

Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center



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HANDBOOK

Introduction

We would like to welcome you to the Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center. We believe the early childhood years are the most formative. Therefore, we have provided an environment of love, care, and educational development during these years.

To better acquaint you with our school's basic philosophy, program and policies, we have provided this handbook for your reference. We look forward to a warm relationship with you and your child and feel that the more you know about the school the warmer this relationship can be. We hope this handbook answers any questions you may have.

History

Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center was founded in 1960 by Mrs. Meta Grill, the Executive Director. Mrs. Grill received her training in early childhood education in Frankfurt, Germany, where she studied the Froebel approach to childcare and education. It was Froebel who founded the first "kindergarten" and whose methods were widely accepted and adapted throughout Europe and the United States. Mrs. Grill opened one of Harrisburg's first Day Care Centers in her home where she soon became a leading and respected authority in the field of childcare and education. As the "Meta Grill Day Care Center" rapidly grew and expanded, it became necessary to add a Kindergarten curriculum to the existing program. In 1972, this property located at 2206 Walnut Street was purchased and also grew from offering nursery school and kindergarten into a program including a full elementary school program up to the fifth grade. Along with the expansion of the program came the new title "Hansel & Gretel School". As our program grew so did our exposure to new and progressive methods. The Montessori method, which promotes independence and the development of each child as an individual, related well to our own philosophy. Therefore, we added this method to our existing program to give each child attending our school the benefit of the leading learning techniques of our times. In more recent years, we have included computers in our educational program to give the children additional exposure to current trends.

Mission Statement

It is our goal to provide the greater Harrisburg area with a program of child care development for ages 6 weeks through 12 which far exceeds average standards. We seek to provide a safe, nurturing, clean environment which will encourage the physical, social, and emotional development of each child as an individual. We seek to maintain and enhance the Level 3 Keystone Star Certification that has been awarded to our center as an affirmation of the quality

programming we offer. A developmentally appropriate program which offers a variety of safe and fun –filled activities will be provided by a nurturing, knowledgeable and qualified staff!

Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

At Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center, equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Curriculum

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) developed a specialized teaching method. Dr. Montessori was one of the first professionals to realize that a child's nature craves for knowledge. She came to this conclusion through her constant observation of children in school. She observed that a child learns through a process of absorbing the many things he is exposed to in his environment. Our job as teaching professionals is to provide the child with worthwhile concepts to absorb in his early life.

Dr. Montessori spent her entire life designing learning apparatus that is best adapted to "the absorbent mind" of a young child. She discovered that a child would work long and hard at an activity if he finds it pleasurable. The materials she designed are child-oriented, following the logical progression from simple to more complex concepts. The Montessori materials are divided into four basic instructional areas: practical life, sensorial development, language, and mathematics.

As a child goes through the progression, the materials are designed to test his understanding, and in most cases, is self-corrective.

With this approach, the child knows immediately if the work he has done is correct. If he makes a mistake, he is able to work out the solution without depending on an adult. This progression of the materials takes the child step by step toward comprehending abstract ideas. To a three and a half year-old the letter "a" has no meaning. However, in a Montessori school, the child will run his fingers along a sandpaper letter "a" see the symbol "a" and say the sound it makes. This gives that symbol "a" meaning to a young child's mind. Montessori observed that the same problem occurred when teaching shapes to a child. The shape of a "triangle" is hard to describe to a child. However, if that child feels the shape, traces the shape and then sees the word "triangle" with the shape, he can understand what this abstract word "triangle" means.

The basic philosophy of the Montessori Method is that each child is an individual who possesses within himself the potential of the man he will become. In order to develop his intellectual, physical, and spiritual power to the fullest, the child must have freedom – a freedom achieved through order and discipline. Each child is provided freedom to work on self-chosen tasks in an attractive environment specifically designed and equipped to meet his needs. Dr. Maria Montessori developed the “prepared environment” that possesses a certain order and encourages the child to develop at his own individual rate in a noncompetitive environment. In a Montessori classroom, learning is encouraged, not forced. The children are loved and not dictated to. This attitude relieves the child of competition and tension and allows him to be free to expand his own intelligence.

