



### **Mission Statement**

EduPlay Discovery Center's mission is to cultivate and nurture young minds by educating children through play. Our program reflects our belief in discovery and education through play and exploration. We strive to prepare children academically, socially, physically, and emotionally for future educational and life experiences. Children are born with a natural ability to learn from their surroundings and experiences. Our creative environment and surroundings are an essential part of our teaching process for inspiring these young minds to learn, become creative problem-solvers, express their ideas and feelings, and become strong leaders of tomorrow.

Parent Handbook

Revised January 2024

# Welcome!

You are now a member of the EduPlay Discovery Center family. We are committed to providing children with daily activities that will enhance their development as individuals. We are committed to making every day an enjoyable experience for every child.

## **Program Philosophy**

We believe a child's early experiences enrich and stimulate future growth. As your child's provider we promote this growth through structured and versatile play. Our Creative Curriculum, along with the Reggio Emilia inspired philosophy, guides our teachers through each day, enriching the classroom environment, building each child's self-esteem, facilitating smooth transitions between activities, and creating a literacy-rich and multi-cultural environment where each child will be comfortable exploring and discovering new concepts and ideas. Children also deserve to be treated and respected as individuals in an environment that welcomes reason, exploration, question, and imagination. We respect each child's need for love, security, acceptance, warmth, and stimulation.

## **Christian-Based Environment**

We are a non-denominational, Christian-based childcare center. We teach bible stories, songs, and prayers to the children. We practice daily mealtime and snack time prayers and allow the children to lead these prayers. We will recognize Christmas as Jesus's birthday and will celebrate other Christian holidays as well. We are also open to learning and helping your child celebrate other holidays that are important to your family as well, as this will also allow us to learn about other cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds.

## **Cultural Competency Statement**

EduPlay Discovery Center recognizes that we live in a pluralistic society where each family may recognize holy days, holidays, and celebrations in an individualized way. However, the purpose of EduPlay Discovery Center is to recognize holidays that are specific to the families enrolled in our center. We feel that bringing families' cultural beliefs into our program is very important, and we would like each family to share their traditions, customs, and heritage within our community in meaningful ways to help bridge cultural gaps and to encourage children to be more diverse in their views of society.

If there are any holidays, traditions, or customs you would like to share with your child's room community, we would enjoy having some decorations, clothing, books, music, art, and even foods brought in from which our children can experience and learn.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirement**

The staff of EduPlay Discovery Center is mandated by law to report any suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation or deprivation to Children's Protective Services. A report can also be filed if a child is not transported in an approved car seat in the rear of your vehicle.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint alleging discrimination, write USDA, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may

contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. (Rev. 8/12)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **Our Curriculum**

### **Emergent Curriculum**

EduPlay Discovery Center uses Creative Curriculum to provide a foundation for the program and the Reggio Emilia philosophy to implement the curriculum. Creative Curriculum is an emergent curriculum that builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from the talk of children, through community or family events, and the known interests of children (puddles, shadows, dinosaurs, etc.).

### **Curriculum Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Philosophy**

The staff of EduPlay Discovery Center is committed to providing a high-quality program for children and their families. We recognize each child as a whole person entering our programs from a variety of backgrounds and at many different stages of development. Our program is designed to enhance the cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and creative skills of each child. We strive to provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where children can satisfy their own natural curiosity and discover the joy and wonder through exploration.

We strongly believe that children learn best through experiences and a balanced program that includes a negotiated curriculum of both teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. Our teachers are co-collaborators with children. They act as guides, mentors, and models as we observe, reflect, and hypothesize.

Our commitment is to foster an open and cooperative relationship between home, school, and community. EduPlay Discovery Center seeks to be responsive to families' needs. It is our desire to have parents, teachers, and staff work together to build a foundation for a lifelong love of learning.

**\*\*\*Additional Reggio Emilia philosophy information at the end of this handbook.**

### **Assessments**

We use assessments to support children's learning using a variety of methods such as observations, checklists, rating scales, Teaching Strategies GOLD®, and work sampling. All children receive developmental screening within three months of program entry by using the Ages and Stages Questionnaires as well as ongoing assessment through GOLD.

The **Ages & Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3)** and the **Ages & Stages-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE)** are screening tools that ask questions about your child's overall and social emotional development. They examine how children are progressing in the developmental areas of communication, physical ability, social skills, and problem-solving skills. These questionnaires are completed by you, the child's parent/guardian, and can help identify your child's strengths, as well as any areas where your child may need support. The screening should take about 10-20 minutes. All children will have individualized plans to help guide their learning.

**COR Advantage-** is built on 36 items that best prepare children for school success. With the fewest items of any early childhood assessment, COR saves teachers time and keeps them

focused on what matters most. Teachers capture and record child development in the COR Advantage online tool and then use that valuable insight to create individualized lesson plans and detailed reports on child and classroom progress. The online tool's built-in support increases scoring accuracy, delivering consistent data administrators can rely on to meaningfully guide their program.

**\*\*\*EduPlay Discovery Center strives to incorporate teaching and research components into developmentally appropriate curriculum for children.**

### **Hours of Business**

Our center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
We accept children ages 0-12 years old.

