

Woodside Children's Center  
Parent Handbook  
June 2021

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Dear Families,

On behalf of Woodside Children’s Center, we would like to welcome you and your family to the Woodside community. At Woodside, we strive to provide a safe, loving and culturally diverse atmosphere. We will do our best to provide the highest possible quality care and educational experience for your child. We will accomplish this through building relationships with you over the years coupled with our belief that children learn best through play, exploration, and positive experiences.

Because we value the relationship between our center and parents, we welcome families to visit Woodside at any time to experience our curriculum and see our teachers at work in the classroom. We encourage family members to join their child(ren) on occasion for lunch or snack, reading a story, helping with a craft or sharing something that you feel is special to your family. Because our center door is always open, we have an “open-dialogue policy” and believe that an open dialogue between parents and educators is the foundation for a solid working relationship and good childcare experience.

This handbook outlines many of our policies and procedures as well as answering questions you may have. As a way to start our “open-dialogue policy”, we ask you to review our handbook and become familiar with it as it serves as a great resource for you.

Finally, because I always love to hear stories, family updates or just to chat, please feel free to stop in the office anytime.

Sincerely,

Sue Dexter  
Director  
Woodside Children’s Center

### **Licensing Agency**

Licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Woodside Children's Center is affiliated with Amherst College. We are compliant with state and local regulations such as building codes, fire laws, and health/safety guidelines. Our Center proudly meets, if not exceeds, the licensing requirements for staffing.

### **Chart of Organizational Authority**

Woodside Children's Center is led by a Board of Directors and an EEC certified Director. Reporting to the Director, is an accomplished Assistant Director and a skilled part-time Bookkeeper. The Center also comprises 10 full-time teachers all of which are trained and certified through the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. Additionally, all teachers are certified in CPR and First Aid. Before hire, all teachers must pass a CORI, SORI, DCF and Fingerprint check.

### **Philosophy of WCC**

Woodside Children Center promotes a rich, safe, and caring environment that supports the child's growing awareness of self and others. The curriculum balances free play along with teacher directed activities that consider the developmental level of each child. Our goal is to help each child develop physical, emotional, cognitive, independence and self-confidence. The center provides a warm, relaxed environment in which children are free to explore, create and have fun. Woodside also works in conjunction with the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model is a framework that supports the social and emotional development of our children. We strive to create an environment where every child feels good about coming to school.

### **Goals of the Center:**

1. To encourage each child to develop feelings of positive self-esteem.
2. To encourage the children's learning and exploration of the surrounding world.
3. To encourage problem solving and enhance the child's experiences.
4. To encourage interaction and communication with other children and adults.
5. To encourage development of a range of motor and cognitive skills.

Woodside Children's Center incorporates all families' values, morals, and beliefs. We incorporate this through books, family involvement in the classroom, family

posters and special events. We take into consideration the DEEC regulations and we notify families of sensitive topics that are discussed in the classroom.

### **Non-Discrimination/Diversity Statement**

Woodside Children's Center admits children of any race, sex, country of origin, ability or religious affiliation and guarantees access to all rights, privileges, program, and activities generally accorded or made available at the center. The center does not discriminate based on any protected category in the administration of its admissions, hiring, or educational practices. We believe that every child has an equal value to our program, and actively work to support full inclusion of children with diverse abilities and disabilities, as well as those from all social-economic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

### **Program Information**

Woodside Children's Center serves children from infancy through pre-school. The Center also is equipped to provide care through the age of eight (8). We offer a variety of full and part time slots to accommodate the needs of children and their families.

### **Ratios:**

WCC is licensed for 41 children on a daily basis.

Infants (4 weeks - 15 months) Staff: Child Ratio - 3:7

Toddlers (15 months - 2 years, 9 months) Staff: Child Ratio - 3:9

Preschool (2 years, 9 months - 5 Years) Staff: Child Ratio - 1:10

When additional space is available at WCC, the center can care for children up to 8 years of age. This care must be made in advanced and approved by the office.  
Vacation Care/Summer Care (5 Years - 8 Years                      Staff: Child Ratio 1:10

### **Attendance: Arrival & Departure**

The Center opens promptly at 8:00am and closes promptly at 5:00pm. To allow for each classroom to follow a daily schedule with minimal disruption to the plan activities, we ask that all children arrive by 9:00am. We understand that on occasion children have medical or dental appointments that will require a late arrival. Parents are expected to email, call, or send a Bright wheel message to the center to notify of the late arrival. Upon late arrival, parents are responsible for locating the child's classroom at the Center. We also ask that parents inform us about early pick up, so children may be prepared to leave with belongings ready to go home with the child. If your child will be absent on a given day, we ask that you tell us in advance or contact the Center on the day of your child's absence. We are obligated to contact you if we have not heard from you and your child is not in attendance at school.

### **Late Policy**

We emphasize that you must be on time picking up your child(ren). Half day pick up time is at 1:00PM. Full day pick up is at 5:00 PM. Each family will be given one grace period per classroom. A late fee of \$15 for the first fifteen minutes, and then \$2.00 per minute thereafter. Late fees are due the following day to the Teacher that remained on site with your child.

After 10 minutes with no contact from the family, all emergency contact persons will be called until contact is made.

If you have an emergency and must be late, please call the Center or send a message to you child's teacher through Brighwheel. Late charges will still apply even if the Center has been notified. It is important to notify the Center, if you will be late, to allow the Teachers to make arraignments for their own family obligations.

If someone other than you will be picking up your child, please notify the Center in writing prior to the pickup. We require the person picking up to have a valid photo ID available. The child will not be allowed to leave the Center with unauthorized individuals.

### **Operating Schedule**

Woodside Children's Center is a year-round program. We are open from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Morning half day is from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Vacation care hours are 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Vacation care must be requested by speaking with the Director or Assistant Director. The spaces will be given on a first come basis. You will be billed separately for these days.