Within this prepared environment, a child can develop his senses and skills by using the specialized Montessori materials that isolate a particular skill. As the child reaches a certain period of development, his teacher encourages his interest. As the child progresses, his interest in learning increases. He will then, naturally, be interested in using the advanced materials of reading, writing, mathematics, geography, and science. Dr. Montessori concluded that a child’s satisfaction encourages him to seek new sensations and discoveries. Our program is based upon an active involvement with the materials in the environment. Our classrooms are reviewed and materials are updated frequently to meet the ever-growing needs of our children. We have aligned our curriculum and the children’s activities on the PA Early Learning Standards (or the PA Kindergarten Standards for our kindergarten classroom.) A copy of these standards may be found in any of our classrooms. References to these standards are made on each teacher’s lesson plan. Our curriculum will implement activities that are appropriate to meet IEP/IFSP goals and/or special needs plans and objectives IF these goals are shared with us and a copy of said goals are in your child’s file at the center.

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Location

Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center currently has two locations.

- Londonderry is located at *4820 Londonderry Road*, which runs parallel to Union Deposit Road and is easily accessible from Interstate 83, Union Deposit exit or Route 22.
- Walnut Street is located at *2206 Walnut Street*, approximately 1 mile West of Penbrook Square; one of Harrisburg’s main arteries to the Capitol Complex. Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center is located approximately 1 mile West of Penbrook Square on Walnut Street; one of Harrisburg’s main arteries to the Capitol Complex.

Licensed

Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center is licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Education/state Board of Private Academic Schools as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. The school and its staff are subject to inspection by these licensing agencies at any time during the year. Some of the staff have received their Bachelor's degree and are certified teachers. Other staff members are group supervisors, assistant group supervisors, child development associates or classroom aides meeting the requirements of the Department of Public Welfare.

General Information

Daily hours of operation

- Londonderry: 6:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
 - All classes begin promptly at 9:00 a.m.
 - Kindergarten and Preschool is officially over at 4:30 p.m.
- Walnut Street: 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
 - All classes begin promptly at 9:00 a.m.
 - School is officially over at 3:45 p.m.

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All classes begin promptly at 9:00 a.m.

Kindergarten and Preschool is officially over at 4:30 p.m.

Tuition

A rate sheet is found on the back page of this Parent Handbook.

Tuition rates and payment ~ Tuition payment is the responsibility of the parent(s).

- Tuition is due each **Monday** for that service week or the next school day following a holiday or closing. Tuition may be paid by cash, check, credit/debit card, or money order. Any checks returned due to insufficient funds will be returned to the check writer's bank through ReSubmit. The check writer will be responsible for all fees resulting from this. Additionally, after two returned checks, no future checks will be accepted from that account.
- The tuition fee is nonrefundable or deductible in the event of illness, vacation, holiday, or emergency closing. The service week runs from Monday through Friday, inclusive.
- Any tuition received after the close of school on Wednesday is considered late and is subject to a \$5.00 late fee. Tuition is subject to change. Non-payment of tuition is ground for immediate dismissal from the program.

Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at Hansel & Gretel.

Tuition discounts ~ There is a weekly discount in tuition for each additional child from the same family if each child is enrolled on a full-time basis. Discounts only apply when tuition payments are made on time. The full tuition rate, plus additional late fees will be charged when tuition payments are late as per the late tuition policy stated above.

Vacation discounts ~ Hansel & Gretel offers a half-off discount for two vacation periods lasting one week, if the center is given a two week notice in writing for all families enrolled in the program year-round.

Tuition assistance ~ Assistance with tuition payments may be available to parents based on certain eligibility requirements through the Child Care Network Agency. Additional information on this program may be obtained by calling Child Care Network at (717) 233-8454.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of our center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. They are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, conditions or behavior prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Hansel & Gretel take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of children.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Leaving a child unattended for any amounts of time

- Sending a sick child to school overly medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require a child to be kept home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

Parent Code of Conduct

Respectful Behavior - All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Cell Phone Usage - The time you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with one another about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child, other children and adults who may wish to communicate with you, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at anytime while visiting the center.

Swearing/Cursing – No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the administration or staff.

Threatening of Employees, Children, Other Parents, or Adults Associated with Hansel & Gretel – Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, Hansel & Gretel cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the center will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children At Hansel & Gretel – Since Hansel & Gretel does not support nor condone corporal punishment of children; such acts are not permitted in our child care facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about a behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director.

Firearms and Weapons - At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of Firearm, Ammunitions, and/or Weapon on school property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate discharge from the center.

Smoking – For the health of all Hansel & Gretel employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on school property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the school grounds, and in the parking lot of Hansel & Gretel. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette PRIOR to entering the parking lot.

