



Greenway Early Learning Center

# Family Handbook

Updated: December 2024

*Thank you for choosing Greenway Early Learning Center. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.*

Warm Regards,

Sara Wachter

Director

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## Greenway Early Learning Center, LLC

**Address:** 3119 Seiples Station Road Whitehall, PA 18052

**Website:** [www.greenwayelc.com](http://www.greenwayelc.com)

**Phone Number:** 610-799-3635

**Hours of Operation:** Monday through Friday - 7:30AM-5:00PM

## Our Mission

We believe that children learn through play, hands-on experiences, and benefit tremendously from time in the great outdoors. Our mission is to provide children with a balance between free play and enrichment activities to encourage independence and the joy in joining together as a group. The philosophy behind our curriculum is to cultivate a sense of community, responsibility, and creativity!

Greenway Early Learning Center, LLC is fully licensed and certified with the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)/ PA Department of Human Services. Our center can provide care for up to 32 children complying with Pennsylvania state teacher-student ratios.

**Definition of Family:** *In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.*

## School Closures for Holidays

We are closed for certain holidays. All closures and events are included on the **Annual School Year Calendar**. Please see Director for the current year's calendar.

We are closed the last 2 days of August for Teacher Inservice, Labor Day, Indigenous People's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday, the week between Christmas and New Years, President's Day (Teacher Inservice), Good Friday and Easter Monday, Memorial Day, July 3rd and 4th. There will be an early dismissal on Graduation Day, which varies year to year.

## Admission & Enrollment

**Documents Required for Admission:** Enrollment is based upon completion of enrollment packet, and signed billing contract. Immunization and health records must be completed on/before start date. The following items must be received, reviewed, and filed by the Owner/Director before a child is enrolled for child care:

- \$50 Registration Fee (*Non-Refundable*)
- Sign up for Brightwheel and Brightwheel Billing
- [Child Health Assessment](#) signed by a Physician & Immunization Records
- [Emergency Contact Form](#)
- Custody Orders, if applicable
- Program Policy Agreement/Contract Signed (Director will issue this packet during tour)
- [Infant Feeding Form](#) (*If Applicable*)
- [Medication Log](#) (*If Applicable*)
- [Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan](#)

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from **3 months to 5 years of age**.

Our process for introducing children to our program is to schedule a tour of our facility and review our policies and curriculum. Depending on availability of space, an enrollment is offered, and a start date will be scheduled.

## Inclusion/IEP

Greenway 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 his/her individual capabilities and needs.

**Individualized Education Program:** A copy of your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or written behavioral plan is required in order to assist your child appropriately. The child's family will authorize this permission with a signature on the IEP Request Form. We consider the individual needs of all children, and will integrate individual accommodations or strategies that therapists, special educators, and other professionals see fit. We will permit an adult individual who provides specialized services in the facility for the child in need, with appropriate documentation. In the event of an IEP meeting, the child's teacher along with the Director, will be present.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Greenway Early Learning Center offers enrollment for children ages 3 months to 5 years of age. Enrollment shall be granted without regards to race, ethnicity, gender, creed, nationality, religion, national origin, or disability; and without regard to a parent/guardian's race, ethnicity, gender, creed, nationality, religion, national origin, or disability.

## Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

## Staff Qualifications & Supervision

### Staff Qualifications

Staff are trained in mandated child abuse, health & safety, fire safety, and first aid/CPR. Staff must also have cleared criminal history, FBI fingerprints, and child abuse history clearances. Greenway Early Learning Center offers employee opportunities for applicants with disabilities and reasonable accommodations shall be made to meet the limitations of qualified applicants or employees. Personnel Policies, procedures and practices are designed to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex. Our staff are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum.

Staff participate in orientation and annual training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism. Staff sign a non-compete clause, and are therefore not permitted to provide babysitting services to enrolled families.

### Supervision

Children on the facility premises and on facility excursions off the premises shall be supervised by a staff person at all times. Outdoor play space used by the facility is considered part of the facility premises. The requirement of supervision includes compliance with childcare ratios. Each staff person shall be assigned the responsibility for supervision of specific children. The staff person shall know the names and whereabouts of the children in his assigned group. The staff person shall be physically present with the children in his group on the facility premises and on facility excursions off the facility premises.

## Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All staff receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness. We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

- Infants 0-12 months: 1 staff to 4 children
- Young Toddler 1-2 years: 1 staff to 5 children
- Older Toddler 2-3 years: 1 staff to 6 children
- Preschool 3-5 years: 1 staff to 10 children
- Young School-age K-4th grade: 1 staff to 12 children

## Communication & Family Partnership

**Daily Communications will be sent through Brightwheel.** Our program is designed to keep you knowledgeable about your child's milestones, day to day activities, and school events. Families are encouraged to read Brightwheel Daily Activity logs, messages, and calendars that we send home. Families can also communicate via Brightwheel and telephone calls. Families are welcome to participate in classroom activities, school events, and fundraising. We encourage you to make things for the program and contribute to the curriculum in any way you see fit. Teachers will be sure to communicate with their classroom families when any volunteer opportunities are available, or any needful items for the classroom. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions, and/or open investigations to any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom. Families with court orders detailing custodial agreements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody. Please see our Annual Calendar of Events for family events such as Holi, the Lantern Walk, Halloween, and Graduation.

**Calendars** will be sent monthly which will include upcoming events, closures, and other announcements. A school year calendar will be sent in late spring to alert you to any events or closures for the upcoming school year.

**Family Visits.** Family participation is encouraged. See Director for visit procedures.

**Conferences.** Parent-Teacher Conferences will be offered in Fall and Spring to discuss developmental milestones. Parents will be notified via Brightwheel. Conferences take around 30 minutes and will be offered either in-person, via video conference, or by telephone. Parents and teachers may also request a conference at any time over the course of the year.

## Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times. Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

## Publicity

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website. Written permission will be obtained, on the contract, prior to use of photographs.

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

## Curricula & Learning

### *Learning Environment*

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

### *Curricula & Assessment*

In all of our programs we implement **Experience Early Learning Curriculum**, along with Greenway's **Emergent Curriculum**. This curriculum is designed and created around the interests of the children and is also aligned with the [Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood](#). The Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood were created by the PA Department of Education and also in collaboration with PA Department of Human Services. The PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood are designed to start in infancy, and grow with the child into the toddler curriculum. The toddler standards are designed to prepare them for preschool, as the preschool standards are designed to prepare them for Kindergarten. This will help to ensure your child is given the proper early foundation for learning to succeed into their elementary school years. Our

emergent curriculum follows monthly standards, however based off the interests of the children and seasons, themes can be adjusted within the Experience Early Learning framework. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources. For information about your child's day, please see all correspondence sent from your child's teacher through Brightwheel.

### **Infants (0-12 months)**

Greenway accepts infants who are at least 12 weeks of age. Our Infant Room allows each child the opportunity to explore, to satisfy his/her natural curiosity, and to develop their social graces. Children are given daily exposure to stimuli such as language activities, fine motor, gross motor, cognitive activities, dramatic play and learning through play.

### **Toddlers (13-25 months)**

This classroom focuses on a young toddler's need for independence and safe exploration! With plenty of floor time and outdoor play, toddlers learn valuable self care and life skills, while interacting with other young toddlers. Our toddler classrooms contain "storefront displays" on our shelves, along with wooden toys which add to the natural environment.

### **Preschool (3-4 years)**

The classroom is arranged into activity centers to challenge the children, spark their enthusiasm, and continue their learning process. Areas covered are social-emotional, intellectual, physical development, as well as language, music, art, crafts, cognitive activities, and outdoor play.

### **Pre-K (4-5 years)**

Our Pre-K classroom is designed to get children ready for Kindergarten while sparking creativity and a continued love of learning! Our open atelier allows children to have full access to a wide variety of art media. There is always an availability of books in every learning center including our outdoor environment. STEM: Children have an evolving discovery table, as well as measuring, weighing, estimating, and balancing with the materials. Our construction zone allows children to explore engineering and physics concepts. Daily meditation allows children time to relax and check in with our feelings as we re-center ourselves. Whole-group activities focus on teamwork and community-building.