### **Calendar and Holidays**

Woodside Children's Center is closed for:

- 10 Holidays See calendar posted near office, and on our website.
- The week between Christmas and New Year's
- 6 Professional Development (PD) Days

These PD days allow teachers to maintain all certifications as well as time to prepare for incoming students. Teachers are required to attend professional development training. To retain certification, WCC licensing stipulates that each teacher must receive at least 20 hours of PD training per year. This equates to six (6) curriculum days.

### **Change to the Calendar**

Due to changes to the Amherst College calendar, WCC will occasionally make changes to its calendar after it is published. For example, if Amherst College announces an extended Holiday break such as early release the day before a holiday for college staff, our calendar will follow that change. The director will announce these closures as soon as possible to allow families opportunities to find alternate care for these days as needed.

### **Emergency Closures**

Occasionally, WCC will close unexpectedly due to a weather emergency or a power, water, or other outage. When outages occur, WCC will close until the situation has been resolved. As a program that is governed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, our license requires to operate our facility that meets state regulations and building code requirements. We must close when the conditions within our building do not allow us to meet these standards with electricity needs, safe air temperatures or water quality.

In the case of a delayed opening, WCC will open in accordance with Amherst College policy. We ask that families use individual discretion as to whether their child will attend the program due to weather or other circumstances. Families should be sure to notify us when their children will not attend during bad weather so that we can plan for staffing needs. In the event that WCC has a delay or closure, efforts are made to make announcements as soon as possible. E-mails will be sent out and or phone calls. Families are also encouraged to check the Amherst College website at [www.amherst.edu/myamherst](http://www.amherst.edu/myamherst) or call (413) 542-SNOW.

### **Helpful Hints for Introducing Your Baby to The Infant Room**

WCC Infant Room staff realize that parents enrolling their infant in childcare for the first time can be have some anxiety. With years of experience our infant room teachers are here to answer any questions and work with parents during this emotional time. Do not hesitate to call or visit if you have any concerns or just want to check in. In the meantime, we have a few helpful suggestions to make the transition smoother so that your child can adjust to new people, new routines, and a new environment.

- Babies who are used to being bottle fed generally adjust faster than those who are exclusively breast-fed. We suggest introducing at least one bottle a day to ease your baby into a different feeding routine before starting your infant care experience. Regardless, you are of course welcome to come and nurse your baby at any time.

- We are not allowed to swaddle infants per state regulations. We do suggest the Merlin Magic Sleep Suit if your baby is used to the weight and coziness of a swaddle. We can also put them in sleep sacks if you prefer.
- We are not allowed to let babies' nap with a blanket, pillow, or a stuffed toy. We make sure that babies are soothed to sleep by rocking them, holding them, or rolled gently in their cribs.
- Bottles are warmed under warm running tap water. State regulations do not allow us to warm bottles in a microwave or a bottle warmer.
- We adhere to "back to sleep" for infants until they are rolling independently.

### **Infant Room Philosophy**

#### *Ratio 7/3*

In our infant room, the teachers provide a warm, nurturing, loving, and safe environment for your children to explore, grow, and develop. The teachers provide a predictable routine throughout the day which helps build a sense of security. Our main focus is working on social, emotional, and motor development. Teachers establish a secure bond through prompt and calm responses to the infant's cues and meeting their needs. Talking to and holding infants also encourages bonding. Teachers allow for lots of tummy time and floor time to move and explore. We strive to make the experience a happy and safe one.

Children's learning is enhanced through active play, communication, and exploration. We provide various opportunities for sensory exploration and motor skill development in and outside the classroom. They explore their surroundings and nature through walks around the college, going into town, along the bike path and on the playground.

Communication is a large part of the children's day and development. Teachers communicate at the child's eye level, engage in conversations, join in laughter and respond to children's vocalizations. Some simple sign language is also demonstrated, incorporated, and encouraged throughout the day to enhance the children's language and communication.

## **Infant Daily Schedule**

Infants are on individual schedules to accommodate their own eating and sleeping patterns. Accommodations are made as individual needs change. Parents are welcomed to join the classroom as desired for visits or feedings. Diapering occurs 3 set times during the day, as well as when needed. The following is a summary of a typical day:

- ◇ Warm welcoming to the children and parents as they arrive each day.
- ◇ Morning snacks, diapers, bottles, and naps as needed.
- ◇ Self-directed play occurs in the classroom as well as outdoors. We enjoy, walks and playing on the porch. Infants engage in gross motor exploration, tummy time, and play with sensory materials. Teachers sing and read to the children.
- ◇ Lunch time is offered at the table with plates, bowls, and spoons to allow infants to begin to independently feed themselves. Mealtime is followed by diapering and naps.
- ◇ Late afternoon snack/feedings as needed. The end of day includes diaper changes, goodbyes, and conversations with parents.

### *Infant Room Logistics*

Please label ALL items- bottles, bottle caps, formula containers, food items, and clothing. Any food to be warmed up, should be in a glass container. If you use cloth diapers, your child can arrive in one and we can send them home in one, but only disposables throughout the day. Please bring a few spare outfits including various layers to be able to accommodate for change in weather. When parents and visitors enter the infant classroom, they may be asked to remove their shoes. Please be aware that some children might experience some "stranger anxiety" with unfamiliar adults.

## **Helpful Hints for Transiting Your Baby into The Toddler Room**

Here are some helpful hints to make your experience easy and enjoyable when transitioning into the toddler classroom at Woodside Children's Center.

The teachers in the toddler room will provide your child with a warm and loving environment, helping them to feel comfortable and safe in their new classroom. We will always provide individual care, tailored to each individual child, and welcome you to talk with us about any concerns or questions you may have. We would also like you to know that you are always welcome to call and check in

with your child's teachers on how your child is doing throughout the day. We encourage parents to come in and read books, do projects, or share something special and unique with our class!

