

# Jacksonville State University Child Development Center Family Handbook



Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 7:30am – 6:00pm

PreK Classes: Monday – Friday, 7:30am – 2:15pm

Afterschool for PreK: Monday – Friday, 2:30pm – 6:00pm

115 College Street SW

Jacksonville, AL 36265

Phone: 256-782-8655

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## CDC Staff

Name	Position	Email
Amy Crotts	Director	<a href="mailto:acrotts@jsu.edu">acrotts@jsu.edu</a>
Nikki Zarzabal-Valencia	Assistant Director	<a href="mailto:nzarzabal@jsu.edu">nzarzabal@jsu.edu</a>
Annaleigh Harris	Administrative Assistant	<a href="mailto:aharris@jsu.edu">aharris@jsu.edu</a>
Linda Williams	Infant Lead Teacher	*All teachers respond to messages using ProCare, the CDC's management platform. All messages are confidential through the ProCare system.
Raven McDaniel	Infant Auxiliary Teacher	
Autumn Smith	One's Lead Teacher	
<b>VACANT</b>	One's Auxiliary Teacher	
Marquesha Thomas	Two's Lead Teacher	
Kara Prater	Two's Auxiliary Teacher	
Heather Smith	Three's Lead Teacher	
Emily Walls	Three's Auxiliary Teacher	
Brittany Craig	Pre-K 1 Lead Teacher	
Melody Paquette	Pre-K 1 Auxiliary Teacher	
Kelsey Blair	Pre-K 2 Lead Teacher	
Courtney Rich	Pre-K 2 Auxiliary Teacher	
Jasmine Prater	Pre-K 3 Lead Teacher	
Ty Coleman	Pre-K 3 Auxiliary Teacher	

Student workers and substitutes are required to have the same background checks as other JSU employees. Their photos are posted in each pod. Parents will be notified through ProCare if a child has a substitute in their classroom for more than two days in a row.

## ABOUT THE CDC

The Child Development Center (CDC) has been a part of Jacksonville State University's campus for over sixty years. Originally designed as a half-day preschool class for three and four-year-olds in the Family and Consumer Sciences department, the CDC was located in East Mason Hall. In Fall 2022, the program expanded and relocated to the former Kitty Stone Elementary School, now the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) Complex. The CDC welcomes children from 6 weeks to Pre-K, five days a week, from 7:30am to 6:00pm.

The CDC follows the Creative Curriculum Learning Environment in all its classrooms. Children are encouraged to investigate using hands-on activities to discover their world. The developmentally appropriate curriculum is research-based to include strategies to best support young learners. Play, literacy, numeracy, and STEAM lessons are essential elements of the program that are evident in CDC classrooms throughout the day.

The partnership with Jacksonville State's College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) is a unique component of the CDC. Jax State students enrolled in Child Development and Early Childhood Education courses use the CDC for laboratory experiences and classroom learning. Students are supervised at all times. This collaboration allows Jax State students to demonstrate developmentally appropriate practices and facilitate learning in an exemplary childcare facility while observing and supporting the classroom teachers.

The CDC receives support across campus. The University Police Department provides the CDC with a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) who is housed at the CEPS Complex. Other faculty and staff across campus support the CDC by sharing their talents through musical performances, science investigation, STEAM activities, cooking, and sewing. One of the children's favorite activities is the weekly pep rallies in the fall to support the Gamecocks. Football players, cheerleaders, and members of the Marching Southerners get the children ready for Jax State football weekends. It's a great tradition!

The three Pre-K classrooms are funded through the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education's First Class Pre-K Program. Students are randomly selected in the spring for the following school year. Children who are not selected may elect to be placed on a waiting list. The state monitors Pre-K classrooms, and classrooms receive weekly visits from state coaches. Children are monitored using TS GOLD, an assessment strategy used to assess children's development. This information provides Pre-K teachers with ideas for strategies to support their students and ensure they are prepared for kindergarten.

The CDC enables families to "*go to school together*," encouraging classroom engagement and family participation. The proximity of the CDC for Jax State students, staff, and faculty allows families to participate in programs and be involved in their child's school during the day.

Community members also enjoy visiting the school and working with their children due to its central location. The CDC currently serves 103 children in the following classrooms:

- Infants – 1 classroom
- 1's – 1 classroom
- 2's – 1 classroom
- 3's – 1 classroom
- PreK – 3 classrooms

Activities are planned according to the age and developmental level of each child in care and provide children with a variety of experiences. The daily activities include a flexible balance of indoor and outdoor activities, active and quiet play, and individual and group activities. The activities provided will expose the children to a variety of cultures and will encourage children to use and develop language and literacy skills, use large and small muscles, think creatively, learn new ideas and skills, and participate in imaginative play. The activities are designed to provide protection from excess fatigue and over stimulation and to ensure that each child can be successful and feel good about himself or herself. Some of the activities include:

- Language development: e.g., books, music, story time, fingerplays, flannel board stories
- Large muscle skills: e.g., balls, hula hoops, bean bags, swinging, outdoor play
- Small muscle skills: e.g., arts/crafts, stringing beads, pegboards, blocks
- Creative expression: e.g., dramatic play, puppets, music/instruments, flannel board
- Self-help skills: e.g., assist with mealtime preparation, dress self for outdoors
- Literacy skills: e.g., books, story board, alphabet and writing games

PLAY is the major component of our program. Enough time, materials, and space will be provided for children to actively explore the world around them. Children will have an opportunity to use a variety of art materials and manipulative and dramatic play materials.