### **EduPlay Discovery Center Observed Holidays for 2024**

Memorial Day                      Labor Day                      Independence Day  
April 19 for MIAEYC Conferences  
Thanksgiving Day and The Friday after Thanksgiving  
December 24th & 25th in observation of Christmas  
Closed New Years Day

NOTE: If any of these holidays fall on a weekend, the Friday before and Monday after are subject to being closed if enrollment is expected to be low.

### **Weather closing**

EduPlay Discovery Center must meet the guidelines set by the Department of Health and Human Services. If EduPlay is unable to meet required staff-to-child ratios because the staff is unable to drive to work safely or if most of the staff is out ill, EduPlay will be forced to close.

If EduPlay is closed due to hazardous weather or state of emergency, the closure will be announced on local television stations (CBS, WNEM-5, ABC/WJRT-12, NBC/WEYI-25, FOX/WSMH-66) and through email, Facebook, and your child's classroom app. **We DO NOT follow the public schools when determining whether we remain open on hazardous days. Please note, these days will be paid by parents.**

### **Tuition rates**

Speak to the Assistant Director or Director for the updated rate sheet.  
**Infant tuition includes diapers, wipes, and baby food and finger snacks.**  
**Tuition for other ages includes breakfast, lunch and two afternoon snacks.**

### **Payment Methods- [www.tuitionexpress.com](http://www.tuitionexpress.com)**

Tuition Express is the avenue through which child care payments are usually made. Electronic fund transfers are completely automated by the use of a checking account routing number. Payments made with this method are convenient for parents and are on-time and integrated for providers.

Tuition Express payments can be used with checking accounts, saving accounts, master cards, or visa cards. If you choose to use a Mastercard or Visa card there will be a fee for each credit card transaction.

Other forms of payment are cash, money order, or cashier's check submitted in a sealed envelope. All payments must be turned in at the reception desk and handed directly to the receptionist. We will not be liable if the payment is left unattended by a parent at the reception desk.

### **Late Payment Policy**

A late payment fee of \$10.00/day will be charged for payments received after Monday, 6:00 p.m. Furthermore, childcare services may be immediately suspended until payment is received.

There is a \$35.00 service fee for checks returned for non-sufficient funds. A re-deposit fee of \$10.00 will be assessed for return of Auto pay and when checks are re-entered. Parents may view their ledger card by pushing "accounting" on the ProCare touchscreen.

### **Child Care Deposit**

A deposit in the amount of one week's care per child will be required before attending. **This is due prior to the first day of care and will be necessary to hold an upcoming spot for your child within the next 12 months.** If the deposit is not used within one year it will be forfeited and a new deposit will need to be placed and the child's waiting spot will be at the end of the waiting list. If your child attends more than 6 months and your account has always been up to date and current, then the deposit will be applied towards your child's final week of care. This is nonrefundable if your child has attended less than 6 months and/or your account is not in good standing. If there is a gap of over 2 months that a child does not attend, new paperwork and a new deposit will be required at the time of beginning care again. If you increase the number of days you are scheduled for on a permanent basis, your deposit needs to increase accordingly, so that your deposit will cover your child's final week of care.

For those parents who wish to keep their children home for the summer, there will be a \$75 summer hold fee per child. This fee can only be used for families wishing to keep their children out for 3 months or less during the summer months, or for medical reasons, and other reasons approved by the Director. EduPlay will follow the local schools calendar to determine summer breaks.

### **Registration and Materials fee for Summer Camp (school age through 12 years)**

There is a \$75 annual registration fee for the first child (additional siblings \$25 each) due at registration for Summer Camp and covers a one year period of June-May. School age only families will pay a registration fee each year. The School Age Summer Program (June to September) has a materials fee of \$15 for each child.

Summer School Age Camp will officially begin the first day off for Frankenmuth Schools. Additional fees for on-site events and off site field trips may apply if you would like your child to attend.

If your child is enrolled in our Kindergarten Prep Class, and you paid a deposit, your deposit will cover the before and after school registration fee for the first school year. A summer camp registration fee will be billed every year in June.

### **Materials Fee**

There are many wonderful activities we do with the children at EduPlay Discovery Center that require consumable materials such as clay, paint, glue, paper, toothbrushes, bandaids, cold packs, cups, etc. We launder the children's cot sheets, blankets, bibs (and occasionally clothes), a process that also consumes resources. Each March and September a \$30 per child (no more than \$60/ family) materials fee will be assessed. You will be notified at the time of enrollment when the first materials fee is due. Notification of subsequent fees will come via billing statements in your child's mailbox or through email. Material fees that are not received in a timely manner are subject to late fees. The School Age Summer Program (June to September) has a materials fee of \$15 for each child, which is due upon enrollment.

### **Admission Requirements/Care Schedule**

EduPlay Discovery Center is open to all children from birth through 12 years of age. Children may attend on a full-time or part-time basis. On admission, parents will be required to establish a set weekly schedule for care. Additional care or schedule changes will be accepted on a space available basis. A two week written notice should be provided in order to make a schedule change.