Parents' Right to Immediate Access

Parents of a child in our center are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are at Hansel & Gretel, as provided by law. In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (ex: Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), Hansel & Gretel must be provided with a copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, we suggest that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Hansel & Gretel staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise. If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, our center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of Hansel & Gretel cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. Hansel & Gretel will report any violations of these orders to the court.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director, and are allowed in the child care center only at the discretion of the Director. An employee of Hansel & Gretel will accompany visitors at all times, throughout the center.

Hansel & Gretel may dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering center property. Due to the parents' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, we cannot have a child at our center when

the child's parent is prohibited access. Hansel & Gretel will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

Holidays and Closings

The school observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Thanksgiving Day & the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas break: the week between Christmas and New Year's.

Additionally, the school will close for one to two days in late August and/or March for staff in-service training. Please refer to your school calendar for additional training dates and conferences that our staff may attend.

Inclimate weather ~ If weather or other emergencies force us to delay the opening of our center, or close the school these announcements will be broadcast on WHP 580 AM, WKBO 1230 AM, WCMB 1460 AM, River 97.3 FM, KOOL 99.3 FM, and BOB 94.9 FM radio stations as well as WGAL – 8, WHP – 21, and WHTM - 27 television stations. Hansel & Gretel is listed separately, as we do not follow the schedule of any other school. Please note our expenses do continue whether or not your child attends school. A reduction in tuition is not possible. You may also check our Facebook page for any updates (www.facebook.com/HanselandGretelELC).

Arrival and Departure

Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening of their center. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in. We close at 5:30 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time. All families will be given a code to use for entry into our center. This code may be shared with family and friends who may be dropping off or picking up your child. The code is used for security purposes – *please do not hold the door open for someone you do not know!*

Each child must be properly signed in and out upon arrival and dismissal to and from school; using the sign-in sheet that is located by the office. Please notify the staff member in the classroom of any special instructions or needs for

the child's day. The parent should present the special instructions in the form of a letter and verbally discuss them with the teacher. The special instructions include but are not limited to: Early Pick Up, Alternative Pick Up Person, health issues over the night which need to be observed, and/or any general issues of concern which the child care providers should be aware of to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day.

At dismissal, parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet located at the office. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on center property. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms, and/or playgrounds. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child and are required to directly exit the building once they have signed their child out of care. As the child is signed out, each child will be paged to the office.

If someone other than the usual parent or guardian is to pick up the child, the office must be given prior notice either in writing or by telephone. The designated person must provide photo ID at the time of dismissal. Our staff will call you back to verify that you placed a call concerning this change in dismissal. When bringing or picking up your child, please park your car in a parking space. The size of our lot does not allow for "front door delivery". Please follow the painted arrows for direction in the lot. It is important that you share this information with family and friends who may be using our center's lot.

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, however, at 7:00, if we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

Children who are picked up after our designated closing time (5:30 p.m.) are charged a late fee of \$1.00 for minute staff members must remain after the center is closed. Repeated late pick-ups will result in service termination.

Hansel & Gretel reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff:Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations
- The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations
- Staff deems the child too ill to attend

- Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at Hansel & Gretel if the child were to be present at the center
- Parents' failure to maintain accurate, up-to-date records
- Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
- Parents failure to pay tuition

Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the center.

Absence or Tardiness

It is not necessary to call the school if your child will be absent. However, if your child will be late, we would like to be notified. A child arriving after 9:00 a.m. will be marked tardy for the day. If a child does not arrive by 10:00 a. m. we will assume that he is absent. Our final lunch count is taken at this time, therefore, any child not heard from by 10:00 a.m. cannot be guaranteed lunch. Children may not arrive between 11:30 and 2:30.

If a child is absent from school for three or more consecutive days, a doctor's statement will be required for reentry to school.

Dress Code

Children are engaged in various activities throughout the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Children are also involved in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable, washable clothing. Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. Please do not wear these on your children. Children are not permitted to wear open-toed, and/or open-backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities is rubber-soled sneakers.

Parents are prohibited from dressing children in overalls, or clothing with difficult closures. These types of clothing present particular challenges for children in relation to toileting.

Coats, hats, gloves, scarves and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. It is not necessary for the children to wear their winter boots to school. Teachers will change the children into their winter boots when they go outside.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports your child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

Personal Belongings

In addition to the items mentioned below, children should bring a book bag each Friday to bring home art projects and newsletters. The school supplies all napping equipment so you do not need to bring these items from home.