Infants and toddlers (children under two years of age) will have a flexible schedule which reflects the child's individual needs. They will be given individual attention, including lots of time for talking. The body position of non-mobile infants and their location in the center will be changed frequently. The CDC provides safe, open spaces for children who are creeping and crawling. Infants and toddlers will be encouraged to play with a wide variety of safe toys and objects. All children, including infants and toddlers, will go outdoors daily when weather permits, so dress your child appropriately for the weather. The children may be kept indoors during inclement weather such as any of the following:

- Heavy Rain
- Temperatures above 90 degrees F
- Wind chills of 32 degrees F or below

## **MISSION**

The Jacksonville State University Child Development Center's (JSU CDC) mission is to Support Jax State students, faculty and staff, and community by providing a quality, play-based, on-site, early childhood education program.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Jacksonville State University Child Development Center (JSU CDC) recognizes families' vital role in their children's school life. For this reason, family members are considered an integral part of all program phases. The JSU CDC is a living and learning laboratory in which family members, teachers, college faculty, and children work together cooperatively for the children's greatest possible gains. The CDC celebrates the diversity of its families and encourages awareness of all families' cultures.

## **CONTINUITY OF CARE**

Our goal is to retain staff so our children see the same familiar face throughout the years they share with us at the Child Development Center. All staff will get to know all the children while they are in our care.

## **ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES, STATUS, & TRANSITIONS**

The JSU CDC prioritizes enrollment to primarily serve students, faculty and staff of Jacksonville State University, offering a full-day early childhood education program for children 6 weeks to 4 years of age. The CDC operates from 7:30am until 6:00pm, Monday through Friday, year-round.

The JSU CDC observes the following enrollment priority system:

- Children of currently enrolled families
- JSU students, faculty and staff desiring full-time enrollment.
- Community families desiring full-time enrollment.

### **JSU Faculty and Staff Families**

To be eligible for Faculty/Staff Tuition, you must be a current employee of Jacksonville State University (or its affiliates). Should your employment status change, your enrollment will be updated accordingly. A new, non-JSU tuition rate will be applied beginning on the first day of the month following the month of the employment change. All families are responsible for informing the JSU CDC of a change in affiliation within 30 days.

Should the CDC learn of a change in the primary caregiver's affiliation without being notified by the family, the tuition rate will be adjusted, and a \$100 penalty will be applied. If any of your family's information changes (e.g., home or work phone numbers, address, email address, JSU affiliation), please contact the JSU CDC immediately.

### **JSU Student Families**

To be eligible for a JSU Student Tuition Rate, parents/guardians must be enrolled as a full-time student. Parents are asked to provide copies of their course schedule within five days of the start of each term. The JSU CDC periodically verifies Student ID numbers to ensure enrollment. If your full-time student status changes, your enrollment will be updated accordingly. A new, non-JSU tuition rate will be applied beginning on the first day of the month following student status expiration. All families are responsible for informing the JSU CDC of a change in affiliation within 30 days.

Should the CDC learn of a change in the primary caregiver's affiliation without being notified by the family, the tuition rate will be adjusted, and a \$100 penalty will be applied. If any of your family's information changes (e.g., home or work phone numbers, address, email address, JSU affiliation), please contact the JSU CDC immediately.

### **Waitlist Procedure**

Families wishing to enroll in our program may be placed on a waitlist depending on classroom numbers for the specified age group. Families will complete an initial registration form to secure a space on the waitlist. The completed form should be submitted to the JSU CDC Administration either via email (preferred), US mail, or in person, along with a NON-REFUNDABLE per child waitlist fee. Registration forms are time and date stamped as they are received to maintain the order of applications. Once your form and payment are reviewed, you will be placed on the waitlist in accordance with the priority system noted below. We will contact you to confirm receipt of your registration. Once registered for the waitlist, your child will remain on the list until space is available or you notify us that you are no longer interested in enrolling your child at the CDC. Families receive a maximum of two offers when a spot becomes available. Should you decline both offers, you will be removed from the waitlist and no longer considered for enrollment. You may contact us at any time to obtain a status update on availability at the center; however, the accuracy of our projections on availability increases as we near your desired start. For questions and updates, please email Annaleigh Harris, CDC Administrative Assistant, at [aharris@jsu.edu](mailto:aharris@jsu.edu)

The JSU CDC observes the following enrollment priority system:

- Children of currently enrolled families
- JSU students desiring full-time enrollment.
- JSU faculty and staff desiring full-time enrollment.
- Community families desiring full-time enrollment.

## Classroom Transitions

Transitions of currently enrolled children take place annually in May (this does not apply to Pre-K). Every spring, families complete a registration process whereby all relevant enrollment information is updated as needed, and continued space for the following school year is secured with a registration fee payment.

Transitions of children are based on age and developmental readiness. Most children progress to the next age group of our program during annual transitions in May. Children enrolled in our Two's program may transition to the Three's in May at 2.5 years of age if they are fully toilet trained and developmentally ready. Current 3-year-olds transition to a Pre-K Summer Camp within the CDC at the same tuition rate. A Kindergarten Bootcamp is available for those children completing Pre-K. Exceptions do occur through a partnership with a child's family, teachers, and JSU CDC Administration. Any concerns will be discussed with families before any child stays for another year in any age group.