## **Developmental Screening**

Greenway Early Learning Center uses the [CDC's Developmental Milestones checklist](#), along with the Experience Early Learning Observation Based Assessment. Staff will complete the CDC Developmental Milestones checklist within 45 days. To coincide with curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatment. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving parents/guardians and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider and health, education, and early intervention consultants. Developmental screening is conducted with written consent from the child's parent/guardian(s) and completed twice per year.

## **Outside Time**

Outside is part of each classroom's daily schedule. In the winter months we will go out to our play yard as long as the temperature is a real feel of 25°F or above and in the summer months we will also go outside daily as long as the real feel temperature is below 90°F. With this in mind if the weather permits for outside time each child must go outside with their class as we will not leave children inside, so please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. We do sprinkler days in the Summer, so on sprinkler days please bring your child dressed in their swimsuit under their clothing. Wet clothing must be taken home after every splash day to be washed. You must also provide sunscreen for your child. If you wish for us to apply sunscreen parents must apply some before coming to school as we will only apply sunscreen for afternoon outside time. Please remember when dressing your child for the day that children will get dirty playing outside. We encourage families to send children in comfortable play clothes that can get dirty. Also, "muddy buddies" and mud boots are preferred! Please ask your child's teacher for more details on what gear to purchase.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of daily schedules and lesson plans posted in each classroom.

## Walking Trips

Weather permitting; we conduct minutes of supervised outdoor play and/or walking trips around the neighborhood times a day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

## Transitions

Your child's transition into child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

### Transition from home to center

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns

### Transitions/Continuity of Care

Our school year runs from the last week of August until the last week of August the following year. Classroom placement is based on chronological ages of children enrolled. We typically transition children in August. Children are transitioned to the next classroom based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. Your child's teacher will assist you in gradually transitioning in the most positive way we can. When children transition, families will be provided with their child's end of your progress journal, the new teacher bio and other pertinent information within the new classroom.

### Transition to elementary school

Transition activities include Kindergarten readiness lesson plans and a formal graduation ceremony. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

## Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a teacher directed activity, used to meet a developmental goal, and limited to no more than 30 minutes per week per child.

## Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

## Dual Language Development Policy

Greenway Early Learning Center supports the scientific consensus that bilingualism is a strength and an asset. "For young children, the language of the home is the language they have used since birth, the language they use to make and establish meaningful communicative relationships, and the language they use to begin to construct their knowledge and test their learning...Each child's way of learning a new language should be viewed as acceptable, logical, and part of the ongoing development and learning of any new language." --NAEYC Position Statement on Linguistic and Cultural Diversity, 1995

At Greenway, our teachers will work to create a welcoming environment for families and children of all cultures and who speak different languages. All enrollment forms and correspondence can be translated as requested using Google translate.

Families will complete a Family Questionnaire so our teachers can learn more about the family background, culture, and home language. Teachers will add materials such as books and toys that show different languages and cultures. We will seek help from families to help us to label materials in the home language, and provide at least 10 statements in the home language that teachers can use to help connect better. We will also make a picture communication board such as "eat, drink, bathroom, hug" etc., to help guide these connections as well. Greenway will continue to advance our equity practices by working with families, organizations and other educators, in order to provide positive and welcoming learning experiences for all children.

## Celebrations

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community. Our classroom materials and lesson plans reflect these beliefs. **Please see our Annual Calendar of Events for family events such as Holi, the Lantern Walk, Halloween, and Graduation.**

## Birthday Events

If you choose to send in treats for your child's birthday, you must check with your child's teacher/director on classroom allergies. If you choose to bring in a store bought item it must have the list of ingredients; homemade treats must be approved by the Director/Owner.

## Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants frequently. After lunch, all children less than 4 years of age, participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities. Families will send in a nap mat, which will be sent home weekly to be laundered.

## 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 the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. 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.

## Guidance (*General Procedure*)

Greenway Early Learning Center is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

## Behavior Management Procedures

Our Goals Are To Help the Children Learn To:

- Show respect, kindness, consideration and courtesy toward others.
- Develop a strong self-esteem, confidence and independence.
- Take care of the material provided to them.
- Understand what socially acceptable behavior is, and what is not.
- Helping the children learn appropriate behavior is a partnership process between the child's home environment and school. **EXAMPLE IS THE BEST TEACHER.** A child will tend to emulate what he/she sees demonstrated around him/her.

