

Emilie

Christian Day School

To Learn

To Grow

To Become

Family Handbook

www.emiliechristiandayschool.com

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Welcome

Thank you for choosing Emilie Christian Day School! This Family Handbook is designed to help your family have a positive experience with our school. Throughout these pages we have tried to anticipate your questions about the program.

Our goal is to provide high quality care and education for children and to ensure that parents are valued and respected. To accomplish this, we depend on parents to be responsible and active participants. We expect parents to refer to this handbook, follow the policies and procedures, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest regarding their feelings about the program. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child's experience and the program. The director and teachers are available for individual meetings at a mutually convenient time to ensure good communication and the best experience for your child.

Changes to specific policies and/or procedures will be distributed to families in writing. The handbook is to be used as a guide and is not inclusive of all policies and practices. Any questions and/or concerns should be forwarded to the Director.

Here is our contact information:

Emilie Christian Day School
7300 New Falls Road
Levittown, PA 19055

Main Line: 215-945-3131
Fax: 215-945-1060

Tami Lewis, Director

Website: EmilieChristianDaySchool.com
Email: dayschool@emilieumc.com

Facebook: Emilie Christian Day School
*Private Facebook Page: ECDS Family Page 19-20

*Our Private Facebook Page is for families enrolled at Emilie Christian Day School for the current school year only. The page will be open for families by mid-September. A Permission Form allowing your child's picture to be posted on this page was provided at enrollment.

History

The Emilie Christian Day School has been servicing the Levittown area since 1958. Feeling the need for a Christian preschool and kindergarten program, the official board of the Emilie United Methodist Church established the school in August of 1958.

It began with three classes in the basement of the original Emilie church building. Upon completion of the new church education wing in 1994, the school moved to its present location. Currently there are over 150 children enrolled.

The school is conducted by the Emilie United Methodist Church on a non-profit, but self-sustaining basis for the benefit of children in Levittown and vicinity. It is a non-sectarian, but Christian school.

We are grateful to the many parents, friends and educators whose warm praise, enthusiastic recommendations and loyal support have been largely responsible for the success and development of the school.

The Emilie Christian Day School is administered by an official Board consisting of members of the church, community and school. The Board strives to uphold the high educational standards of the school by employing qualified and experienced teachers and assistants.

The earliest years of childhood are of great significance. The habits, attitudes, ideas and interests, which are acquired, will influence the remainder of the child's life.

The toddler, preschool and Pre-K classes offer a friendly and happy environment where children can work and play together. Opportunities are provided for the children to gain new skills, appreciations and form good habits. The children learn to be responsible members of a group.

There is an additional value to a Christian School. The teachers and assistants are aware of the many opportunities for religious interpretation of the children's day-to-day experiences. They seek to guide the children at their developmental level in the way of life as exemplified by Jesus Christ. Prayers are said before snacks and meals and all children participate in a bi-weekly chapel time with the pastor or Director of Congregational Life.

Philosophy

Young children learn by doing. They use their senses to explore objects, people, and the environment. Through these experiences, children begin to make sense of the world around them. Meaningful interactions with adults and other children help support that understanding and promote confidence, motivation and curiosity. This complex process of learning and interacting begins at birth and shapes a child's cognitive, motor, language, sensory, social and emotional development.

A quality program provides an environment full of stimulating and challenging materials and activities that are developmentally appropriate for all children. However, a quality program also recognizes that each child is unique. At Emilie, our skilled teachers and staff use assessment and observation in order to determine each child's skills, knowledge and development. They use this information to construct additional experiences and challenges to expand each child's thinking even further.

At Emilie, we believe that with a foundation of security, love and encouragement, developmentally appropriate programming, and meaningful interactions, children are free to discover, learn and grow!

Vision Statement

Growing through imagination, exploration and community!

Mission Statement

Our mission at Emilie Christian Day School is to help children
to learn to love God and each other,
to grow into caring, responsible citizens, and
to become the best people they can be!

I. General Information and Policies

Days and Hours of Operation

Emilie Christian Day School provides preschool and childcare for children ages 13 months to 5 years beginning in September and continuing through the middle of June. A separate Summer Camp is open from the end of June through August for toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners and children in 1st-4th grade.