To support the transition of newly enrolled children, we recommend the following:

- A minimum of one scheduled visit for the family and child in the child's new classroom.
- Meeting between the family and the child's new teacher. Sharing questions, concerns, allergies, etc, is strongly encouraged before starting the program to ensure the best support for your child.

## TUITION, FEES, FINES, AND COLLECTION POLICIES

### Tuition

Tuition rates for the 2024-2025 school year are as follows for infants through 3-year-olds:

- JSU full time student = \$450 monthly
- JSU faculty and staff = \$525 monthly
- Community = \$600 monthly
- After school care for PreK = \$20 a day

Families will receive monthly statements via email. Tuition payments are due on the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month. If bi-weekly tuition is selected, it is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. **All tuition payments must be made using ProCare, our online credit card payment system.** Tuition details and fees are available on the JSU CDC website. The JSU CDC does NOT provide credit for absences due to illness.

JSU CDC students who transition up from the 3-year-old class must have a zero-dollar tuition balance before enrolling in a CDC Pre-K classroom. **Children will not be enrolled in a JSU CDC Pre-K classroom if past due amounts are due to the CDC.**

*\*Tuition is subject to change each school year per the discretion of the JSU CDC Administration and University leadership. Parents will be notified two months before any increase takes effect.*

### **Late Pick-up Fines**

If a child is not picked up by 6:00pm, a \$25 late fee will be charged to the family's account. Beginning at 6:15pm, an additional \$15 will be charged to the account every 15-minute increment (or fraction thereof) during which the child is not picked up. Payment of these fees is subject to the collection policies noted. If we are unable to reach a parent, emergency contacts will be called. If we cannot contact anyone authorized to pick up a child by 6:30pm, JSU University Police will be notified for assistance.

### **After-School Care Late Payment**

After-school care is offered to Pre-K students only. There is a daily rate of \$20 per day/\$100 a week. There are no discounts for after-school care. After-school care begins at 2:30pm and ends at 6:00pm. You may register for the program anytime during the year. After-school payments are due on Monday for the previous week. If payment is not received for the previous week by Tuesday at noon, the family will be contacted, and the child will not be allowed to stay for the after-school program until the after-school charges are paid in full. Families are only charged for the days the child is present in the after-school program.

### **Collection Policies**

**Tuition or fees not paid within 30 days of the due date will be considered delinquent and will result in the suspension of a child's enrollment until paid.** Tuition or fees not paid within 60 days of the due date will be considered past due. The family will relinquish the child's spot at the CDC at that time. To re-enroll, the family will have to begin the initial registration process again and may be waitlisted until a space opens for the child. JSU Collections will be notified of any accounts 60 days past due if a payment plan has not been established. If at any time a family fails to abide by the agreed-upon payment plan, collections will be notified, and all past-due fees must be paid.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The JSU CDC observes both the Alabama DHR Minimum Standards requirement and Jacksonville State University's written policies regarding the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of children's records. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members,



program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality requires parental consent (except in the case of abuse or neglect). Active children's files are maintained in a locked cabinet in the JSU CDC's administrative offices. Teachers have access to these with permission from the Director or Assistant Director; files are read on-site and are never removed for the JSU CDC. Files of children who have graduated or withdrawn from the JSU CDC are archived in compliance with the State of Alabama.

We carefully maintain confidentiality and respect each family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. Exceptions to this policy occur only when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is a risk, and it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest.

### **Photo Release**

Photographs, videos, and audio recordings of the children are taken occasionally to benefit the program. During the registration process, parents are asked to complete a release form for their child to be photographed, videoed, and recorded while at the CDC. Parents who disagree may indicate so on the form. Administrators and teachers are aware of children who do not have permission to be photographed, videoed, and recorded and will ensure that decision is enforced. The JSU CDC will not sell any child's likeness without prior permission from the family.

### **Camera Access**

The CDC is equipped with security cameras in all classrooms and common areas. Camera footage is only viewed by CDC administrators and University Police due to the privacy of our children and families. The CDC does not offer camera access for families.

## **COMMUNICATION**

We value and facilitate frequent communication between families and teachers and consider this exchange an important contribution to the planning and implementation of the program. Teachers and administrators use ProCare to communicate with families. ProCare is both a browser-based and app communication tool created for childcare centers. The CDC uses ProCare for tuition payments, attendance, notifications, and messaging. It can message one parent or a group. CDC teachers use ProCare to share classroom updates and pictures. It is a secure platform for communication and has a social media-type format available within the system, so all photos and information remain private.

Communication includes monthly newsletters for the entire CDC, weekly classroom updates, and daily reports from each child's lead teacher in the infant to two-year-old classrooms. A

daily report is completed for each child prior to their departure each day in ProCare. Here teachers highlight the basic activities of the day, such as mealtime, toileting/diapering, rest, and details related to the curriculum. The report aims to give you a snapshot of your child's day and support conversation with you about school each day.

### **Classroom Contact**

All questions and concerns regarding your child should be directed first to your child's Lead or Auxiliary Teacher. If you cannot reach the teacher or have additional concerns, contact the Director or Assistant Director at 256-782-8655.

### **Conferences**

Family-teacher conferences will be scheduled twice a year, typically in the Fall/Winter and Spring, to discuss your child's developmental progress. Additional conferences may be scheduled with your child's teacher as needed at any time throughout the school year.