### **Toddler Room Philosophy**

Ratio 9/3

Woodside Children's Center provides a safe, loving, home-like atmosphere for your child. Our program is based on the theory that children learn best through play and exploration. Your child will learn through their own discoveries and hands-on experiences. Emphasis is also placed on the socialization skills which include sharing, self-esteem, and building children's self-awareness. Literacy, music, nature, science, arts and crafts, and outdoor play are also a large part of our program.

### **Toddler Daily schedule.**

#### **Drop off/Free play:**

Upon arrival, children will wash their hands before starting any activities. Each child is then encouraged to choose different areas of the classroom to explore. To give each child a variety of activity options, teachers will have different table activities set up each day which may include an art activity, fine motor manipulatives, play dough, etc.

#### **Clean up:**

Before snacks, outside time, and group activities/circle time, children are encouraged to help clean up the classroom with the teachers' assistance.

#### **Circle/group time:**

Children come together as a group for circle time where we sing songs, read books, talk about the weather, and play games that incorporate colors, shapes, counting, letters, and movement. We also offer a group art activity that is teacher directed. Every Friday we have a cooking project where the children learn about taking turns, measuring/counting, and nutrition. They all participate with their teachers to prepare something food related, and later taste test the final product.

#### **General Hygiene:**

Hand washing will happen throughout the day as needed, as will diapering. Tooth brushing is encouraged daily and is incorporated into the schedule. Children use a wet toothbrush, without toothpaste and teachers assist the children as they are brushing to ensure that they reach all their teeth.

**Diapering:**

Teachers will change diapers three times daily after morning snack, after lunch, and after afternoon snack, unless otherwise needed. As children show interest in using the potty, they are taken during diapering times to use the bathroom.

**Snack/Lunch:**

We offer snacks in the morning and afternoon. Snacks are provided by Woodside and usually consist of some type of cracker or dry cereal and fruit or cheese. Children usually sit down for lunch at about 12:00. Children and teachers eat together, enjoying each other's conversation and company at lunch and snack times. Children are encouraged to eat independently and help with clean-up of their space.

**Outside Time:**

Children enjoy time outside every day, weather permitting. Some of our favorite places to play and visit are the playground, the porch, the Amherst College track and fields, bike path and walks into Amherst. When the weather gets warmer the teachers will bring their curriculum and activities outside for the children to enjoy. We also enjoy playing in the water and running through sprinklers on hot summer days.

**Nap time:**

The teachers will turn off the lights and play soothing music as they rub backs until the children fall asleep. Nap time generally starts at 1:00 and as children wake-up they are offered quiet activities at the tables or on their mats.

**Pick-up:**

During this time children participate in independent play. When the warmer months arrive, we enjoy playing outside, either on the playground or on the porch as we wait for parents to arrive.

**Progression of Children to Pre-School Classrooms**

Based on physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, the Teachers and Director recommend to parents when their child is ready to join our pre-school program. Evaluation occurs throughout the year as children reach the age for the next classroom and or when a vacant slot is available in the next classroom.

As appropriate, the Director and or Assistant Director will schedule a meeting with both classroom teachers to discuss the readiness of a child. The meeting allows for the teachers to discuss the latest progress report, share information regarding family preference, medical concerns, custody (if applicable), and development history.

Before the transition to the pre-school program, the new classroom teachers will provide a welcoming packet to the family. Families are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new classroom teachers to ensure the teachers are aware of the families' expectations for their child.

## **Preschool Philosophy**

### **Classroom 1**

In the younger preschool classroom, the teachers strive to create a loving, friendly and safe learning environment. Our staff provides the building blocks for each child to grow their independence, self-help skills and confidence. We promote and encourage constant communication between teachers and families to nurture these skills in each unique child.

The teachers believe that children learn through play as well as teacher directed activities. We strive to create a fun and exploring curriculum for the children. We believe that children understand and expand their knowledge through play. Every day there is some type of educational project and or physical activity and a related book included in our curriculum.

Finally, preschool classes take advantage of the Amherst college track and Campus for fun field trips to the Dinosaur Museum, Art Museum, or planetarium. We also create seasonal activities such as Trick-or-Treating and visit other points of interest that extend the learning found in the classroom.

### **Classroom 2**

In this classroom, the teachers strive to create a safe and comfortable environment. The teachers are always available to offer support, help solve problems and listen to exciting news in their students' lives. Teachers offer students many moments throughout the day to practice self-help skills and build confidence in their ability to be independent. Free play inspires children to explore, be curious, ask questions and solve problems.

There are moments throughout the day that offer children the chance to explore activities individually, as well as in a group. Play between and among fellow classmates exposes children to each other's different culture's backgrounds and beliefs, while also teaching team acceptance, cooperation, and patience. Areas of exploration in the class include book area, where there are always a variety of books. There is also a block area, dramatic play, music, art, writing, math, science and sensory. Teachers create lessons based around the interest of their students, as well as the educational goals for the class and children individually.

believe in a balance of both teachers directed activities and play. Teacher directed and teacher planned lessons focus on several areas of development. Often giving preschoolers one on one time with their teachers. Teacher directed activities help teachers with certain aspects of documentation, and future planning. Daily lesson plans are posted outside the trailblazer front door. Every six months the Trailblazers are required to do assessments. These individual assessments focus on kindergarten readiness. As always, preschool classes take advantage of the Amherst college track and Campus for fun field trips to the Dinosaur Museum, Art Museum, or planetarium. We also create seasonal activities such as Trick-or-Treating and visit other points of interest that extend the learning found in the classroom.

