others in the class, but office staff can assist if necessary. We close promptly at 5:00 P.M. We will provide a 10-minute grace period. After that we will charge a \$1.00 per minute late fee. If tardiness becomes an ongoing issue the director will give you a warning, and if it persists after that then you will lose the right to have your child enrolled at the EVELC.

## **Brightwheel**

We use Brightwheel for daily communication with parents. Upon enrollment both parents/caregivers and those approved for pick up will receive an invitation. Each person will download the app and receive their own 4-digit code. The code will be used to sign your child in and out each day. Parents will be able to send messages back and forth with the teachers. They will also be able to see all updates entered by the teachers, such as, diaper changes, food or bottles consumed, naps, activities, and pictures. You will also be able to pay your child's tuition electronically through the app.

## **Payments**

Our tuition is charged monthly. We do not offer weekly payments. Tuition is due at the beginning of each month. Payments must be paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> day, or your child will not be permitted to stay in our care until payment has been made. Your fee will be due whether your child attends or not. If our center is closed for holidays, in-service training or inclement weather your tuition will remain the same. This is to cover overall operation and expenses. You will receive an invoice through Brightwheel. You may pay electronically through the app, or with check & cash. If you are paying with cash please give it directly to the director, and it must be the exact amount due. We do not keep cash on hand to make change.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up**

Each child must be signed in and out of our care daily. You can do this through Brightwheel on the tablet located in each classroom. Please notify staff if someone different will be picking up your child. All adults that come to pick up that are unfamiliar to staff will be asked to bring a photo ID that must match the approved pick-up names you provide on your child's application or added to Brightwheel.

## **Immunization Records**

Children's immunization records must be kept up to date to comply with the state law. Please be sure to provide the director with a copy of your child's immunization record each time they receive vaccines. Children who have a medical or religious immunization exemption will be permitted to attend our center with written documentation.

## **Visitation Policy**

Our program is open-door. Parents are always welcome to visit and volunteer in the classroom.

## **Early Learning and Challenging Behaviors**

We know in the early childhood years, birth to five, that children are learning to express themselves, regulate their emotions and behaviors, and over all developmentally appropriate milestones for social and emotional development. If we experience any behavior challenges; some are appropriate, we will help children communicate their wants and needs, help them regulate, and respond appropriately. We use conscious Discipline, which promotes 'brain smart start, mindful breathing, I love you rituals and many other self-regulation techniques. We may call a parent meeting to help us work through any challenging behaviors that we need your support with, or we may also involve our Early Intervention support and inclusion specialist to help us with strategies and support.

## **Medication Policy**

The director or a designee can provide prescription medication to children. We will not give your child over the counter medication. You will be required to fill out a medication form and give the prescribed medication to the director. Please do not leave it with your child's teacher in the classroom.

## **Sick Policy**

Sick children will not be admitted into our center. If a child develops a fever or becomes sick throughout the day, we will call the parents and ask for the child to be picked up. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before they can return. Illnesses that require temporary exclusion:

- 100.4 degrees temperature or higher.
- 3 or more instances of diarrhea in 24 hours not associated with a change in diet or medication.
- Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours.
- Pink or red eyes with yellow or green mucus drainage or matted eyelids.
- Lice or nits (If sent home with lice or nits your child must be checked by a staff member before readmission).
- Illness resulting in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

If your child receives a diagnosis from a doctor, please inform the director so that parents can be informed of possible exposure.

## **Inclement Weather**

In case of inclement weather, we follow Oak Ridge Schools schedule. If the Oak Ridge Schools are closed or delayed, then we are closed or delayed also. We will inform you of any closures and or delays through Brightwheel and email.

## **Curriculum**

Our centers use the Creative Curriculum which aligns with the Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards (TNELDS) and Conscious Discipline. Creative Curriculum offers studies of real-life topics to help children become enthusiastic learners and develop a love of learning that will last their entire lives. Conscious Discipline helps children regulate their emotions by creating a safe space and a shared school culture of love and understanding. Teachers, and other designated EVC staff specialists with our children services team will use a developmental screening tool on all children at the beginning of the year, in January, and May, or as needed to assess any developmental areas. You will be asked to participate in this process, and we will offer parent teacher conferences to discuss results.

## **Advisory Board**

An advisory board that is made up of 1 parent from each classroom will meet quarterly to discuss upcoming events and plan family engagement opportunities. If you have an interest in being a part of this advisory board, please speak with the director.

**There may be children in your child's class that have food allergies. If you plan to provide breakfast, lunch, or snack for your child be sure to ask if there are any items that are prohibited in that classroom.**

## **Meals EVELC**

Weekly menus are posted in your child's classroom and on Brightwheel.

Breakfast: We ask that you feed your child breakfast before they arrive, we do offer a morning snack consisting of milk and either a grain or fruit.

Lunch: We provide a well-balanced lunch that has been approved by the USDA Child and Adult Food Program. Milk is served with lunch. You are welcome to provide your child's lunch for them if you prefer. However, we do require that the lunch be a healthy well-balanced meal. Junk food is not acceptable.