Daily Activities and Program Schedule Daily schedules and activities are located in the child's classroom. You will receive information on each developmentally appropriate level so that as your child grows you will see the progression of their schedule and expectations.

Items required for admission include the Child Information card, immunization record, food program enrollment handbook acknowledgement form and deposit.

### **Policy for accepting DHHS or other Scholarships**

Full payment of tuition is expected by the parent until their DHHS or scholarship is approved. Any parent/guardian receiving assistance from the Department of Human Services (DHHS), or any other agency, must notify EduPlay Discovery Center of any change in payment status. The parent is responsible for any reimbursement changes made by the state. Charges will be retroactive from the date the state elects to change your status. If your tuition assistance is canceled, you are responsible either to reimburse EduPlay for any non-payment or set up a repayment plan within a week of notification.

### **Collections & Misc. Information**

You will be responsible for any costs related to collection of the childcare fees. These costs will include late fees, any loss of wages, cost fees, and childcare fees. Cash, check, or credit card is accepted and a receipt will be given. A fee of \$35.00, along with any additional costs EduPlay incurs plus the late fee, will be charged to you for a returned check. All future payments must be made by cash or money order. Childcare fees are due regardless of whether or not your child attends unless a vacation week or illness days are being used. You are paying for a position as well as a service. All childcare services will be contracted. **The contract is a legal document.**

A position at EduPlay Discovery Center will be considered open until the deposit is received. A year-end statement of all childcare fees paid will be provided by the last week of January.

## **Bussing for families living IN Frankenmuth School District**

St. Lorenz  
Frankenmuth Public Schools

### **Sign in/out procedure**

All children must be clocked in upon arrival and clocked out when leaving the center. This is very important because this procedure will be used to check attendance in an emergency.

When entering/exiting the center, our touch screen computer allows this process. By touching the screen, any person registered in our system can clock in/out your child. If you have more than one child and they are not enrolled on a certain day please touch the appropriate in/out message next to your children's names.

**Parents are required to inform EduPlay each day their child will be late or absent. This allows EduPlay to adjust the adult to child ratio appropriately if possible.**

### **Express Pick Up**

Express Pick Up is available at any time with advance notice. Your child will be dressed and ready to go within 5 minutes of the time you request on an Express Pick Up and can be called into the children's waiting area. (Please remember a child should not wait more than 5 minutes from the time you request.)

This will eliminate the need for you to go into the classroom and get your child ready to go home. Parents are still required to clock their child/children out on the touch screen computer.

Please note: this is only for children ages 2 ½ and up and can be used no more than once a week. It is very important that teachers have good communication with the family, and we want to be sure you do not miss something important.

### **Late Pick up- Policy**

There will be a \$10.00 fee plus a dollar for every minute you are late. This fee will be added to your account. Chronic late pick-up will lead to dismissal from our program. Our center appreciates a phone call if you are going to be late.

### **Confidentiality**

All information pertaining to the children in the program, including all reports, records and data, is confidential and used for internal purposes only. Information pertaining to children enrolled at EduPlay Discovery Center will not be released to third parties without the express written permission of the parent unless required by statute, a court order, or licensing mandate. If the parent agrees to release information to a third party, the parent must complete a Release of Information Form which is available from the office.

### **Adjustment Period**

Your child's adjustment to a new environment may take a few days or weeks. During the adjustment period, the staff will work closely with the parent to ensure a smooth transition for the child. A favorite stuffed toy or a t-shirt worn by mom for an infant will comfort the child during this transition. Feel free to call or stop by as many times as you would like.

### **Breastfeeding Parents**

EduPlay Discovery Center realizes the importance of breastfeeding and the benefits of such. Breastfeeding parents are welcome to feed their child in the comfort of the Observation Room, which is located in the Infant Room.

### **Quality Assurance – Grievance Policy**

EduPlay Discovery Center is committed to providing a high quality program that meets the needs of children and families to the greatest extent possible. In case of concerns, first discuss the situation with your child's teachers. If the problem is not resolved, discuss the situation with the director. Every effort will be made to achieve resolutions that are in the best interest of the child, the family, and EduPlay.

### **Social and Emotional Health and Wellness**

At EduPlay Discovery center we take all aspects of development into consideration when caring for your child. We believe that social and emotional milestones are just as important as academic and physical development. We strive to work closely with parents to identify and observe when children are not meeting their social emotional milestones. Information and activities regarding social and emotional development are found on the parent information board.

### **Schedule Changes**

We do allow part-time families to change the scheduled days their child attends when available. Please fill out a Child's Schedule Change Request Form and give it to the receptionist or director. These forms should be filled out for both permanent and temporary changes. Another option to save your child's spot regardless of which days your child attends would be to pay for a full time spot and use your days as you wish.