### **Preschool Schedule**

The teachers believe that a consistent schedule is important to the preschoolers' development. Familiarity is the first step to creating a safe environment. The teachers request that all children arrive by 9:00 a.m., this will allow all children to participate in morning meeting and will be made aware of the days' happenings.

### **Drop Off/Free Play Inside/outside**

After handwashing children will be able to choose between areas of the classroom to explore. The teachers will also have different table activities set up each day: coloring, fine motor manipulatives, playdough, etc.

### **Clean up**

Children will work together to take care of their classroom. Teachers will offer support by making suggestions when help is needed.

### **Morning Meeting/Group time**

The group comes together to share personal stories, sing songs, read stories, participate in math/literacy activities, calendar, and discussing the day.

### **Teacher planned activities**

This is the time where we break off into smaller groups for hands on formal and thematic learning.

### **General Hygiene**

Children will be provided with opportunity to use the bathroom prior to transitions, going outside, and at other times as requested by the child. Handwashing will happen throughout the day as needed.

### **Tooth Brushing**

Occurs daily and is incorporated into the schedule either after snack or lunch. Teachers will assist children with becoming independent brushers.

**Snack/Lunch**

Teachers and children sit together and enjoy conversation during snack/lunch. Children are encouraged to unpack their own lunch and to clean up their snack or lunch before moving to the next activity.

**Outside**

Children enjoy time on the playground, exploring climbers, sandbox, walks, group games, seasonal play, and nature exploration. Teachers often in nice weather will bring their curriculum outside.

**Nap Time/Quiet Time**

Children are encouraged to set up their nap mats with the assistance of friends or teachers. Children look at books to quiet themselves or a teacher may read a story. Occasionally an audio book may be played during this time. Teachers will turn the lights off and play soothing music as they rub backs to help children sleep. After resting briefly, children who do not sleep can enjoy quiet activities at the table.

**Pick Up**

During this time children will participate in independent play. Depending on the time of year children often enjoy outside play as they wait for pick up.

**Toys from Home**

We ask that children leave all toys at home. Children have a harder time sharing their own toys in a classroom. Toys from home can become broken or lost. If a child carries a toy into school, it is up to the parent to take it home. Children are welcome to bring cuddle items for nap time. These will stay in the cubby until rest time.

**Field trips/walks**

Written consent is required for all off site trips. Most field trip expenses are covered by the program.

Occasionally, classes take a field trip that has an entry fee over five dollars. In this case, in order for the children to benefit from a special experience, the program may ask parents to contribute the difference over five dollars. These fees will be added to the bi-monthly invoice for tuition. Parents whose children receive vouchers for childcare will not be charged additional field trip fees.

All classes carry first aid kits and child specific emergency medication on all walks/field trips. Children's emergency cards & attendance records will accompany each classroom on field trips and to the playground. These cards are

found in the classrooms backpack.

In case of minor accident, a trained staff member will administer first aid. In case of illness, the child will return to the center with a certified teacher, as soon as possible. A parent or the emergency contact person will be called.

In case of a situation which has been assessed to be serious and requires further attention, the staff members will use a personal cell phone to call 911 and notify the Center. The staff members will continue to follow all procedures noted in the serious illness or injury procedure above.

### **Clothing and Other Supplies**

The children's dress should be appropriate for play both inside and outside daily. Boots, mittens, hats, snow pants, jackets, sweatshirts, towel, hat and bathing suits are examples of some of the things your child will need for outdoor play. Please remember New England temperatures can change quickly and layers in fall and spring are helpful to ensure the children are comfortable. Two extra sets of weather appropriate clothing (including a pair of extra shoes) should be placed in your child's extra clothes bin.

Please label all belongings that are brought to the Center. The teachers will do their best to return lost items to their rightful owner. If a child is given extra clothes from the school, please wash and return all items as soon as possible. (This will ensure that we have extra in case another child is in need). It is the parent's responsibility to check the extra clothes bin at least on a weekly basis to see if they need anything added to the bin.

### **CLASSROOM GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE**

Our goal is to work together with the families to provide a safe and healthy learning environment. Working together with parents will give teachers a good understanding of each child's unique personality and needs. To achieve this goal, teachers put consideration and thought into what that goes into each classroom both for individual needs and the classroom as a whole. Teachers are thoughtful in set-up to help avoid conflicts, frustration and over stimulation.

**Infant** – Children will not be placed in a swing, highchair, crib or any piece of equipment for an extended period of time. When needed, for a frustrated or aggressive child, they may be removed from the situation and spend one-on-one time with a teacher and redirection play.

**Toddler** – We feel that "time-outs" are not appropriate for young children. Instead, teachers will be role models for children, help to teach strategies, use redirection, and offer vocabulary that can be used. Sometimes, a child may be

removed from group in order to calm themselves before rejoining the activity. Teachers know the importance of anticipating challenges before they arise and always try their best to do this.

**Preschool** – In our preschool classroom, teachers use a problem-solving approach. They help children to develop tools to handle conflict through discussion with classmates individually and in a group setting.

“Consequences” is another tool used in preschool. For example, when a child misuses material they are given a chance to use it appropriately. However, if a child is unable to change their behavior, they will be asked to put that activity away and will be given another chance later that day or the following day.

### **Progress Reports and Conferences**

Toddlers & Preschoolers will be assessed bi-annually. Infant, Toddler and Preschool teachers use SEAM as our assessment tools. Because our goal is to keep you informed, conferences will be scheduled to coincide with these assessment periods.

In addition to written reports, we are available to talk with you directly, by telephone or email. The best time to talk with teachers is typically between 1:00pm and 3:00pm. Drop off and pick up times are not the best classroom times for practical discussion, as teachers are helping the children transition and focus on what they need to bring home. If you need time for an uninterrupted discussion, please request a meeting be scheduled.