We offer two types of programs for children and families. Our full day program is open from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. We offer a full day young toddler program for children ages 13 months – 2 years; a full day toddler program for children who are 2 years old, preschool programs for children who are 3 years old by August 31st and PreK programs for those who are 4 years old by August 31st.

We also offer half day classes for older toddlers through prekindergartners (ages 2 through 5). Half day classes run from 9:00am – 11:45am.

Toddler half day classes: Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday

Preschool half day classes: Mon/Wed/Fri or Tues/Thurs

PreK half day classes: Mon/Wed/Fri or Tues/Thurs or Mon through Fri

Enrollment

Admission and program services shall be granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital status, disability and/or military status.

The enrollment process begins with a tour of the school and a meeting with a member of our office team. Upon registration, families will receive an Enrollment Packet. All forms must be completed and turned into the office prior to your child's first day of school. If your child has an IFSP/IEP, is receiving outside services or has standing Court Orders, we ask that all of this additional information be included with the Enrollment Packet paperwork.

Children will be accepted into the program depending on available space. If there is no space in your child's age group you will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. Children are accepted into the program on a first come, first served basis.

Required Documentation

The following paperwork is included in the Enrollment Packet. Families are required to provide this documentation prior to their child's first day of school.

All forms need to be filled out in their entirety. Staff will check for completeness when forms are received.

Registration Form

Emergency Contact Form – reviewed every 6 months

Health Appraisal – updated annually

Immunization Record – updated annually

Civil Rights Data Form

Behavior Policy

Health and Illness Policy Sign Off Form

Media Release Form

Fee Agreement – reviewed every 6 months

Several forms need reviewed and updated every six months as per state regulations. When you receive paperwork for review, please make sure information is accurate, update with any changes and return forms to the office as soon as possible. If changes occur before our 6-month review, please inform the office. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping your child's file current.

Key Cards

Families are asked to rent a key card to be used to enter the building. Each key card requires a \$10.00 deposit which will be refunded when the card is returned upon termination of services. Renting a Key Card is not required, however, this avoids long waits outside to enter the building when staff is not immediately available in the office.

Parking

Emilie Christian Day School has a parking lot for families and staff behind the building. Please park your car in this lot and walk your child to and from his/her classroom via the sidewalk. Please do not keep the motor running in your car while dropping off your child. Under no circumstances is a child to be left in a car unattended. We ask families to please drive slowly and safely through our parking lot, being mindful of other children and parents walking to and from the building.

We also ask that families do not park in the funeral home parking lot next our building. This is not our property and is not for our use.

Notification When Child Will Be Absent

Families are asked to call the school whenever their child is not going to attend. In the case of extended absence due to illness, a doctors' note should accompany the child upon return to school.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center not only of absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This will help our staff keep track of any illnesses that may occur at school. If your child has a communicable disease, share the diagnosis with the Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Parents will receive information about symptoms and what to look for, regarding any communicable disease that is in the classroom.

II. Tuition and Fees

Registration and Security Deposit

When registering your child for any of our programs, a non-refundable \$75 Registration Fee is charged. Registration is required annually.

When you enroll, there is a Security Deposit due in the amount equal to 2 weeks of your child's tuition. This deposit will be used as your June tuition payment or the final two weeks of attendance if two weeks written notice is given. The deposit is forfeited if two weeks' notice is not given.

Families wishing to have their child to attend Emilie's Summer Camp Program must register, however a Registration Fee will not be charged.

Re-Registration

For families currently attending Emilie Christian Day School who would like to guarantee a spot for their child during the next school year, (September to June) a re-registration fee of \$75 is required. Registration for the following school year begins in January.

Tuition and Late Payments

All families sign a written Fee Agreement prior to their child's attendance at Emilie Christian Day School. This Agreement will specify the weekly fee amount for the care of your child(ren) as well as late fees incurred if tuition is not paid on time.

Tuition is due, in advance, on the first attending day of each week. We prefer that you pay your fee by check, cash or money order and leave it with the staff in the Day School office. Fees that are not paid by the end of the week will be considered late and subject to a late payment fee of \$25. Failure to pay the fee may result in termination of care for your child(ren).