### **Inclement Weather Advisories/Early Dismissal Notification**

The CDC will follow the University's decision on inclement weather closings. Families will be alerted via their preferred method of contact (as listed in ProCare) and may call the CDC at 256-782-8656 for additional information. If JSU closes early due to weather, families must pick up children within 60 minutes of notification or no later than the University closure. All families must designate individuals authorized to pick up their child if they cannot reach the JSU CDC.

### **Power Outage**

The JSU CDC adheres to the following state guidelines regarding operating a childcare center during a sustained power outage:

- The center must have proper ventilation and heating/cooling to maintain comfortable temperatures (68-82 degrees Fahrenheit) in the building.
- The center must have an operating phone line dedicated to the center at all times.
- Access to warm water at all times.
- Lighting to be maintained at a level to allow children to participate in center activities.

The CDC reserves the right to delay opening or dismissing children early due to a power outage. If the power is anticipated to be out for a prolonged time (2 hours or more), the CDC will notify parents through ProCare as soon as possible with a revised opening/dismissal time.

### **Teacher Trainings**

CDC teachers are required to have 24 hours of training annually. In order to ensure they have all the hours completed; the CDC will close one day each quarter. These dates will be included on the CDC calendar, which can be accessed through the CDC webpage. Reminders will be posted at the CDC and shared through ProCare.

## **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE**

### **Conscious Discipline**

CDC faculty and staff practice Conscious Discipline in the CDC classrooms. Conscious Discipline is a researched-based approach to addressing behavior with young children. All staff have completed Conscious Discipline training with the state. This approach provides choices and respect for the children's individual rights. All teachers at the JSU CDC approach discipline problems in a loving, positive manner. If the child has challenging behavior issues, they are redirected as needed and provided with access to the calm-down corner inside his/her classroom. Families will be included to provide additional support outside of the classroom as needed.

### **Disruptive Behaviors**

If a child has challenging behavior issues, teachers will redirect them as needed and give them access to the calm-down corner.

- Teachers will use positive reinforcement.
- The children involved will be separated to ensure safety.
- Parents will be notified of continued behavior issues.
- The teachers will meet with the CDC Director and the CDC Assistant Director. Daily or weekly behavior notes will be sent home.
- A follow-up conference will be called to reevaluate the behavior between two and four weeks from the initial conference.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Families may withdraw a child from the program at any time upon giving the JSU CDC thirty (30) days written notice. Tuition will continue to be charged, and related late fees will be assessed if a child does not attend class but is not formally withdrawn from the JSU CDC. Families who withdraw their child from the program will be charged tuition until the end date specified on the thirty (30) day written notice. Withdrawal from the program is considered permanent, requiring

re-application to the JSU CDC for readmission. This places the child at the bottom of the JSU CDC admissions waitlist. Families who withdraw their child will not be guaranteed a space in the future unless the family continues to pay tuition.

### **Involuntary Separation from the Program**

The JSU CDC reserves the right to require the separation of a family from our program. Examples of why the JSU CDC would reach such a decision include, but are not limited to, those listed below:

- Long-term pattern of unresolved behavior that is harmful to other children or staff, such as repeated biting.
- Tuition that is 2 months past due or other financial delinquency.
- Behavior by any family that is considered threatening to another family or any member of the JSU CDC staff.

The JSU CDC will make reasonable efforts to address underlying issues to avoid separation and provide advanced written notice of separation when it must occur. JSU CDC administration, in conjunction with the university administration, reserves the right to make separation decisions at its sole discretion and to make any such decisions effective immediately concerning the safety and well-being of child, families, and JSU CDC employees.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Illness Prevention**

In accordance with Childcare Licensing Regulations, children will be excluded from the JSU CDC when exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature over 100 degrees
- Recurrent vomiting or diarrhea
- A communicable disease

If a child is sent home due to illness, he/she is required to remain home the entire next day and until symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours. Families must pick up sick children within 1 hour from JSU CDC notification. Families **MUST** notify the JSU CDC within 24 hours after the child or any member of the household develops any reportable communicable disease as defined by the State Board of Health, except for life-threatening diseases, which must be reported immediately. Please inform the JSU CDC immediately if any other infections diseases are

present in your home, and when possible, refrain from bringing sick siblings into the JSU CDC to help prevent infection spread.

Children who cannot participate fully in the regular daily program should not be sent to the JSU CDC. Children must be well enough to participate in the group and to go outside during recess. Please notify the JSU CDC Administration and adhere to the following guidelines when your child is diagnosed with any of the following communicable illnesses:

- **Chicken Pox:** Exclude from the JSU CDC for a minimum of 5 days after eruptions appear or until all scabs are dried.
- **Strep Throat and Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye):** Exclude from the JSU CDC for a minimum of 24 hours to allow for a least two doses of antibiotics.
- **Influenza and Diarrhea Illnesses:** Excluded from the JSU CDC for a minimum of 24 hours following the resolution of fever/diarrhea.
- **Coronavirus (Covid 19):** Exclude from the JSU CDC for 5 days after positive test. Must be fever/symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to the CDC.
- **Coxsackies (Hand, Foot, and Mouth Syndrome):** Exclude from school until blisters appear dry and not oozing. Must be a minimum of 24 hours since the last blister appeared. Requires a note from the doctor confirming the child is free of contagion while blisters persist.
- **Hepatitis, Impetigo, Mononucleosis, Scabies, Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pertussis (Whooping Cough):** A doctor's note is required confirming that the child is free of contagion and able to resume normal activities at the JSU CDC.
- **Head Lice:** A child must be nit free before returning to school. Upon their return, the child will undergo head checks by CDC Administration for at least 14 days.