### **Permanent Schedule Change Guidelines**

- Schedule changes must be requested **at least 2 weeks** in advance for permanently adding days and **at least 3 weeks** in advance for permanently dropping days.
- If a family needs to move to full-time status, full-time families will have first priority for the available spots, just as permanent schedules will take precedence over temporary changes in schedules.
- You will be able to see the confirmed schedule **2 weeks** in advance if your change has been approved.
- **Schedule changes are not guaranteed.**
- **All scheduled changes must be approved by the assistant director or director before being incorporated into the room's schedule.**

### **Temporary Schedule Change Guidelines**

- Temporary schedule changes must be made in writing and approved by the director **at least 2 days** in advance for adding days. Approval will be determined by classroom capacity and staff availability.
- Temporarily dropping days is not allowed at any time with less than **3 weeks' notice in advance.**
- If a family needs to move to full-time status, full-time families will have first priority for the available spots, just as permanent schedules will take precedence over temporary changes in schedules.



- You will be able to see the confirmed schedule **2 weeks** in advance if your change has been approved.
- For those parents who wish to keep their children home for the summer, there will be a \$75 summer hold fee per child. This fee can only be used for families wishing to keep their children out for 3 months or less during the summer months, or for medical reasons, and other reasons approved by the Director. EduPlay will follow the local schools calendar to determine summer breaks
- **Schedule changes are not guaranteed.**
- **All scheduled changes must be approved by the assistant director or director before being incorporated into the room's schedule.**

**Because staffing and other operational costs are incurred on the basis of enrollment, these costs must be assessed even when a child is temporarily absent.**

### **Maternity Leave**

During maternity leave, there are several options to reduce the days that your older child is attending.

- You may continue your regular full or part-time schedule.
- If you wish to keep your child home with you, you may pay a \$50 per child, per week holding fee.
- **2 days** – You may send your child two days a week, with the possibility that the center may need to choose which days work best for their room, depending upon classroom capacity and staff availability.

**\*\*\*Billing Tuition Change Form needs to be submitted as soon as possible, preferably 2 weeks ahead of time. We do understand that babies have a schedule of their own!**

### **Vacation Time and Sick Time**

This year Vacation and Sick Time will be all encompassing and can be used in 2 or more day increments until they are gone. These days can be used for vacations or sick time on a day you would normally have been scheduled for care.

Parents or guardians must fill out a Vacation/Time off Request form, located in the vestibule, for these days to be applied. We cannot apply sick or vacation days to your account without the submitted form.

**Full-time and 4-day families** -If you are a family that is contracted to attend full-time or 4 days per week, you are eligible for 18 sick/vacation days per year. These are to be used in 2+day increments that we are scheduled open. You must still request vacation time 2 weeks in advance on the Vacation Time Request Form.

**3 days/week families**- If you are a family that is contracted to attend part-time (3 days per week), you are eligible for 10 days sick/vacation days per year. These are to be used in 2+day increments that we are scheduled open. You must still request vacation time 2 weeks in advance on the Vacation Time Request Form.

Sick/Vacation days cannot be used for days that we are closed for holidays, but we will make this exception if it is submitted for a full vacation week (5 weekdays in a row), and submitted two weeks in advance.

If more time than your allowed weeks of vacation time is needed per year, the weekly amount will still be required to hold the child's position within EduPlay. You must request this vacation time 2 weeks in advance on the Vacation Time Request Form.

**\*\*\*Additional time can be requested for special circumstances and need to be approved by the Director.**

### **Withdraw**

- Two weeks written notice is required when a parent is withdrawing a child for any reason. Tuition is due for those two weeks (applicable deposit can be applied for last week if you have met all requirements to use that deposit for your last week of care). Vacation and sick time will not be allowed to be used after the two week notice is submitted.
- Children who do not come to EduPlay for a period of two weeks without notice will be considered no longer enrolled in the program. A letter stating this will be sent at the end of the two week period and the opening filled by a waiting family. Tuition is due for the two weeks of absence.
- EduPlay reserves the right to terminate the contract immediately, without notice, if:
  - Child care tuition is not paid when due.
  - The child's continued participation in the program creates a direct threat of harm to the child, other children, or the staff.
  - Parents of a child, or a child in care engage in inappropriate conduct such as acts of violence, including assault and battery, profanity, harassment, threats, verbal or physical abuse against a child, staff member or other parents, possession within the center of illegal substances or firearms.

### **Staff Training**

All employees are required to have current certification in infant, child, and adult CPR as well as current first aid certification. This ensures that EduPlay Discovery Center is prepared during all hours of operation. In addition, each caregiver completes blood-borne pathogen training. They have health and physical screenings, as well as TB Tests.

All employees will be trained on emergency procedures, including training for fires, tornadoes, and crisis management. Our onboarding of new employees also includes a licensing orientation and training in program policies and procedures, Creative Curriculum, and Reggio Emilia Philosophy training.

Our lead teachers must have a minimum of a Child Development Associate for either infant and toddler, or preschool age children. Every room must have at least one lead teacher with the appropriate education.

All employees also complete at least 24 clock hours of training per year on topics including child development, curriculum, child discipline, health/safety, nutrition, working with parents, and licensing rules for child care centers. These training hours will be accumulated through in-services, workshops, seminars, classes, and conferences on early childhood, child development or child care administration, and practices offered by early childhood organizations, etc. Those staff members working with infants and toddlers have training that includes information about safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome. We also strive to include

training hours each year on topics such as cultural competence and/or special needs. Verification of the above training will be kept at EduPlay by the director.