Weekly tuition totals are calculated by taking the annual tuition and dividing it into equal weekly payments. Tuition is billed weekly; however, you are free to pay bi-weekly or monthly if preferred. If paying monthly, please note that some

months have 5 weeks, therefore tuition for that month will be higher. Also, the number of days attended does not affect the amount of tuition due. Full payment is required regardless of illness, holiday, weather or other emergency.

Please feel free to discuss any temporary financial problems with the office staff.

Please note that full time tuition is based on an 9-hour day. After 9 hours, there is an additional \$5 per hour charge. Extended time must be pre-arranged with the office.

Late Pick Up Fees

Emilie Christian Day School closes at 6pm. Families who have not picked up their children by 6:00 p.m. are considered to be late. Late pick-up fees will apply in all cases where children remain in our care after that time. A \$25.00 fine will be assessed at 6:05 PM. An additional \$25.00 fee will be assessed for any part of 15 minutes and for every 15 minutes until pick up. Habitual late pick-up may result in termination of service to your family.

Returned Check Policy

Checks returned to us for insufficient funds or any other reason are charged a \$25 fee.

Vacation Policy

As we are closed for the week between Christmas and New Year's, all private pay families will not be charged tuition for the week. Families in good standing are also eligible for a tuition-free 'vacation' week in May of the school year, provided their child has attended Emilie for at least 6 months.

Discounts

Families with 2 or more children attending Emilie Christian Day School are eligible to receive a second child discount of 10% off their weekly tuition. This discount will also be reflected in the Security Deposit due at enrollment. Registration Fees are still charged per child.

Childcare Subsidies

Emilie Christian Day School accepts payment subsidies through the Child Care Works Program managed by the ELRC (Early Learning Resource Center). Child Care Works determines eligibility for childcare subsidy.

Referral Policy

Emilie Christian Day School offers currently enrolled parents a tuition credit of 1 week's tuition for referring a new student to the program.

The credit is one week of the referred students' tuition. The new student must be enrolled a minimum of 3 months. The credit will be applied at the end of the 3 month period.

For example:

A T/Th parent refers a full-time Pre-K student to the school. The referring parent will receive a credit of one week of full-time tuition. Or, a full-time parent recommends a student for the MWF half-day class. The referring parent will receive a credit of one week's tuition for a 3 half day program.

Withdrawals and Termination of Service

When you register, it is expected that your child will be attending for the school year (September to mid-June).

Families are required to provide two weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw their child from the program. Failure to provide 2 weeks' notice will result in forfeiture of your security deposit.

Emilie Christian Day School reserves the right to terminate service at any time to any family for failure to pay tuition and fees as outlined in the Fee Agreement.

III. Programming Policies

Our curriculum includes both indoor and outdoor play as well as floor activities and messy fun! We encourage independence in play, exploration, cleaning up, hand washing, eating and toileting. All of this play and practice can be messy, so we ask that parents dress children in comfortable play clothes that are safe to get dirty or spilled on. It is also important that children are dressed in clothing that they can manage as independently as possible.

What to Bring to School

What to bring to school varies depending upon the age of your child. Regardless, all children should have at least one complete change of clothes available at school at all times, including socks and underwear. Please place extra clothes in a zip-top bag for storage. Remember to label everything with your child's name. Here are some guidelines. Please see your child's teacher for classroom-specific information.

Young Toddlers: diapers, wipes, diaper cream, 2 changes of clothes, crib sheet & blanket for nap

Older Toddlers: diapers, wipes, blanket & small pillow for nap, multiple changes of clothes if toilet training

Preschool/PreK: change of clothes, helmet, blanket & small pillow for nap

Half Day Classes: change of clothes, helmet

***Please exchange soiled/dirty clothes that have been sent home promptly to ensure your child always has extra clean clothes at school.*

Outdoor Play and the Weather

In order to play on our playground equipment, children are required to wear sneakers. Rubber-soled, closed-toe/closed-back shoes are the only shoes permitted to be worn while climbing. Sneakers also keep feet safe while walking on the mulch in the playground, in the hallways, on the stairs and while riding bikes in the Social Hall. Children who come to school wearing dress shoes or sandals will not be allowed on any climbing structures or bicycles.