## Medication

Trained JSU CDC staff will administer medication to children with the following requirements are met:

- The medication is in the original container, labeled with the child's name, and the prescription label or direction label is attached.
- The authorization form is consistent with the manufacturer's age, duration, and dosage instructions.
- The authorization form on file is complete, dated, signed, and includes an administration duration not exceeding 10 days. Any medication authorization requiring longer than 10 day is considered long-term and requires families to submit and updates authorization form annually.

Families are responsible for administering the first day's dosage of any new medication at home. When an authorization for medication expires, families must pick up the medication within 14 days or renew the authorization. Medications not picked up by the family within 14 days will be discarded by the JSU CDC. All medications are stored in a locked cabinet at the JSU CDC, except for Epi-Pens and items required for diabetes management, which are kept near the child in a backpack or classroom cabinet at all times.

### **Diaper Cream/Topical Over the Counter (OTC) Ointments/Insect Repellent and Sunscreen**

Families who give consent to the JSU CDC to apply diaper cream and other OTC ointment, including insect repellent and sunscreen, must complete and sign an authorization form as required by Alabama Minimum Standards.

- The product shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's first and last name. All products must be labeled with the purchase month and year.
- Any known adverse reactions to previous product use must be disclosed on the authorization form.
- Forms must be updated annually.
- If the sunscreen, insect repellent, or other product does not expire, we recognize that the products are designed to last up to 3 years.

### **Minor Injuries**

In the event that your child experiences a minor injury (scrape, bruise, bump, etc) while in attendance at the JSU CDC, a trained staff member will administer First Aid consisting of cleaning the area, applying ice, and a bandage if necessary.

All incidents resulting in an injury to a child will be recorded on an Incident Report Form. Families must review and sign the form when they pick up their child and will receive a copy for their records. When children sustain an injury on the face or head or are bitten by another child, families will receive a phone call from the child's teacher or member of the JSU CDC Administration prior to receiving the incident report.

### **Serious Injury**

The JSU CDC Administration, Lead, and Auxiliary Teachers are certified in First Aid and CPR. When a child experiences a serious injury or allergic reaction, the JSU CDC will call 911 first and notify the family next. For emergencies, families must keep the JSU CDC informed of changes in work and home phone number, addresses, and email addresses. Should a child require transport by ambulance, a teacher will accompany him/her or follow the ambulance to the hospital. A JSU CDC staff person will remain with the child until his/her family has reached the hospital.

## **Allergy Policy and Procedures**

All staff, in partnership with families, are responsible for always ensuring the safety of children with allergies. Allergy and Food Preference Lists are kept by the JSU CDC Administration, updated as needed, and shared with all classrooms. Families must share knowledge of food and other allergies at the time of enrollment. For a child who has experience an allergic reaction, the teacher will notify the JSU CDC Administration immediately and follow the protocol for that child on the Allergy List.

## **Infant Care**

To reduce the risk of SIDS the CDC will adhere to the following:

*Children under one year of age:*

- Child will be placed to sleep on his/her back in a CRIB or PLAYPEN, unless the child's physician authorizes another position in writing.
- If a child falls asleep in a swing or car seat, the child will be immediately removed from the swing or car seat and placed to sleep on his or her back in a crib or playpen.
- Child will not sleep in a crib or playpen that contains soft or loose materials, such as sheepskins, pillows, blankets, flat sheets, bumper pads, bibs, pacifiers with attached soft objects, or stuffed animals.

*Children under two years of age:*

- Cribs and playpens shall contain a tight-fitting mattress and any mattress covering shall fit snugly over the mattress. Waterbeds may not be used.
- Sheets or blankets used to cover a child one year of age or older shall be kept away from the child's mouth and nose, and if sleeping in a crib or playpen, shall be tucked tightly under the mattress.

## **Biting**

While biting is a normal stage of development, the CDC Administration will monitor all incidents of biting for the safety of our children and staff.

A bite without a mark will result in behavior modification strategies being applied. Written documentation will be provided to the family of the child who was bitten as well as the biter's family. We will collaborate with the families of each, to keep them informed and to develop behavioral change. Please note that the aggressor's identity will not be shared with the family of the child who was bitten.

A bite with a mark, may be viewed as aggression, and will result in the biter being sent home for the day (at the discretion of the CDC Director).

- Three bites (with no mark) a month will be considered extreme and will result in parental notification and a scheduled conference.
- Three biting incidents in a day (whether or not they result in a mark) will be viewed as aggression and a plan of action will be constructed to rectify the issue.

### **Child Abuse**

All employees of the CDC are required by law to report any suspected child abuse, child neglect, exploitation, or deprivation to the Department of Human Resources (DHR). If any abuse is suspected, the parents will be notified as soon as possible.

### **Tobacco-Free Policy**

It is the policy of Jacksonville State University to provide students, faculty, and staff with a tobacco, smoke, and vapor-free environment in which to work and study. No use of tobacco products, including cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and electronic cigarettes, is permitted within the facilities or on the property of Jacksonville State University at any time. Supervisors are responsible for the enforcement of these policies in their areas.

### **Written Parental Authorization**

There may be times and/or events that may require written parental authorization or parental permission. For example, fieldtrips, special activities at or away from the CDC, and water-related activities occurring in water more than 2 feet deep.