### **Staff Screening**

All employees and interns must complete the Department of Health and Human Services Clearance Check for substantiated child abuse and neglect prior to any contact with children and every two years after. In addition, a criminal record check is performed using the Michigan Department of State Police's internet criminal history access tool (ICHAT) before making an offer of employment or internship to a person. All employees are also required to complete a national fingerprint/background check.

### **Babysitting Policy**

We take great pride in the quality of child care services that we provide. While at EduPlay Discovery Center, staff is under the supervision of the director and teachers professionally trained in early childhood education. However, because we have no supervisory authority or control over staff that provide babysitting services away from or outside of EduPlay Discovery Center premises, we cannot be responsible for their actions while engaged in such activity.

We do not become involved in our staff babysitting away from EduPlay Discovery Center premises. Any arrangement for such services is strictly between you and the staff member.

EduPlay Discovery Center is not a party to any outside babysitting agreement, nor can EduPlay Discovery Center make guarantees, warranties, or representations as to any outside babysitting services. Please be advised that should you engage the service of any EduPlay Discovery Center staff member outside of EduPlay Discovery Center premises, we are not responsible or liable for any act or omission with such services. If a staff member transports your child from EduPlay Discovery Center premises as part of any babysitting services, please be sure they are on the pick-up list. We are not responsible for any injuries that may occur during transportation by a staff member.

### **Volunteers/ Visitors**

Hundreds of research studies have proven that when parents get involved, children do better in school. Talk to your child's teacher to find out a good time to come into their classroom! We also always need volunteers for our special holiday parties and events. More information is posted as these events draw nearer. We encourage our parents to become involved in our program. Our center strives to make a family environment for all children.

Stop by our center to have lunch with your child or visit any time.

EduPlay Discovery Center's written policy of visitors requires screening of volunteers, including, but not limited to, parents and grandparents who are present at the building for more than three hours, three days a week and are in contact with the children. Background checks are conducted by the State of Michigan as a Central Registry Clearance and an ICHAT screening as well to find out if any volunteer has ever committed a listed offense. Volunteers will not have unsupervised contact with a child in care, as indicated by State of Michigan licensing regulations.

Visitors should report to the reception area first. Anyone picking up a child in the classroom must be released by the emergency card. Teachers are advised to send unfamiliar individuals to the reception area if you are not added to the emergency card.

### **Smoking**

It is against Michigan State licensing regulations to smoke on the premises; this includes the parking lot and walkway entrance. Please dispose of cigarettes in their proper and safe receptacle prior to driving onto the premises.

### **Food Program**

EduPlay Discovery Center provides breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks each day for children ages 1-12 in the daily tuition. Infant cereal, fruits, vegetables, and finger foods are provided for children under one. Food is portioned into bowls for each classroom; the teaching staff in each classroom will ensure that food is cut into appropriate sizes prior to placing containers on the table for consumption.

Depending on the age of the children and their schedule, they will be served breakfast (around 8:00 or 8:30 a.m.), a nutritious lunch (11:35 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.), and an afternoon snack (3:00 to 3:30 p.m.). Each meal/snack includes a family-style food service where everyone is seated together. Food substitutions cannot be made for individual children except for documented medical or religious reasons or if the child is a documented vegetarian. Two week menus are posted in advance.

If EduPlay is ever disqualified from this program, we reserve the right to charge an additional fee for our lunch program. We are part of the CACFP through the State of Michigan. Being a part of this program assures that your child is receiving the suggested amount of fruits, vegetables, dairy, whole and enriched grains. Likewise, children will learn healthy eating habits from caregivers who recognize the importance of participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program as a way to help children grow and develop to their fullest potential.

Receiving nutritious meals early in life, as well as being physically active, is critical to the establishment of positive lifelong habits. Forms are required to be filled out yearly by parents.

Children should not bring food to the Center except by prior arrangement with the child's teacher, assistant director or director. Bringing food should be limited to special celebrations such as birthdays or classroom requests and must always be approved. For formula, please see formula/food sign off sheet.

### **Outdoor Activities**

Children will go outside everyday unless it is raining or weather conditions could result in children becoming overheated or excessively chilled. In cold weather, children must wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth. In warm weather, children must wear protective clothing and/or use sunscreen with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher that is applied to exposed skin. Sunscreen must be provided by the parent and must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Insect repellents are used only if supplied by the parent and must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Staff will apply supplied insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental permission.

All children (including infants) will go outdoors daily unless they have medical exclusion signed by a physician. Please be sure that your child has the appropriate attire for the weather, including rain boots and raincoats, snow pants and snow boots, etc. If you need assistance with acquiring these items, we may be able to help. Please let a staff member know.

### **Field Trips and on-site vendors for ages 3 through 12 years of age**

We will be offering on site events and off-site field trips during summer camp, some at an additional charge. Dates and locations will be posted. Community involvement is also an

opportunity that is provided to children ages 3 -12 through a connection we have with Frankenmuth Farmers Market. This would be a weekly walking field trip during the summer, as it is located within a block from EduPlay.