Afternoon Snack: We offer a 2-component snack with water that consists of a grain and either a fruit or vegetable.

## **Meals LLL**

Monthly menus are posted in your child's classroom and on Brightwheel.

Breakfast: If your child arrives before 7:00 we can provide your child with milk and cereal. You can bring your child breakfast from home up until 7:30.

Morning Snack: We offer a morning snack consisting of milk and another component from 8:00 to 8:30. Please have your child here by 8:20 to be included in the snack.

Lunch: For lunch parents have two options. You can pack a healthy balanced lunch, or we have partnered with One Community Services, a local cater, to provide a balanced hot meal. This service is \$5.00 per day. For more information on this service, please visit their website at [onecommunityservices.com](http://onecommunityservices.com).

Afternoon Snack: We offer a 2-component snack with water that consists of a grain, dairy, fruit or vegetable.

### **What parents are responsible to provide:**

- 1 crib sheet (EVELC ONLY)
- small blanket
  - These will be sent home for washing and returned weekly. (EVELC ONLY)
  - Please do not include bulky bedding like standard pillows and/or blankets or comforters.
  - Each child's belongings must fit neatly in their cubbies.
  - You may also include a small stuffed animal.
- Diapers and Wipes
  - Most people send a box or sleeve of diapers at time and a refill pack of wipes.
  - Please send a box of wipes the first time. (LLL ONLY)
- Change of clothes
  - If your child is potty training or has accidents on a regular basis, please send several changes of clothes.
  - This should be replaced each:
    - Time your child is sent home in their spare clothes.
    - Season change.
    - Time they size up into new clothes.

### **What parents should provide for infants:**

- Premade bottles of formula or breastmilk that are labeled with your child's first and last name.
- Crib sheet (no blankets, lovies, or stuffed animals permitted)
- Diapers and wipes
- Diaper cream
- Several changes of weather appropriate clothes
- Once your child is starting to eat food – baby food and any other snacks that you feed your child at home
- Pacifiers are optional. However, if your child uses a pacifier at home, it is strongly recommended that you provide 1 or 2 for here as well.
- Armless sleep sack (optional) (EVELC ONLY)
- Rubber-soled shoes as your child becomes mobile.



## **Transitioning to New Classes**

As your child grows and matures, they will transition from one classroom to another. We strive to make these transitions as stress-free as possible for both you and your child. You will be notified in advance if your child will be transitioning to another room. Both classrooms work together to devise a visitation schedule for your child so that the teacher will not be a stranger when they officially move. You will also receive an information packet from the new teacher before the transition.

## **Staffing Changes**

When a teacher resigns their position or is moved to another classroom, we try to make the transition as smooth as possible for the children. Parents will be informed of any staffing changes before they take place. If possible, the new teacher visits the class while the teacher who is leaving is still there, and every attempt will be made to keep schedule changes to a minimum.

## **Confidentiality**

All children's records are maintained in accordance with HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) regulations and are destroyed after five years from the date the child withdraws from the program.

## **Other Policies**

- If your child is going to be absent or late due to a doctor or therapy appointment, please let us know through the Brightwheel app.
- Please be aware that our playground is covered with rubber at the EVELC. It is a great protective layer for your child's safety; however, it is messy. Your child's shoes and sometimes clothes will have a black residue on them from the mulch. Please do not dress your child in clothing, shoes, or jackets that need to stay pristine.
- Both campuses have a no alcohol, tobacco, vaping and firearms policy. These items are not allowed on the premises, including the parking lot.
- We will not release children to anyone whose behavior may place the child at risk. If it is apparent to the staff that the adult is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, we will ask them to make other arrangements. If necessary, law enforcement will be notified.

- We have plenty of toys for your child to have fun with, so we ask that you do not bring toys from home. Your child is welcome to bring a stuffed animal, or 'lovey' for naptime. If your child uses a pacifier, it will remain in the cubby until naptime for children over 2 years old.
- Both centers provide in-service training days for professional development every other month and will be closed for this training. These days will be communicated to parents on the quarterly calendar as well as reminders will be sent out in Brightwheel.
- Both centers will be closed for the following holidays.
  - New Year's Day
  - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
  - Good Friday
  - Memorial Day
  - Fourth of July
  - Labor Day
  - Thanksgiving
  - Black Friday
  - Christmas Eve
  - Christmas Day
- Our center welcomes and values all families' cultures and beliefs; we invite you to share your family's activities, traditions, favorite foods, and customs. We celebrate our school community and will be learning about one another.
- Our goal is to provide every child with a great environment to promote learning and development. We work collaboratively with parents and families to help make this a reality. Unfortunately, situations may arise from time to time that make continuing services inappropriate. This can happen for a variety of reasons and despite the best efforts of all involved. Consequently, we must retain the discretion to stop providing services when our management teams determine that is the most appropriate decision.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with the federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex (including gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. braille, large print, audiotape, American sign language, etc.) should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1.) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistance Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington D.C. 20250-9410;  
(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or  
(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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