### **Cleaning Procedures**

All classrooms are cleaned daily. Classroom materials including toys, play spaces, furniture, sinks, bathrooms, and other hard surfaces are disinfected and/or sanitized daily. All soft materials, including blankets, are washed at least once a week.

## **ATTENDANCE, ARRIVAL, AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

Regular school attendance contributes to academic achievement and facilitates the student's ability to succeed. Attendance will be monitored for patterns or irregularity...



- Unexcused Absences (Please provide Dr's Excuses, when possible, upon returning to school)  
**NOTE:** Your child may not return to school until the date noted on the doctor's excuse.
- Absences of 5 consecutive days
- Patterned Absences (Every Monday, Every Friday, Etc)

Once a student accumulates 8 consecutive days of absences, a meeting will be scheduled between the CDC Administration and parents.

Missing more days of school than attending, may result in removal from the program. There are several students on our waiting list who can and would be excited to attend school every day.

### **Arrival Procedures**

It is mandatory that the JSU CDC maintain a signature record of all children's arrivals. Children must be escorted by a parent/guardian/caregiver to join their class each day upon arrival. Upon joining the class, the parent/guardian/caregiver must ensure one of the JSU CDC staff acknowledges the arrival prior to leaving their child. All children should be signed in no later than 9:00am (signature timestamps are recorded at sign-in).

### **Car Line**

We offer a car line drop-off Monday-Friday for morning arrival. Parents of 3's and Pre-K students may drop off in the carpool area behind Pod 2. The teachers will be in the carpool lane to help unload in the mornings from 7:30am to 7:45am. If you arrive after 7:45 am, you must escort your child into the school building.

### **Late Arrival**

We realize that sometimes circumstances arise that may cause a child to be late for school, but consistent tardiness affects the entire class and is not fair to the teacher or other students. Please be respectful of the classroom routines and drop your child off no later than 9:00am every morning.

### **Check-in/Check-out**

If a child checks out for a doctor's appointment or special event (i.e. field trip), we ask that they remain out for the day. The CDC will not accept children returning to school after 2:00pm.

### **Release of Children**

When a child is enrolled in the CDC, administrators will share ProCare login information with the family. The family will provide updated contact information and share emergency contact

information and names of approved pick-up persons for their child in ProCare. This will be the system CDC staff uses to ensure safe pick-ups for all children.

Only a child's parent/guardian or adults previously approved by the parents/guardians will be permitted to take a child from the JSU CDC. Parents/guardians may update the initial information provided at the time of enrollment when necessary. All adults picking up children will be asked to provide photo identification and pick-up authorization will be confirmed by a JSU CDC Administrator prior to the release of a child. If a family experiences a change in marital status and/or custodial rights, appropriate legal documents must be provided to the JSU CDC Director/Assistant Director. Personal information pertaining to children and families is protected by the University confidentiality policies and kept secure in a locked cabinet in the offices of the JSU CDC Administration. Should any unfamiliar or suspected unauthorized individual request the release of a child, the JSU CDC staff will implement the following guidelines:

- Require review of photo identification
- Confirm the individual's pick-up authorization status in the family database and/or child's file. If a certified copy of a court order or separation agreement shows that the unauthorized person does not have custody, we will advise the person and not release the child.
- Notify the child's other parent/guardian or other authorized person as soon as possible.
- Notify the JSU Police Department, if necessary, at (256)782-5050.

## **Departure**

We encourage families to check and empty their child's file folder and cubby daily.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for signing out their child. Children are signed out with a signature and the time at which they are signed out is documented.

Parents/guardians/caregivers must ensure a staff member knows they are taking their child prior to leaving for the day.

Aftercare is available for all Pre-K students. There is a charge of \$20 per day. The children will be signed into aftercare and charged starting at 2:30pm.

## **Late Pick-Up**

The CDC closes promptly at 6:00pm. All children are expected to be out of the building at that time to allow for final day cleaning procedures to occur PRIOR to the end of a teacher's workday. Please leave enough time for toileting and other routines prior to 6pm to avoid a late fee charged to your account. If an unforeseen issue prevents an on-time pick-up, parents must call the center's main number, (256)782-8655 as early as possible. At 6:00pm, a JSU CDC Administrator will contact family members to ensure they are on the way if information has not previously been received.

If a child is not picked up by 6:00pm, a \$25 late fee will be charged to the family's account. Beginning at 6:15pm, an additional \$15 per child will be charged to the account for every 15-minute increment (or fraction thereof) during which the child is not picked up. Payment of these fees is subject to the collection policies noted above. If we are unable to reach a parent, emergency contacts will be called. If we cannot contact anyone authorized to pick up a child by 6:30pm, JSU University Police will be notified for assistance.

### **Parking**

The JSU CDC parking lot is reserved for short-term use by our families during peak drop-off and pick-up times, not to exceed 1 hour. Those needing to park longer than required for drop-off and pick-up must receive an authorized pass from the JSU CDC Administrative Offices. During JSU CDC events, the JSU CDC Administration will collaborate with the University Police Department.

The CDC shares a parking lot with the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS), which includes students, faculty, and staff. Mornings are a busy time at the CEPS complex. Please be mindful of the traffic flow in the parking lot and notice the arrows painted on the pavement to indicate flow. Also, and parking spaces striped red are for Jax State and CDC faculty only. The speed limit in the parking lot is 15 mph.