Prior to each field trip (if not a regular routine weekly event), the parent will be required to fill out a permission form giving the child permission to go on a field trip. Transportation will be arranged through EduPlay. Emergency cards will be taken with the group on a field trip in the event of an emergency happening unexpectedly. More information is available as the field trips occur.

### **Illness Policies**

The State of Michigan requires that EduPlay Discovery Center abide by all the rules and regulations set by the state. By law, a child who has a contagious disease must not attend child care. A report of your child's condition should be given to the center while your child is ill so that appropriate precautions may take place. If your child has been diagnosed as having a contagious disease or illness, please notify us immediately. Whenever a contagious illness has been reported, we will post a confidential (no names) contagious illness notification near the sign-in computer. **PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE NOT ONLY OF THE HEALTH AND COMFORT OF YOUR CHILD, BUT ALSO THE HEALTH OF THE OTHER CHILDREN.**

If your child has an illness and must be picked up, a parent/guardian has 30 minutes to respond with a plan of action. Your child should be picked up by you or someone on the pick-up list within 1 hour of the initial phone call.

State of Michigan Licensing states a child too ill to remain in a group shall be placed in a separate area where he or she may be comfortably cared for and supervised until he or she is taken home.

Following is a list of illnesses and symptoms for which your child will be sent home or should remain home:

\*\* Information and resources may be provided to you from your child's teacher or upon request with regard to the following items\*\*

- **Fever:** If your child has a fever of 100.4 (temporal) or over, he/she must be excluded from care. To return, your child must be fever-free without medication for at least 24 hours. If you take your child to the doctor and have a doctor's note stating he/she may return because his/her fever is due to an ear infection or teething, it must be stated in the doctor's note. These are the only cases in which a child will be allowed to return with a fever. If your child received vaccinations that may cause a fever, please bring in his/her immunization records. If your child is especially fussy and uncomfortable after vaccinations, you may consider keeping him/her home as well.
- **Vomiting:** If your child vomits, or exhibits other symptoms along with vomiting, he/she should be excluded from care. The child must be vomit-free for 24 hours before returning.
- **Diarrhea:** If your child has a runny stool more than twice within a three hour period, he/she must be excluded from care. To return, he/she must be diarrhea-free for 24 hours. If your child requires a special diet for this time, please provide the appropriate foods.
- **Rash:** If your child develops a rash while in our care, you might be asked to pick up your child. He/she may return with a doctor's note stating what the rash is. If your child comes in with a rash, you must have a doctor's note stating what it is.
- **Thrush:** If your child has symptoms of thrush, he/she must be excluded from care. They must be on medication 24 hours before returning to EduPlay.

- **Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Disease:** Although doctors have differing opinions on when it is ok for a child to return to school, our policy is that ALL blisters or sores must be scabbed over and NO NEW blisters or sores appear for 24 hours. There also must not be any sores in the mouth when the child returns. Since this is often a long-lasting illness, a vacation week and/or sick days will be allowed for this particular virus due to the extent of the child's discomfort and also for the extreme contagiousness of the virus.
- **Pink Eye:** Should your child become infected with conjunctivitis (pink eye), he or she must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to EduPlay.
- **Ringworm:** Ringworm must be treated for 24 hours and be covered until it is gone.
- **Lice:** If your child shows evidence of head lice, you will be notified immediately, and we will ask you to pick up your child. We will inspect your child before admitting him/her back.
- **Colds and Ear Infections:** These are not normally reasons to keep your child at home, but it should be noted that many times an ear infection or cold may be severe enough to make your child too uncomfortable for child care. A day's rest may be all he/she needs to feel better.
- **Viruses:** Children with measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, or other viruses should be kept at home until their doctor says they may be around other children. We strive for a 95% immunization environment.
- **Abnormal Behavior:** If your child shows signs of lethargy, long periods of crying, irritability, and generally is not acting like him- or herself; you may want to keep them at home. If you do bring your child in and he/she requires long periods of individualized care or seems to be extremely uncomfortable, he/she may be sent home.
- **Injury:** If your child should ever injure him- or herself and there is any question as to whether medical attention is needed, we will contact you and ask that you at least contact your doctor. If a serious injury should ever occur, we will contact you immediately and seek medical attention for your child.

#### COVID:

If your child tests positive for Covid. They will need to stay home a minimum of 5 days from which the symptoms began. The rule is that children and staff are able to return when their symptoms are gone, and they have been without medication in their system for at least 24 hours and can function normally in the classroom. If a household member tests positive, as long as the child is not showing symptoms, they may return.

If your child is diagnosed with something that is not on this list, we follow the guidelines from the Saginaw County Department of Public Health.

The State of Michigan mandates that "A center operating with children in attendance for 3 or more continuous hours per day shall provide daily outdoor play." Please dress them appropriately because we will be going out to play in the snow, sand, grass, and/or water in the winter, spring, summer, and fall seasons.

#### **Illness Days Policy**

If your child is ill and must stay home 2 or more **full consecutive days**, you will be able to use your sick days. Please see page 9, **Vacation Time and Sick Time** for details as former policies have changed.