### **Children with Special Needs**

WCC welcomes applications for children with special needs. In conjunction with the parent/guardian input, we will identify in writing all the specific accommodations, if any are necessary, to meet the child’s needs. This includes any modifications and or changes required in daily activities, special equipment needed and necessary staff/child ratio changes to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience. This process will help us determine whether the accommodations required present an unreasonable or undue burden.

be evaluated every three months.

### **The Referral System**

WCC continuously monitors child progress and changes in perceived needs. If after classroom observations and evaluations, when a teacher and or teaching team suspects that your child is having physical, social, emotional, behavioral, or developmental problems the following steps will be taken:

1. The director will be asked to join the teachers to observe the child.
2. The observations will be documented.
3. Working with the director, the teaching team will discuss and create an action plan.
4. The director and a teacher will meet with the family to share their observation and to share recommendations for a referral or to discuss what the next steps should be. The conference will be documented.
5. If recommended, teachers will work with families and an early intervention specialist to learn how to incorporate suggestions and strategies into daily curriculum.
6. The consultant will meet with the family to discuss their findings and with parental permission may share their findings with the teaching team; and,
7. A plan of action will be created and will be provided to the Center.

If services are refused by the family, the teaching team will discuss with the director if any modification can be made to their program without early intervention services. The director and the teaching team will make the final decision as to whether the child's needs can be met in the classroom.

It is our goal to ensure the safety of all children. Repeated aggression by a child towards others, which is not diminished by intervention can create a dangerous situation for everyone. If teachers assess a situation to be unsafe the director or designated person will notify the family and the family will be responsible for pick up within a half hour. They may return when all issues that precipitated the situation are resolved.

### **Enrollment**

Parents and family are encouraged to come in and take a tour of the classroom, spend some time talking to teachers and getting all questions and concerns answered.

Once you make the decision that WCC is the best place for your child, you will be given an enrollment application. Once that has been filled out and returned to us along with a \$25 non-refundable application fee, you will be placed on our waitlist. We will notify you as soon as a spot becomes available. A contract will be written out with hours, days and tuition cost for you to sign and return. A tuition deposit of one month's tuition is required prior to your first day. This deposit will be credited toward the last months tuition at the center.

### **Fee Schedule**

Woodside Children's Center fees are based on a monthly tuition fee. Tuition fees are set during the spring each year for the following school year which begins on July 1st. A copy of our monthly tuition fee schedule can be found outside of the office and or on our website.

### **TUITION PAYMENT**

Tuition payments are due the last day of the month for services to be provided in the subsequent month (for example, payment is due September 30th for October tuition). Tuition is due regardless of holidays, scheduled or unanticipated closings or absences. Monthly tuition statements will be provided.

\* Failure to make payment on time may result in termination of this contract. \*

### **Payments options**

1. Hand Delivery – checks may be placed in the Tuition Drop Box in front hall.
2. Mail – checks may be sent via U.S. Mail.  
Woodside Children's Center  
155 Woodside Ave  
Amherst, MA 01002
3. Bill pay – directly mailed from bank.

### **Late Tuition Fee**

Families are given a grace period of five business days at the beginning of each month to make tuition payments. If payment is not received after five business days, a late payment fee of \$20 will be charged. If payment is not received after 20 business days an additional late payment fee of \$20 will be charged.

If payments are outstanding at the end of a month, the Director will review the account with the Treasurer and the contract may be terminated. Please notify the Director to discuss other payment options if circumstances arise that may lead to late or partial payments.

### **NONSUFFICIENT FUNDS (NSF)**

Families are responsible for all fees associated with insufficient fund transactions. The funds are due immediately upon notification. Families with more than two NSF notifications will be required to make payments using money orders for the remainder of their contract.

### **Cancellation of contract**

A contract may end anytime with a 30-day written notice, stating what the last day of attendance will be. If the family chooses to withdraw their child before the end of the contract term, you will lose your deposit and will be responsible for the last months tuition.

### **REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY CHANGE IN SCHEDULE**

Families may request a temporary change in schedule by submitting a letter in writing. All requests will be reviewed and are subject to the availability of program openings and staffing. Families will receive a copy of the request form indicating if the request is approved or denied. Families are responsible for payment of any additional hours or days.

### **TERMINATION**

Woodside Children's Center reserves the option to terminate an enrollment contract if Woodside determines that the Child's continued enrollment is not in the best interest of the child or the Center. Termination of an enrollment contract by Woodside for this reason is expected to be rare and will be determined in good faith by Woodside, generally in consultation with the Child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and with advance notice (unless immediate removal is required under applicable rules or regulations). In the event of such termination (other than termination for nonpayment of fees) any prepaid tuition shall be refunded to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) on a prorated basis.

### **Re-enrollment**

Re-enrollment for the next contract year will occur annually in the Spring. Enrollment applications will be sent out to all Woodside families in March. This form is to indicate hours and days you will need for the upcoming contract year. (This does not guarantee you the hours and days, it is just an indication of what you need.)

As an affiliate of Amherst College, please note that Woodside Children's Center will contract Amherst College families under a priority admission procedure until April 15<sup>th</sup> each year. All other Woodside families will be contracted after that date. Once a contract agreement has been signed and returned, your spot will be held.

### **Admission Priorities/Admission Procedures**

1. The siblings of already enrolled Amherst College families.
2. The children of Amherst College employees and the children of Woodside staff.
3. The siblings of already enrolled Woodside families.
4. New families

### **Declining of Childcare Slot**

Any family who declines an offered space for their child will be placed at the bottom of our wait list. If in the future you are interested in being considered for care, we will ask you to fill out an updated enrollment application.

### **Wait List**

Upon receiving your enrollment application all families will be placed on the waiting list if an immediate opening is not available. Families will be notified by mail or email when space becomes available. Woodside typically has a longer wait list in the infant & toddler programs as fewer spaces are available. We strongly recommend families apply for these classrooms as soon as they know they may need care.