## **CLOTHING & SUPPLIES FOR CHILDREN**

### **Clothing**

Children should be dressed for play at the JSU CDC. Children are encouraged to learn through their senses. Young children acquire added information best through active, hands-on play, which sometime gets messy. Please take that into consideration when helping children dress for the center. Extra clothes and underwear should be kept in a backpack in each child's cubby, regardless of the child's age, since spills or accidents can happen to anyone. Children play outside daily for at least 2 hours, weather permitting.

Inclement weather and air-quality alerts are closely monitored prior to children going outdoors. Make sure each child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Layers that can be added or removed are recommended. Children should arrive at the JSU CDC with sunscreen applied when appropriate. Children are not permitted to wear flip-flops or Crocs to school due to their lack of proper support and potential for injury. All clothing should be labeled with the child's name.

### **School Supplies**

Parents/guardians/caregivers should provide their children with the following supplies:

- Two to three full sets of extra clothing. Check your child’s extra clothing frequently to ensure the correct size and seasonal appropriateness. Replenish items when necessary.
- Reusable water bottle with permanently attached lid, labeled clearly with your child’s full name.
- Blankets or nap mat. Nap mats will be sent home once a week for washing. Pillows are not permitted.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent (if desired) clearly labeled with your child’s name and corresponding authorization form.
- Diapers and wipes if necessary.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost items are displayed in the front office. Please remember to label all coats, hats, mittens, etc. Unclaimed items will be used as extras for the JSU CDC or given to charity at the end of each semester.

**ALL PERSONAL ITEMS SHOULD BE LABELED WITH THE CHILD’S NAME.**

## **CLASSROOM INFORMATION**

### **Classroom Visits**

The JSU CDC maintains an open-door policy, welcoming families, extended family, and caregivers to visit throughout the day. We strive to nurture a community environment that embraces all cultures and family structures. We encourage families to share their traditions and expertise with the greater JSU CDC community or their child’s class and believe that family partnerships are the foundation for supporting each child’s development. Visitors will be allowed in the classroom when actively participating in the lesson/activity. We ask that classroom visits should be coordinated with the lead teacher and/or CDC administration. While visiting the JSU CDC, we ask that all individuals respect the routines and policies and utilize the classroom observation room/window of each classroom, to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff. We ask that visits be limited to 30-45 minutes. All visitors will be required to sign in/out at the front desk.

### **Nap Time**

State licensing requires that all children in full-day programs have a designated rest period for at least one hour but no more than two hours. Staff will play quiet music and gently run the children’s

backs to help them relax. After the first 30 minutes, children who are not sleeping may engage in quiet activities.

### **Celebrations/Holidays**

Birthdays are especially important for young children, and we would love to celebrate this incredibly special occasion. We request the celebration be kept simple. We suggest a special healthy snack be shared during the afternoon snack time. Before sending in any birthday treats, check with your child’s teacher to see if allergies are present for any children in the classroom.

We understand that birthday parties are often planned for the JSU CDC children outside of the center as well. Whenever possible, we encourage parents to consider inviting all children in the class. Parents may only send paper invitations through the children’s backpacks if all children in the class are invited. Parents are responsible for distributing the invitations. No gifts may be distributed through the CDC.

We recognize that holidays are an important part of family life, and we value the integration of broad cultural and linguistic diversity representing all JSU CDC children and families in our curriculum. We emphasize holiday experiences with family traditions. We are honored to have families come into the classrooms to share special traditions with children, keeping in mind that the JSU CDC is a secular institution. If you wish to share an activity, story, recipe, etc., please speak with your child’s teacher.

### **Television/Technology**

Screentime is kept to a minimum at the CDC. Each pod has one television that is only used for special occasions for the children. Children do not have screentime on tablets, phones, or computers while at the CDC.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

### **Emergency Evacuation or Lock-Down**

In an emergency evacuation or lock-down situation, the JSU CDC will follow procedures developed with the Jacksonville State University Police Department (UPD). Families will be provided with JSU CDC specific information and directions via the JSU CDC alert system. The JSU CDC will follow the larger JSU emergency response plan when such procedures are under periodic review and development.

Advance notification for lock-down drills will not be provided as advised by UPD. Parents will be notified following the lock-down drill that one has occurred. The teachers are well-trained and prepared to keep children calm and happy during the drill.

### **Disaster Preparedness Plan**

The JSU CDC has emergency management/disaster preparedness and response plans for all-hazards, including natural and human-caused disasters, emergencies, and violence in or near our center. The JSU CDC carefully plans for potential emergencies with the safety and reunification of children first. In all emergencies, children are evacuated or sheltered depending on the situation, with the full intention of keeping the children as safe as possible. During all drills and evacuations, children will be accounted for using the transition checklist in place to ensure all children are counted prior to and after the transition.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY**

The Jacksonville State University Child Development Center supports the growth of developing educators enrolled at the University. Through partnerships with the JSU College of Education and Professional Studies, Jax State students have an opportunity to complete fieldwork and observations at the JSU CDC. The JSU CDC Administration interviews all candidates and completes federal and local background screenings if completing fieldwork of 15 hours or more in a classroom. Jax State students complete field experience opportunities throughout the academic year. If a Jax State student has a case study assignment requiring a more in-depth interaction with a specific child, family permission will be obtained in advance. For questions or concerns, please speak with the JSU CDC Administration.

## **YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY**

Families are encouraged to visit the JSU CDC with their child prior to beginning school. These introductory visits are scheduled through the JSU CDC Director/Assistant Director and allow your child to see the classroom and meet classmates and teachers. In addition, these visits allow teachers a chance to begin forming a bond with your child, which is an essential part of a successful transition. During the visit, you will be able to ask the teachers questions. The parent/guardian/caregiver **MUST** remain on site for the duration of the visit.