**\*\*To request vacation or sick days, a vacation/sick form must be filled out. These forms are located on the billboard as well as at the front desk.\*\***

### **Medication**

If medication needs to be administered by our staff, you must fill out a medication form to give us permission to administer medicine to your child. All medication shall be in its original container, stored according to instructions, and clearly labeled for a named child.

Prescription medication shall have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions, and name and strength of the medication and shall be given according to those instructions. All medicine will be sent home if expired. Forms will be reviewed by parents every three months to assure the dosage and expiration is updated.

Any medication without dosage on the bottle will require a doctor's dosage in order for EduPlay Discovery Center to administer. EpiPens and inhalers will require a pharmacy label for dosage.

### **Emergency Cards**

Upon enrollment, Child Information Record must be filled out and signed by the child's guardian. This card will notify our center of any allergies or special needs your child has as well as friends or family members who may pick your child up. All people other than the guardian that picks a child up must be on his/her emergency card and will need picture identification for safety reasons. This card must be filled out annually or as information changes.

### **Incident and Accident Reports/Record of Treatment**

Our staff will make every effort to avoid accidents at EduPlay Discovery Center. However, when working with children, we know that accidents will happen. With any accident/injury at the center, the employee will be responsible for filling out an accident report. We will notify parents of accidents, injuries, incidents, and illness by injury report, text or phone call.

This report will need to be signed by the guardian and kept in the child's file.

In the event that your child requires a doctor or hospital visit due to injury or accident in our care, please see the reception area. We are required to have a record of the occurrence.

Per licensing requirements, in the event of an incident (or accusation of) regarding inappropriate touching or contact, or non supervision please notify EduPlay administration immediately. Administration has the duty to report this incident within 72 hours of being notified of the incident per mandated reporting requirements.

### **Pest Management**

Parents and staff will be notified of a pesticide application at the facility at least three operational days in advance except in emergencies where pests pose an immediate health threat to children or staff (such as bees).

The inspection is usually done around 6:00 p.m. so the children are not affected. Advance notice of the application will be posted at the front desk and on the parent bulletin board. If there are any questions regarding the application of the pesticide or the ingredients involved, please contact the director.

### **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

Procedures are in place in case of an emergency situation at EduPlay. Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom.

### **Drills and Evacuations**

Licensing rules require that centers maintain a log of drills for fire and tornado. We will let you know when these drills occur so that if your child talks about them at home, you will be aware.

If we have to evacuate the building due to fire, gas leak, or any other unsafe conditions, our meeting spot will be at **Cederberg Funeral Home**.

In the event of any other emergency situations, such as, a missing child, hazardous material incident, severe weather, bomb threat, utility emergency, civil disturbance or crisis situation, the safety of the children and staff are the top priority. The Frankenmuth Police or Fire

Departments will be called immediately. EduPlay staff will follow their direction.

If relocation is required, children will be directed to **Cederberg Funeral Home**. Parents will be contacted by phone or email as soon as possible. Parents will be advised of the location of the child and the status of the emergency situation.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

EduPlay Discovery Center is always looking for opportunities to improve its policies, procedures and/or programming. If you have a suggestion, please feel free to talk with the director or assistant director.

### **Great Start Readiness Program**

EduPlay Children enrolled in the Great Start Readiness Program will not be excluded or expelled because of the need for additional developmental, medical or behavioral support, assistance with toileting, or staff attitudes or apprehension.

### **Conscious Discipline**

Conscious Discipline is a whole-school solution for social-emotional learning, discipline, and self-regulation. It utilizes everyday events rather than an external curriculum and addresses the emotional intelligence of both the child and the adult. Conscious Discipline empowers adults to consciously respond to daily conflict, transforming it into an opportunity to teach critical life skills to children. With Conscious Discipline, our entire child care culture becomes a safe haven of cooperation, constructive problem solving, and academic success that encourages self-control, self-direction, and self-esteem.

Conscious Discipline is evidence-based and focuses on building relationships for classroom management. Adults and children are encouraged to build connections, and connections govern our behavior. The classroom culture becomes one that centers on a sense of community in which everyone is valuable and important. Conflict is not viewed as a disruption that must be stopped or removed from the classroom. In reality, vital life skills can be taught during conflict moments. These moments give teachers an opportunity to teach the missing skills so that children can become active participants in solving their own problems.

Conscious Discipline does not condone or dismiss violence. We teach self-regulation skills that help children recognize and manage strong emotions rather than act them out inappropriately. We teach that both natural and imposed consequences happen all the time. In Conscious Discipline, we use imposed consequences after the appropriate behavior is taught, modeled, and practiced extensively and a related, reasonable consequence is set and clearly stated to the child. In this way, we focus on teaching useful new skills rather than on punishment or removal. Our goal is to create a classroom environment built on safety, connection and problem solving, so the need for imposed consequences becomes minimal.



Certain punishments will be prohibited. These include: (a) any sort of corporal punishment including hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of physical punishment; (b) restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her; (c) inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, coercing, making derogatory remarks, or threatening a child; (d) depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, outdoor play, or necessary toilet use; (e) confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.