What to Bring

- **Infants:** enough clean bottles for a day's use, at least 6 diapers per day, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day.
- **Toddlers:** enough clean bottles for a day's use (if applicable), six diapers and at least two changes of clothes per day.
- **Older Toddlers:** at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program.
- **Preschoolers:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.
- **Kindergarteners:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.
- **After School Care Children:** books for homework.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Cubbies: Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a “cubby.” Cubbies are labeled with your child’s name. Please check your child’s cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Lost & Found: You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located in the main hallway. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

Toys from Home: We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity. Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are NOT permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. All toys brought in for use as part of the curriculum will be inspected by the staff for safety and appropriateness, and may be prohibited at the sole discretion of the staff. Parents are responsible for enforcing this *Toys from Home* policy with their child. If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy.

Meals and Snacks

Breakfast is served between 8:30 and 8:45 each morning. Children enrolled in our School-age Child Care are also offered breakfast before their bus arrives each day.

Hansel & Gretel also serves a nutritious lunch that is prepared on site. Nutrition is emphasized as well as good table manners. Children are encouraged not to waste food. However, we do not follow a “forced feeding” policy. If your child has a food allergy or restrictions due to family preference, please indicate this on the enrollment forms. Care will be taken to make sure your child is not exposed to those foods. Meals from outside restaurants are not permitted for children of any age.

The school also provides a mid-afternoon snack each day. Children may not bring breakfast, lunch or snack from home unless they are bringing something for their entire classroom and this has been cleared with the school office. All food items brought into the center must be store-bought and be in its original, unopened container.

Children should not be brought into the center with food in their mouths or unfinished food items in their hands unless a parent is able to sit with the child at the table while they finish the food item. After this, face and hands should be washed and then the child should be presented to the awaiting staff member for morning care.

Birthday treats may be brought in, if you wish to do so. Please check with your child’s teacher to verify the time and date you wish to provide snack.

Our center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program under the auspices of the PA Department of Education.

Health, Illness and Injury

Health

Upon entry, children are required to have a physical examination. A detailed medical form completed by the child's doctor must be kept on file at the school and must be updated annually. Additionally, dental examinations are required before entry into kindergarten. Children must be up to date on their well child check-ups and immunizations following the immunization schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Daily Health Check

We conduct a health check, as soon as possible, when each child enters the center each day. We look for skin rashes, elevated temperatures, itchy scalps, lethargy and changes from usual behavior. These are quick checks to protect the well being of all children in the program. Please understand these are not physicals and do not substitute for proper routine pediatric care.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.

Illnesses and conditions that indicate exclusion from the center and require a doctor's excuse for re-admittance to the center are:

- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Tonsillitis, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Ringworm, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.

- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Head Lice

- Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to the center until they have been treated and no further head lice or nits are detected during a health check.

When your child is ill and you are phoned to pick up your child, you have approximately one hour to make arrangements for your child. If a child is not picked up when ill, the following procedure will be put into place:

1. Center staff will notify the parent of a child's illness and need to remove the child within one hour.
2. If a parent makes no attempt to pick up the child within the hour, the emergency contact person will be called.
3. If the emergency contact person is not available the parent will be called back to remove the child.
4. If the previous steps have failed your child may be expelled from the center at the discretion of the director.

Injury

If your child has been injured at home, please review the incident with us and inform us of any precautions we need to follow or restrictions your child might have. If they have been seen by a medical professional, we should have this information in writing.

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. If your child is injured during their day with us, first aid will be administered by our certified staff. An accident report will be completed and a copy of it sent home that evening. At times, a phone call to the parent may be made notifying them of

the nature of the injury. If the injury requires medical care, we will seek this from Harrisburg Hospital or your child's health care provider if you are not able to assist in seeking this medical attention.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once. When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter to learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

Center staff cannot administer medication to children nor can a child take medication himself. However, an adult that you designate may come to the center to administer medication to your child, as prescribed.

- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the parent or physician, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered.

Emergency Care and Evacuation

The center staff is permitted to treat only minor accidents and only with parent permission. It is mandatory that all enrolling parents give permission for their child to receive Emergency Care as well as First Aid while they are attending our center. This will be signed for by the enrolling parent on the child's Emergency Contact sheet. Each parent must provide home and work numbers, name and phone number of emergency contacts and must give permission to obtain emergency medical treatment from the nearest appropriate source when necessary for the well-being of the child. Parents will be contacted as soon as practical in such instances.

There is an established procedure for evacuation during emergencies, which is tested in accordance with state law, at least every 60 days. If an emergency situation does occur and we cannot return to the building, parents will be notified immediately.