On your child's first day(s) at the JSU CDC, allow enough time when you arrive to settle him/her into an activity before you leave. At times, children experience greater difficulty when a parent/guardian/caregiver prolongs their stay, therefore, it may be beneficial to leave more promptly. Teachers can assist you in making this decision. Saying goodbye is essential to maintaining the trust you have established with your young child. Although it can cause tears, goodbyes and reassurance of a return can help children understand and adjust to the separation process. It is not unusual for the first week to pass without tears, only to have drop-offs become more difficult later. If this happens, do not be discouraged. Continue to remind your child that you will return later in the day, give hugs and kisses, and then leave. Many children benefit from a parent-specific goodbye routine that can be followed each day. Teachers will comfort your child and assist him/her in focusing on an activity. You are welcome to call a JSU CDC administrator to check on your child's progress at any time.

## **PRESCHOOL TRAINING POLICY**

### **FOR 3's AND PRE-K STUDENTS AT JSU's CDC**

Children enrolled in the 3's or Pre-K classroom must be toilet trained before attending the CDC. Children must be wearing underwear. A child having accidents daily is not considered toilet trained. Please note that wearing pull-ups is NOT considered toilet trained.

*Why do children have to be toilet training before they begin preschool?*

- There are strict standards for changing and disposing of wet or soiled diapers/pull-ups, and our classrooms are not equipped for this.
- When an adult is busy changing a child's soiled clothing, it takes away from learning time for all students, and it removes one adult from the direct supervision of and interaction with the rest of the class.

We do understand that even toilet training children will occasionally have accidents. By definition, "accidents" are unusual incidents and should happen infrequently. In these instances, the teachers will help children change their clothes, encouraging independence as much as possible.

A toilet trained child can do the following:

- Communicate to the teachers that he/she needs to go to the restroom before they need to go.
- Alert him/herself to stop what he/she is doing, and go use the bathroom.
- Pull down his/her clothes and get them back up without assistance.
- Wipe him/herself after using the toilet (with minimal assistance for 3-year-olds)
- Get on/off the toilet by him/herself
- Wash and dry hands
- Postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are away from the classroom.
- Wake up during naptime should they need to use the bathroom.

Classes go to the bathroom as a class and have a private bathroom in their classrooms. Classroom schedules indicate multiple opportunities to use the bathroom throughout the day, and of course, children are always permitted to go to the bathroom when needed. Children are asked many times throughout the day and before they nap if they need to use the bathroom. A teacher will assist children as needed, but children should be able to complete toileting activities independently. This is an issue that protects all concerned. It is not uncommon for a child who is fully toilet trained to



have a setback when he/she is in a new environment. Preschool staff are aware of this and will assist the children when necessary. Please have your child dressed in clothing that he/she can easily manage independently. Please send a complete change of clothes labeled with your child's name and appropriate for the season. These will be left at school in case of accidents and returned at the end of the school year. Parents will be notified if a child has a toileting accident.

We understand that each child arrives at this milestone differently. Therefore, we will allow four weeks from the first day of school for your child to demonstrate accomplishment of this goal. However, if the situation is not manageable within the classroom environment, we will discuss the issue with the parents and reserve the right to suspend attendance of the child at such time. A child will not be considered toilet trained for our preschool program if the child continues to consistently have toileting accidents after the first four weeks of school. After the first four weeks of school, the following policies will be in place for children who have accidents:

- If one or two accidents occur in one week, the parents will be notified with the understanding that the issue needs to be addressed and corrected.
- If three or more accidents occur in one week, the parents will be notified with the understanding that if the issue is not corrected by the end of the second week, the child will have to stay home for at least one week or longer until he/she is completely toilet trained.
- If multiple accidents occur in one day, the parent will be notified on that day, and if not corrected by day three, the child will have to stay home for at least one week or longer until he/she is completely toilet trained.

Please note that this policy is not in place to shame or punish a child or inconvenience primary caregivers. Rather, cleaning accidents in the preschool setting is time-consuming, and this time that teachers spend attending to and cleaning accidents is time they are not spending interacting with the children and facilitating the curriculum in a safe manner. This policy is intended to ensure the safety and happiness of children and staff at JSU's CDC.



## CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

### HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I/we acknowledge the receipt of Jacksonville State University’s Child Development Center’s Family Handbook. The signature(s) below indicate that I/we have read the handbook, are aware of all CDC policies and procedures, and will adhere to the stated policies and procedures of the CDC including:

- Policies on Attendance
- Policies Outstanding Tuition/Fee Payments
- Policies related to Classroom Disruption and/or Biting
- Polices related to Separation from the CDC
- Toilet Training Policy for 3’s and Pre-K (4’s)

Information and policies in this handbook will be updated as needed. Parents will be notified of updates through ProCare. The handbook will be updated online as updates occur and can be viewed on the JSU CDC webpage.

If another handbook is needed for a primary caregiver outside of the household, please ask a CDC administrator for one. An Acknowledgement Form should be completed for every child by all primary caregivers at the CDC and will be placed in the child’s file. All primary caregivers living in the household must sign below.

Child’s Name:		Age/Class:	
PRINTED NAME		SIGNATURE	
Primary Caregiver			DATE
Primary Caregiver			