Greenway Early Learning Center has a no yelling policy, and prohibits corporal punishment of any kind, verbal abuse, or humiliation. Our staff is trained to problem solve, redirect, and set clear limits when a behavior problem occurs. We encourage positive reinforcement, redirected activities, and moving the child to a quiet place in the room to calm down. If behavior problems occur such as harming others/property, or disruptive manners, parents will be notified and encouraged to discuss an action plan to help the child behave in a more positive manner. If the problem occurs a second time, parents will be required to sign a written warning. The written warning will state that if the problem continues for a third offense, harms safety of staff and other children, child care will be suspended until a proper action plan takes place.

## Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families/Referral Process & Suspension/Expulsion Plan

- This plan will be implemented when we feel there is a need for behavioral, social, mental health, educational, wellness, and/or medical services. As a measure to ensure all of our children are kept safe, any behavior, especially biting, while it may be considered age appropriate will be documented and if it becomes excessive in occurrences the following protocol will be set into action:
- Step One: Observation Staff will use a daily ABC behavior tracking sheet and conduct and ASQ to monitor and observe student's behavior(s). The teachers will give a copy of this Behavior/Referral Plan to the family at this step as well.
- Step Two: Reviewing of Behavior Tracking Sheet Teacher will sit down and review the observation notes and results of the behavior tracking sheet. The teacher(s) will then create and implement a plan based off of the results.
- Step Three: Parent-Teacher Conversation If behaviors are still occurring after the new plan has been implemented, the teacher will discuss the child's behaviors within the classroom with the parent. The teacher(s) will address their concerns, give the parent an opportunity for any questions or suggestions, and together, the parent and the teacher(s) will come up with a "next step" plan for the child. The teacher will notify the parents if it's aggressive behavior or self-harming or poses a potential threat or harm to others it could lead to calls to pickup their child. At this step the plan may also include Step 4, and parents may be informed an evaluation from an outside source may be needed.
- Step Four: Referral for Services If after all the above steps are taken and problem behaviors are still present, the teacher(s) and parent will again discuss further options, and a referral for services will be requested through Early Intervention, or other appropriate services, if not already done so in step 3. If the behavior is aggressive parents will be given 1 week to correct the behavior or to arrange an evaluation, if after a week no progress or evaluation is made parents will begin getting a call each time the behavior occurs to pick up their child after their first incident each day within an hour of the call. Failure to pick-up within an hour may result in immediate suspension of care and late pick-up fees.
- **Step Five: Suspension of Care/Being Sent Home** If after all of the above steps are taken and no services or plan are yet put into place OR if even with services the aggressive behavior has not yet improved the child's teacher will call the parent after the behavior happens and the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day. If no services are in place after 2 weeks and/or when the student is sent home three times for the behavior, we will move to step 6.
- **Step Six: Termination of Care** If after all of the above steps are taken and no services are still actively in place at the center, care will then be suspended effective immediately, until services are put into place, as to protect the safety of the other children and staff in our care. Depending on the severity of the behavior or action the director has the right to skip step 5 and move directly to termination of care.

## Tuition Policies

### **Payments**

Enrollment is a commitment to occupy a space in the program. The weekly enrollment fee applies to weeks with holidays, snow days, sick days and/or any days that you choose not to send your child to the center. Tuition is due every week that the child is enrolled in the program. Tuition is due by 6PM on the Friday prior to the coming week of care/service. Payments are accepted through Brightwheel.

Non-payment of tuition or fees will result in immediate dismissal from care. There will be a \$25.00 late payment fee charged to each bill that is received after the due date. Greenway Early Learning Center accepts Child Care Works, a subsidized childcare program, administered by the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC). The parent/guardian must submit an application to ELRC to see if your family meets the qualifications for the program. The parent is responsible for the co-payment, plus the difference of contracted tuition.

### **Late Pick-Up Fee**

A late pick up fee of \$25 will be charged for the first 10 minutes after your designated pick up time, with an additional \$10 fee for each additional 10 minutes thereafter.



**Registration Fee**

A fee of \$50 PER CHILD is payable at the time of initial enrollment to reserve your child's place in the program. This fee is non-refundable. If your child is unable to start on your start date, and it goes beyond 3 weeks from that date, fee must be resubmitted.