Evaluation and Conferences

The evaluation component will include progress reports and on going communication between parents and center staff. Conferences will be held throughout the year to discuss your child's progress. These conferences will be held at the school at a time that is suitable for you and your child's teacher. Please check with your center's school calendar for when these will be held and when to sign-up.

Discipline

Hansel & Gretel school utilizes the 1,2,3 Magic approach to discipline as well as positive reinforcement and redirection. With the 1,2,3 Magic approach, a child is "counted" for inappropriate behavior. If the behavior continues and a child reaches a three they are timed out for the number of minutes they are old. For the safety of all the children, a child that hits, hurts, threatens or endangers the safety of others is automatically placed on time out.

Parents may be contacted if negative behaviors continue after our regular strategies have been utilized. At that time the staff and the parent will discuss additional strategies. If these measures are not effective in eliminating negative behavior, the director may request that a child receive an outside evaluation or, in some cases, the child will be expelled from the center.

School age children may receive detention points for inappropriate behavior. If a child receives 3 points he will have a 45 minute after school detention scheduled by the office.

Children may be suspended from school for misbehavior.

Dismissal From the Center

Hansel & Gretel reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice.

Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of the dismissal. A center check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any past due balances must be paid within two weeks of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the two week period will be referred to the center's legal counsel for collection.

A designee from the center will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal. Parents are required to leave the center property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately. Hansel & Gretel will

request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal. Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens in any manner or causes harm to anyone affiliated with our center by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law by Hansel & Gretel.

Visitation & Parent Participation

We have an Open Door Policy! Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school at any time. We love parent volunteers and parent observers! The more opportunities you have to interact with your child's education, the more solid their educational foundation becomes. Yes, even at this age!

We will have special activities planned periodically for parent involvement; however, please feel free to come in at a time that is conducive to your schedule. If you plan on staying for lunch, please phone ahead so that we can add you to the day's lunch count. There is no cost for lunch.

Parent participation in our program is crucial. There is an expectation that parents will attend classroom and center-wide parent meetings and support center-wide fundraising events.

Communication

Bulletin Boards... All classes will post a copy of their weekly lesson plan on the appropriate boards in the hallway. Newsletters will also be sent home in your child's backpack. Please be sure to check the boards and your child's bag.

Email... We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates. In addition, all classes will post a copy of their weekly lesson plan.

Facebook... If you have a Facebook account, we also encourage you to "like" our page. We will frequently update this page with current and up-to-date information on the goings on of each center.

Paperwork

By state regulations we are required to have paperwork completed prior to registration and updated regularly following a child's enrollment. Emergency Contact Forms and Parent Agreement Forms must be updated every six months. Child and Adult Care Food Program forms must be updated annually. Health appraisals are required to be updated – the frequency will depend upon the age of the child. Failure to comply with updating regulations will result in service termination.

Daily Schedules

Each age group follows daily schedules which are designed with the needs of that age group in mind. All schedules allow for a substantial portion of the day to be focused on child discovery and exploration. Please refer to your center's calendar and bulletin boards for updates. A detailed daily schedule will be handed to you with your registration.

Field Trips

Kindergarten children occasionally take field trips throughout the year. All parents will be given prior notice of all trips. Any time a trip is scheduled there will be center staff accompanying the children. Parents may volunteer to be additional chaperones. Chaperones will be assigned certain children to be responsible for during the trip. However, a parent may only transport their children. All other children will be transported by the center.

Enrollment

There is an initial \$75.00 (non-refundable) registration fee per child or \$100.00 per family. This fee is due along with all required paperwork – at least 24 hours prior to the child's start in our program. A copy of our current rate sheet can be found on the last page of this Parent Handbook.

At the time of enrollment, we will inquire as to whether you desire information concerning public, social, and community services in our area. We will also set up a date for a "Getting to Know You" meeting. Of course, we would like for your child to have a pre-start visit with our program, too.

Transitions and Transfers

As children are ready to move to another classroom, we will notify you of our wish to do so and discuss your child's developmental progress in relationship to this move. You will be given the opportunity to come in and meet with us concerning this transition as well as the chance to visit the new classroom. We want to make the transition into the next group as smooth as possible for you and your child!

If your child is moving from our program into public or private school, we would like to help with this transition, too. Please call to discuss this so that we may learn how we can help in this process. As this transition is ready to occur, we have a form for you to complete which allows us to transfer your child's file to their new educational setting.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment. The handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are completed.

Thank you for your cooperation, and we look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center Family Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the office staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management any questions I may have regarding any policy, procedure or information contained in the **Hansel & Gretel Early Learning Center Family Handbook**.

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date