Limited use of "no, don't, and stop" should be the standard in the classrooms unless in the case of a safety situation. EduPlay Discovery Center prides itself on having a strong image of the child and of giving children the opportunity to show us what they are capable of.

Because of this image we ask ourselves three questions prior to redirecting a child's interest:

1. Is the child hurting others? 2. Is he/she hurting him- or herself? 3. Is the child hurting/damaging property? These questions guide the interactions that the adults have with the children as we help facilitate their decision making and idea explorations throughout each day. As we focus on meeting the needs of the children in cognitive, emotional, and physical ways, we aim to give children the opportunity to express their independence and share their ideas with us. The teaching staff serves as mentors, guides, collaborators, and researchers working alongside the children exploring the world around them and learning how to function in a community setting. This mentality assists in our vision of providing an environment for children where the roots lie in relationships. We understand that teaching and learning is a reciprocal relationship and that we are all teaching and learning together.



## ***Parental Acknowledgement***

### ***Receipt of Program Policies and Procedures***

Please read the Program Policies for Parents carefully! If you have any questions regarding any policy or procedure, bring it to the attention of the program director. It is essential that parents work together with the EduPlay Discovery Center staff to honor our commitment to offer a safe, healthy, happy, and beneficial environment for the children we serve.

By signing this acknowledgement you verify that you have received a copy of the Program Policies for Parents and understand and agree to abide by the outlined terms.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date

**Revised 2023**



# Curriculum Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Philosophy

The staff of EduPlay Discovery Center is committed to providing a high-quality program for children and their families. We recognize each child as a whole person entering our programs from a variety of backgrounds and at many different stages of development. Our program is designed to enhance the cognitive, physical, social, and creative skills of each child. We strive to provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where children can satisfy their own natural curiosity and discover the joy and wonder through exploration.

We strongly believe that children learn best through experiences and a balanced program that includes a negotiated curriculum of both teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. Our teachers are co-collaborators with children. They act as guides, mentors, and models as we observe, reflect, and hypothesize.

Our commitment is to foster an open and cooperative relationship between home, school, and community. EduPlay Discovery Center seeks to be responsive to families' needs. It is our desire to have parents, teachers, and staff work together to build a foundation for a lifelong love of learning.

**History of Reggio Emilia** Immediately after World War II, a town in Northern Italy called Reggio Emilia decided to bring hope to their families. Out of the ruins, they constructed quality preschools for their children. In present times, Reggio Emilia has been broadly recognized for having some of the best infant/toddler and preschool programs in the world. The Reggio Emilia approach to education is committed to the creation of a learning environment that will enhance and facilitate children's construction of their own powers of thinking through the combination of all the expressive communicative and cognitive languages. The Reggio Emilia approach is based upon the following principles:

**Emergent Curriculum** An emergent curriculum is one that builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from the talk of children, through community or family events, and the known interests of children (puddles, shadows, dinosaurs, etc.).

**Representational Development** The Reggio Emilia approach calls for the integration of the graphic arts as tools for cognitive, linguistic, and social development. Presentation of concepts and hypotheses in multiple forms of representation – print, art, clay, construction, drama, music – are viewed as essential to children's understanding of experiences.

**Collaboration** Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to talk about, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work. Within the Reggio approach, multiple perspectives promote both a sense of group membership and the uniqueness of the child as an individual.

**Documentation** of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. Pictures of children engaged in experiences, their words as they discuss what they are doing, feeling, and thinking, and children's interpretation of experiences through the visual media are displayed as a graphic presentation of the dynamics of learning.

**The Role of Three Teachers** Reggio Emilia schools believe that there are three primary teachers for our children. The first teacher is that of the parent, the second is the actual teacher, and the third teacher is the environment.

- **The Role of the Parent** The active participation of parents in the life of the school is an essential component of the educational experience. Families are encouraged to be actively

involved in meetings, conferences, celebrations, and events. Partnering with families is essential for consistent, positive experiences both at home and at school. Parents are aware of what is happening in the classroom through posting of daily activities and class newsletter.

• **The Role of the Teacher** Our expectations are high, and we demand nothing less than the following from our teaching teams:

- o To help children see the connections in learning and experiences
- o To co-explore the learning experiences with the children
- o To provoke ideas, problem solve, and conflict resolution
- o To take ideas from the children and return them for further exploration
- o To organize the classroom and materials to be aesthetically pleasing
- o To organize materials to help children make thoughtful decisions about the media
- o To help children express their knowledge through representational work
- o To document children's progress: assessments, checklists, journals, photographs, portfolios, etc.
- o To foster the connection between home, school, and the community

• **The Role of the Environment** The environment is designed to provide a variety of sensory experiences in an aesthetically pleasing manner, using both indoors and outdoors as learning spaces. Items found in nature are incorporated into the classroom materials and considered an important part of developing an appreciation for the world around us. Teachers carefully arrange the room and display all materials so that children can make thoughtful decisions when working and exploring. Documentation of children's works, plans, and collections that children have made from outings are displayed at both the children's and adult eye level. The classrooms provide an enriched environment that nourishes each child's development.