### **Center Communication to Families**

Teachers in the infant and toddler classes record daily notes on the children. Preschool completes a weekly notebook. These notes are shared with families on an on-going basis. Parents are strongly encouraged to fill out the family portion of the child's daily note in the infant & toddler room.

The preschool curriculum is posted on the preschool bulletin board. A travel board is in the front hallway outside the toddler room. This board will provide you information on where your children will be playing during outside time. The preschool families are asked to fill out the second sign in sheet that will provide the teachers a quick baseline for your child.

### **Parking**

Parking is located on Woodside Ave only. The back-parking lot is for employees.

### **Door Access**

All families will be provided with an access card for the building. This card is activated between the hours of 8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. Monday- Friday.

Individuals that are not a regular person to drop off or pick up will be asked to ring the doorbell for assistance. We ask that families please remember not to hold the door for others. This helps us monitor who is coming in and out and allows the card access system to read each card. We understand that this might not feel welcoming, but it does ensure the safety of our community.

### **General Communication**

There are bulletin boards inside the front entrance to the center. Tuition, rates, calendars, and event postings can be found here. The Director can be reached at any time by calling the center or emailing office hours are between 9am and 3pm. The Director can help in setting up meeting times with the classroom teachers.

### **Parental Visits**

You are welcome to spend time in the classroom, visit for lunch or share a talent or activity with the children and come to observe. All families who wish to visit or join us on field trips can do so with a BRC report in place.

### **Health Information & Policy**

In compliance with the state regulations, each child is required to have a complete medical health form upon enrollment. A physician's certificate is required for all children, at admission noting that the child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the current Department of Public Health's guidelines. No child shall be required to have any such immunization if his or her parent's objects in writing on grounds that it conflicts with their religious or moral beliefs. Submission of documents by the child's physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant that immunization is not recommended for your child(ren).

However, please know that if there are outbreaks of infectious diseases for which a child has not been immunized, then the non-immunization child will need to be excluded from the program during the outbreak.

Due to concerns about the well-being of all children and employees at Woodside we strongly encourage you not to send your child to the Center if they are ill and not be able to fully participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Please refer to Health Care Policy section of this handbook for additional information.

You must notify the center if your child is ill and will not be in attendance for the day. Please feel free to leave a message at the Center by calling 413-253-2604 or sending an email to the office [woodside155office@yahoo.com](mailto:woodside155office@yahoo.com) or sending a message through Brightwheel.

## **Procedures for Emergency and Illness or Injury**

Always check the child's consent form for listed preference of emergency facility before transporting (although medical personnel may make the final decision based on the needs of the child).

Emergency Back-up Contacts:

Sue Dexter                    413-687-2911  
Jill Drozdowski            413-210-8108

### **Serious Illness**

1. The staff will immediately call campus police. They will dispense an EMT and will call 911 for an ambulance immediately.
2. Emergency first aid will be administered by a staff member, if necessary. (Note: All permanent staff are required to be first aid certified and recertified every 3 years. Staff are CPR certified annually as well)
3. The parent(s) will be called and asked to meet the child and teachers at the hospital. If unreachable, we may call the child's physician.
4. The director or teacher must accompany a child in an ambulance to Cooley Dickinson hospital.
5. The teacher will bring the child's authorization and consent form of the hospital.
6. If staff are unable to contact the parents, they will continue to attempt to do so.
7. The incident will be documented in writing, and a copy will be placed in the child's file.  
By state regulations, all incidents must be reported to ECC within 24 hours.

### **When a Child Becomes Sick**

Children occasionally get sick. When illness occurs, it is important for the child to stay home. We ask that parents be sensitive to this as our program is an active one and a sick child is likely to be uncomfortable. Please refer to Health Care Policy section of this handbook for additional information.

If, after arrival, in non-emergency situations, the child will be made comfortable, and the staff any child specific method of comfort or assistance. In the event a child must be sent home from the program due to suspected illness the parent will be called, and the child will be tended to by the teacher and/or Director until the child is picked up. Parents are expected to arrive within 1 hour after contact has been made. The child will be provided a comfortable area to rest until the parent or designated person arrives.

Children with mild illness will need to be able participate in all scheduled activities. If a child is unable to keep up or requires 1-on-1 attention, the child will be sent home. The classroom teacher will speak with the Director and/or designated individual to make this determination and contact the family. Families are expected to arrive to pick up child within 1 hour of contact.

### **Examples of Contagious and Infectious Diseases**

**Bronchitis or persistent cough** – Bronchitis can begin with hoarseness, cough, a slight elevation in temperature. The cough may be dry and painful. With bacterial bronchitis, child may return after 24 hours on antibiotics.

**Chicken pox** – Child may return one week after rash first appears or until all blisters are crusted over and dry.

**Conjunctivitis** - commonly referred to as “pinkeye.” The child may return to care when no more drainage or secretion occurs, after 24-hour course of antibiotics or with a note from your health care provider.

**Hand- foot-mouth** - Symptoms can include fever, diaper rash, rash on the hands, feet and trunk, sores in the mouth, runny nose, and sore throat. Children who have symptoms of HFM virus should stay home until they have been fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, and any sores from their rash have scabbed over.

**Diarrhea** – an increase in the number and formation of stools, as compared to what is normal for the child. Child may return when firm stool is present.

**Head Lice** –When lice or nits are found in child’s hair the child will be sent home. Child may return after treatment with special shampoo and removal of nits. (re-treatment required in 10 days)

**Impetigo of the skin** - Shows up as red pimples. When the blister breaks, the Surface is raw and weeping. The lesions occur in moist areas of the body such as creases of the neck, under nose, groin, under arm, face, hands or edge of diaper area. The children may return after 24 hours on antibiotics.