**Annual Fee**

A fee of \$35.00 per child on January 1st will be billed through Brightwheel, and used towards supplies.

**\*\*\*Contact Center for Tuition Costs**

- Sibling discount -\$10 for second child of lower rate.
- Vacation: ½ off tuition for 1 week of vacation per year.
- 1 Tuition Free Week Per Year: The week between Christmas and New Years.
- Children may only be scheduled for drop off at or BEFORE 9:30AM. Drop off and pick up times must remain consistent with contracted times for staffing purposes.

**Tuition Rates**

Tuition rates depend on the number of hours per week. Please call or email the center for the most up to date rates. Rates increase annually. Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date. If payment is more than 5 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

**Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges**

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee of \$12.00. This charge may be collected electronically.

**Attendance, Vacation, & Withdrawal****Absence**

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:30 AM, message on Brightwheel, or call us at 610-799-3635.

**Vacation**

Families are granted ½ off tuition for 1 week of vacation each school year.

**Withdrawal**

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn, unless otherwise discussed with Center Director.

**Transfer of Records**

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally. If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required.

**Closing Due to Extreme Weather**

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on Brightwheel. If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

## Drop-off and Pick-up

### General Procedure

We open at 7:30 AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children up to the door.

We close at 5PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

Families pulling in from Mauch Chunk Rd: Turn left or right onto Seiples Station Road and then turn into the gravel parking lot. Pull in as far as possible to leave space for others. Bring your child/children in through the gated entrance. Please ring the front door bell. Pre-K children will be dropped off at the upstairs doorway to their classroom. The same applies for pick up. Pull into the driveway and enter through the gate. Ring bell. Parents may message on Brightwheel when they are 10 minutes away, so staff can have children ready for pick up. If parking lot is full, parents may park along Seiples Station Road. When parking in the lot, do not walk around to the door along Seiples Station. Please always enter through the gated entrance. Pedestrians will walk along Seiples Station and turn right into Greenway's parking lot for drop off and pick up. If children are outside during drop off and pick up times, a notice will be placed on the front door. Please enter the gates to pick up or drop off. Make sure gates are closed behind you at all times.

## Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy. In order to safeguard your child we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

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, but if after hours 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.

## Right to Refuse Child Release

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. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

## Personal Belongings

### What to Bring

- Infants: enough clean bottles for a day's use, at least 6 diapers per day, at least 2 changes of clothes per day, pacifiers, sleep sack, crib sheet, diaper cream, wipes. All bottles must be labeled and dated.
- Toddlers: labeled water bottle, at least six diapers, wipes, diaper cream, two changes of clothes per day, nap mat, large backpack
- Older Toddlers: labeled water bottle, nap mat, at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program, large backpack
- Preschoolers: labeled water bottle, nap mat, at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes, large backpack
- 

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets, mats, and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the center. Nap mats are sent home on Fridays to be laundered and returned on Monday.

## 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.

## Food, Nutrition & Meal Time

Greenway Early Learning Center provides two (2) snacks. Snacks will include a daily fruit/veg and a grain/protein. Snack Menu will be shared via Brightwheel. Families are to provide lunch each day, lunchboxes must be stored in the classroom refrigerator. Per state regulations, ice packs are not permitted in your children's lunch. Warm foods must be stored in a thermos, and kept inside the child's lunchbox. If a special diet is prescribed for a child, and if the diet is administered during care, written instructions and the parent's written consent shall be retained in the child's file. Children and staff will be required to wash their hands before and after all meals. The teachers will encourage table manners, socialization, and good eating habits during meal time.

### Daily Meal Schedule provided by facility

-9:30-10:00 AM Snack (water, whole grain/protein, fruit/veg)

-3:00-3:30 PM Snack (water, whole grain/protein, fruit/veg)

## Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate snack substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually. Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

## Meal Time

At meal time the dining table is set with lunch boxes, napkins and water. Everyone sits at the same table. Children are encouraged to open their own containers. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged.

All staff are trained in first-aid for choking.

## Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed "on cue" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child's home or discarded at the end of each day. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 5 days.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child's name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

## Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 4 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.

- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

## Health

### *Care Plan*

Families with children with special health care needs will complete the CARE PLAN FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS, along with the child's pediatrician. This plan will be reviewed periodically and the family will provide updates as needed.

### *Immunizations*

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## Physicals

A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than 30 days after your child begins the program. **Child Health Reports are due every year for children age 3 and up, and every 6 months for children under age 3.**

## 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.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear) 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 more than 2 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.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- 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.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

**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.

## 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 with 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

All medications must be inside the original packaging, and should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's backpack or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require written permission and instructions signed by the child's primary care physician. The written permission must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and all medications must be in the original container. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream or teething gel), sunscreen and insect repellent require a note signed by the child's parent/guardian, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months.

## Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- COVID-19
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Tuberculosis

## Safety

### *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.

## Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will depend upon the heat index and wind chill factors on this chart:

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

## Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play at the water table or sprinkler. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease.

## Injuries

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. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report via Brightwheel outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

## 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 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.

## 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.

## Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

## Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited. Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

## Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

## Child Custody

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.

## Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

## Emergencies

### Emergency Plan Review

Each year, our Emergency Plan is reviewed by the Whitehall Township Fire Department. Our staff perform at least 1 emergency drill per year. The facility practices fire drills and evacuation every 60 days.

## Emergency Action Plan

Our Emergency Action Plan provides a response for all types of emergencies. Depending on the emergency one of the following procedures will be followed:

- Immediate Evacuation

In the event of things like a fire children will be evacuated to their designated areas of the property. These designated areas can be found posted in each classroom by the door on their copy of the emergency exit plan for that room. The Medication box containing any and all inhalers and epi-pens etc. shall be taken with when exiting the building.

- Inside Sheltering

Sudden or weather related instances that may require taking shelter inside the center is in the best interest of everyone's safety. In the event that it is unsafe to go outdoors those in the center will be taken to the closest shelter in the center. These spaces should: Be in the interior of the center as to stay away from windows Be as close to, if not below ground level. Be areas like interior halls or walls, bathrooms, closets, basements. Sit facing the wall using arms & hands to protect heads & necks.

- Off-Site Evacuation

This is necessary if the children can no longer be safely cared for in the center or on the property. Our off-site relocation facility is Gantz Farmhouse 2625 Mauch Chunk Rd Whitehall, PA. The children will walk to this location.

In case of cancellation/postponement of daily operation due to severe weather or building problems that make it unsafe for children to attend/be cared for in the center. Please check your Brightwheel messages and email for any cancellations or dismissals.

- Lockdown

Intruder or other possible safety risk inside or outside the center that would require the building to go into lockdown In the event of intruder or other safety risk the following would take place: The front door would be locked by the director or next in charge in director's absence and appropriate agencies would be contacted by director or next in charge. All windows and curtains would get closed. Lights would get turned off. Classroom Doors would get closed if open. Teachers would do their best to keep the rooms as quiet as possible. In the event of an emergency we will contact parents via the Brightwheel Alert Message system as soon as possible and also after the emergency has ended. We do have routine fire drills as required by the state. We will also practice other emergency drills for intruders and severe weather.

- Fire Evacuation

Staff will take the red attendance book (containing emergency contact information) and follow the emergency route map located in the classroom. If we can't go back towards the building, children will be kept in the parking lot area furthest from the building. Parents will be notified.

Follow the 3 C's prescribed by the American Heart Association:

- Check (Assess vital signs)
- Call (Director, Asst. Dir. OR qualified staff member, call 911)
- Care (Qualified person administer CPR or First Aid as necessary)

Infants: Infants will be carried out by an available teacher. All cribs in infant room have rolling wheels on them and infants will be put into 1 or 2 cribs depending on number in attendance that day and pushed out of the building in the cribs and will be kept in there until safely relocated.

## Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 2 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

## Fire Safety

Greenway Early Learning Center is fully equipped with a fire alarm system and CO monitors. Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a 60 day basis, and is reviewed by the Whitehall Township Fire Department each year.

## Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

## Center Policies

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.



# Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment. This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented. Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the Early Childhood Education Program Family Handbook, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the Early Childhood Education Program staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the Early Childhood Education Program Family Handbook that I do not understand.

<b>Recipient Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Center Staff Signature</b>	