**Strep throat** - Child may return 24 hours after antibiotics are begun. A child awaiting the results of a strep culture may not return until results are received, or the child has been receiving antibiotics for 24 hours.

**Vomiting** – If there is more the normal, A child may return to the center 24 hours after the last vomiting episode.

### **Plan for Administering Medication, Including Prescription, Non-Prescription**

All full-time staff members will participate in the required medication treatment training and should review the medication requirements yearly. Parents are required to train all staff members in the proper use of their child's medication and/or to arrange (with the help of the Director) for the staff to be trained by a professional including the chart of required paperwork for each medication. Individual Health Care plans are required for chronic medical conditions and information can be found in 7.11(3) (see policy statement too). An Action Plan will be created for any individual with developmental delays and/or individual health care plan. Children with special dietary restrictions may be asked to provide their own snacks to meet their needs.

First aid kits are in the following areas:

- Infant Room - Cabinet under the changing area
- Toddler Classroom - Top of diapering cubbies
- Large Preschool Classroom - Top shelf of bathroom closet
- Small Preschool Classroom - Above sink in the bathroom

Each classroom also has a travel first aid kit for walks, playground & field trips. Classroom teachers are responsible for maintaining all first aid kits. Please note only staff members that are trained will be able to administer first aid treatment and fill out accident reports. All full-time staff members are trained.

### **Injury Prevention**

The classroom teachers will monitor the classroom and outdoor play areas for any hazards and document it in the safety checklist log and notify the Director and or person in charge.

The classroom teachers will maintain the central injury log and properly fill out all injury reports, including obtaining signatures from the parent & Director. They will then file it into the child's file located in the office and make a copy for the parents.

### **Disinfectant & Sanitizing**

All staff are required to become familiar with the guidelines and implement them daily. The Director or other designated individual will provide the guidelines to the cleaners of the center.

## **Diapering**

Woodside Children's Center follows the regulations relating to proper protocol for diapering and toileting. All employees of Woodside are required to become familiar and implement them on a daily basis. Diapering of young children happens throughout the day and is a nice one-on-one time for teachers to talk to children, to further develop relationships with care givers and further extend language with singing and narrating the diaper routine. Teachers check diapers frequently during the day to ensure the continued comfort and cleanliness of each child. Each diaper is changed in a sanitized, designated area. Each child is fully supervised by a teacher. Parents are asked to provide diapers. Teachers will remind families to replenish supplies but should check supplies regularly. All soiled items will be placed in a dry/wet bag provided by the family and sent home daily. All napping supplies will be sent home on a weekly basis unless an illness and or the items become soiled prior to the weekly cleaning.

## **Toilet Training**

Beginning to use the toilet can be both an exciting and challenging time for your child. The goal of the Center is to begin toilet training at the lead of the child and family. After the parents and teacher decide it is appropriate (which is not based on age, but on their developmental readiness) the child is introduced to the potty. Parents and teachers should be looking for signs from the child of toilet training readiness. Toilet training will include:

1. Introduce potty by getting support from peers.
2. Assist child on potty.
3. Sing a song or read a story.
4. Introducing self-help skills such wiping self, pulling pants.
5. Hand washing.

The Children, who are toilet trained, will be reminded throughout the day to use the toilet. Please provide at least two changes of clothes to be kept in your child's cubby.

## **Oral Care**

Teachers assist children in brushing their teeth when children are in care for more than four hours. Toothbrushes are labeled with the child's name. Brushes are rinsed and stored in an open container without touching other brushes. Teachers sanitize sinks upon completion of tooth brushing. Teachers wipe an infant's gums with a clean, damp cloth.

### **Bottle Warming**

Woodside Children's Center follows the guidelines for proper bottle warming technique. All employees will become familiar with the Bottle Warming safety and implement them through the day. Teachers do this only by holding the bottle under warm, running water or placing the bottle in a container of warm tap water for no longer than 5 minutes.

### **Sleep, Rest, Quiet Activity**

Woodside Children's Center follows the regulations and guidelines set by DEEC. All staff are required to become familiar and implement the Safe Sleep guidelines for Infants.

Families will be notified of SUID (Sudden Unexpected Infant Death) risk reduction practices and sleep positioning policies to reduce SUID risk, including sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS): Every infant twelve months of age or younger will be placed on his or her back for sleeping, unless the child's health care professional orders otherwise in writing. When a child's doctor determines the need for the child to be put to sleep on the child's stomach, that child's crib will be labeled stating that permission is granted. Infants younger than 6 months at the time of enrollment will be under direct visual supervision at all nap times. Teachers will position themselves to allow for crib monitoring. Sleep Sacks are only used when provided by the family. We do not use blankets in cribs. An infant's head must remain uncovered during sleep. When older infants (12+ months) are preparing for their transition to the toddler room, we help them by giving them the opportunity to sleep on a mat in the infant room.

### **Weather Watch Chart**

Woodside follows the guidelines in the Weather Watch Chart to determine the appropriateness of outdoor play. If outside time is not an option, indoor gross motor activity will take place.

<http://www.c-uphd.org/documents/wellness/weatherwatch.pdf>

### **Nutrition**

We make every effort to serve snack food that is high in nutritional value, low in sugar and low in sodium content. Mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack are served in each classroom. Parents provide lunch and special diet snacks for children. Woodside evaluates allergen foods on a as needed basis and will make adjustments/restrictions to foods items, as necessary. Unless notified by the Center all foods are welcomed at Woodside (ex, peanut butter, nuts, dairy, eggs, etc.)

Some guidelines to keep in mind when preparing your child's meals.

- Check with your child's teacher regarding any allergies.
- Provide small portions
- Provide age-appropriate food (avoid "choking" foods for younger children)
- Cut into pieces that your child can manage independently

- Send milk or juice in a prepackaged container
- Choose healthy food: yogurt, veggies, fruit, cheese, sandwiches, bread, pasta is some examples
- Please keep desserts to a minimum (no candy or gum)
- Lunch boxes with ice packs are appreciated! Please label all bags and lunch boxes. Lunches will be heated in the infant and toddler classes only.

Note: On special occasions such as birthdays, you may choose to provide a special snack. No candy, please. Remember to check with classroom teachers about food allergies. Teachers will have suggestions about special treats, how many children are in attendance and what the schedule of the day is. We appreciate donations of special snacks as well. The preschool teachers may request donations related to curriculum or special events.

### **Individual Health Care Plan**

Licensee must maintain as part of a child's record, an individual health care plan for each child with a chronic medical condition, which has been diagnosed by a licensed health care practitioner. The plan must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. Please see the attached individual health care plan.

During intake, parents will be asked to record any known allergies on the face sheet and asked to have the physician fill out a medical condition or food allergy action plan when appropriate. The face sheet will be updated at least annually. All allergies or other important medical information will be posted in each classroom with a "Confidential" cover sheet. Allergy and medical condition lists will be updated as necessary – when new children enroll or when unknown allergies or conditions become known. All staff members are made aware of this list. The names of children with allergies or medical conditions that may be life threatening (i.e., bee stings) will be posted in conspicuous locations with specific instructions if an occurrence were to happen. The Director will be responsible for making sure that staff receives appropriate training to handle emergency situations such as allergic reactions.

### **Plan for Evacuation of the Center in an Emergency**

The Center will practice evacuations on a regular basis. This will include fire drills, lock downs, soft lock downs and relocation drills. The Center on occasion will practice drills with the help of Amherst College and the Amherst Fire Department. The Director will maintain a log of all drills.

The classroom teachers will lead the children out of the building using approved exits. The classroom teachers will perform a thorough verbal and visual inspection within the classroom to verify that all students have evacuated.

A certified teacher will complete an attendance check again once at the meeting spot to verify that all children are accounted for.

The Director and or designated individual will double check the building to verify that it is clear, and all children and staff are accounted for.

LeFrak Gym, field house and/or the Observatory at Amherst College are areas that the Center may evacuate to in the event that Woodside and/or the area surrounding Woodside is deemed unsafe. All emergency exits are marked, and all staff must become familiar with emergency exits available from the classrooms they are working in communicate with co-teachers regarding the exit that they will be using. All classrooms have two exits one out the front and one out the back. All classrooms must take the appropriate first aid backpack, medication & attendance. See health plan regulation.

### **Lock Downs**

In the event of a Shelter in place, the director or designated person will ensure that all doors are locked, and the card access system is shut off. A designated person will be a greeter at the door as families arrive.

In the event of a full lockdown. The Director or designated person will notify the classrooms teachers and shut off the card access system and check all doors. The teachers will be responsible for pulling down all the shades, checking to ensure the windows are locked, shutting off lights, locking doors and bringing the children to the designated area. They will remain there until further notice from the director, designated authority and or the police department. The Director or Assistant Director will notify families that a lock down has occurred.

### **Procedure for Missing Child**

Families are asked to sign their children in and out every day, indicating the times, as well as who is doing drop off and pick-up. Teachers are then responsible to make sure that this has been completed if parents have not done so, or if child is known to be absent for the day. This must be done in a timely fashion. When it is believed that a child is missing, the classroom teacher will alert the other classroom teachers and the Director. The teacher that was first aware of this will then do a complete search through the classroom. Another teacher will stay with the other children and keep them engaged and calm while the search is going on. The Director will search the rest of the building and outside area. If after 5 minutes, the child has not been located, the Director will notify campus police and the parents/guardian of the child.

**Procedures for identifying and reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children & Families.**

All staff members will follow and be familiar with the procedures and policies as stated in the Center policy regarding institutional abuse and neglect. Staff will be trained to be alert to obvious, as well as more subtle signs of abuse and neglect. They include, but are not limited to frequent absenteeism, unexplained changes in aggressive or regressive behavior, poor self-image, untreated medical problems, unusual eating problems, consistent poor hygiene, inappropriate dress, unexplained bruises or other marks, and chronic lethargy. If a concern arises, all staff members are required to document on an incident report and report it to the Director. Staff members may file with DCF even if the Center does not. All documentation will be placed in the child's file and is confidential.

Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Amherst Health Department	413-259-3077
Health Care Consultant	1-508-560-8199 Emily Jones MD 95 College St Amherst, Ma 01002
Amherst College Police	413- 542-2111 or 413-542-2291
Amherst Fire Department	911
Amherst Police	911
Poison Control	800-222-1222
Baystate Medical Center	413-794-000
Cooley Dickson Hospital	413-582-2000
Holyoke Medical Center	413-534-2500
Mercy Hospital	413-886-0410

## **TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM**

Technology plays a very small part in our classrooms. It is used at times by our teachers to enhance occasional activities. An example of this use would be allowing the children to view a yoga, dance or stretching video, when they have been inside for a period of days, due to inclement weather. This allows the children to have an inside structured time in which they can use and build their large motor skills in a fun and safe way. Another example of technology use in the classroom, would be having a special treat for the children right before our winter break. The teachers plan a pizza and pajama party and select a short movie for the children to watch if they choose. There are always other activities going on for the children as an alternate to viewing the video. After a vote by the children, a permission slip is sent home to families sharing which movie has been chosen. Parents are asked to sign and return this slip. A final example of technology use would be as a learning tool. If the children have a question, and the teachers do not have an answer, they might look it up as they have discussions around the topic. What you will not find in our classrooms, are the children on devices. We believe that our children learn best when interacting with their classmates and teachers.