We believe that children benefit immensely from being outside running, climbing, digging, exploring, swinging and playing!! Outdoor play allows children to strengthen their motor skills and provides a change of scenery and fresh air. Our children play outside every day, weather permitting. Half day children go out once in the morning and full day children play outside in the morning and afternoons. In colder weather, we will go outside as long as the temperature, including wind chill, is above 25 degrees. Please dress your child appropriately.

During warmer weather, we monitor temperature and air quality. We will be outside playing if it is cooler than 90 degrees with the heat index factored in. If there is a regional air quality alert that is unhealthy for children, we will enjoy indoor play in the Social Hall. Please plan on your child going outside to play every day and dress them appropriately for the weather.

Helmets

On days when the weather is not favorable, preschool and PreK children have a large, indoor play area to enjoy down in the Social Hall of the church. There are foam mats, stepping blocks, balls, and bicycles. Children must wear a helmet to play in the Social Hall. Please send in a properly fitted bike helmet for your child to wear, that can stay at school. Please be aware that helmets come in different sizes and your child's helmet should fit him/her correctly.

Snacks and Lunch

ECDS provides a morning and afternoon snack each day. We follow the USDA Food Guidelines for Young Children when creating our snack menus. Their guidelines recommend milk as the beverage of choice for mealtime. We provide milk for snacks and lunch as part of your tuition. A monthly snack menu is posted in each classroom.

Emilie Christian Day School promotes good nutrition with the food we serve. We ask that parents do the same by providing a healthy, balanced lunch for their child. USDA guidelines for young children provide recommended food groups and serving sizes. More information is available on their website at <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers-growth>.

Children will be encouraged to eat their sandwich or protein first before they eat the rest of their lunch. The children will be allowed 1 treat at lunchtime, anything additional will be sent home. We do not allow gum or candy at school.

If you would like your child to enjoy a warm lunch, please pack the warmed foods in a thermos. Rinse thermos with hot water and then fill with hot food. Food will be at proper temperature by lunchtime. Perishable foods that require refrigeration such as meat and dairy, should be labeled with your child's name and placed in the classroom refrigerator. Other items should be left in the lunchbox.

Families do not need to send in anything to drink for lunch. We will serve milk and water. If your child is not used to having milk regularly with meals, there may be an adjustment period. In our experience, this is minimal and a new routine will be established. The only other suggested drink for lunch would be 100% juice. We prefer this beverage be saved for home consumption as only 6 oz total is recommended daily for young children.

Food Allergies

If your child has food allergies, please speak with your child's teacher and together you can determine the best way to prepare and serve foods that will keep your child safe at school. We may request additional information and/or a Care Plan from your child's pediatrician.

Birthdays

Emilie Christian Day School allows families to provide a special snack, if desired, for all the children in the classroom on their child's birthday. The family should speak to the child's teacher prior to the birthday, so you can be advised of any food allergies that you will need to accommodate when providing a snack. The snack must be provided in individual servings (i.e. cupcakes), rather than a cake.

Breakfast

For children who arrive at school before 8:30am, a table is available where they can sit and eat breakfast in the Gathering Room. Bowls, spoons and milk will be provided. It is expected that children arriving after 8:30am would enjoy breakfast at home.

Rest Time/ Naps

The need for naps varies with each child. Many children nap daily. Some children find that a quiet rest time helps promote relaxation and refreshes them so they are ready for the remainder of the day. For naptime, each child will have their own cot. Families are requested to supply a small blanket and perhaps a sheet or small travel pillow as well, marked with the child's name. These items will be sent home each Friday for laundering.

Curriculum

We use the Creative Curriculum at ECDS as well as the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards when planning for the children. Our curriculum identifies goals in four areas of development.

- Social/emotional: to help children develop independence, self-confidence and self-control, follow rules and routines, make friends, and learn what it means to be part of a group.
- Physical: to increase children's large muscle skills – balancing, running, jumping, throwing and catching – and use the small muscles in their hands to do tasks like buttoning, stringing beads, cutting, drawing, and writing.
- Cognitive: to acquire thinking skills as the ability to solve problems, to ask questions, and to think logically – sorting, classifying, comparing, counting, and making patterns – and to use materials and their imagination to show what they have learned.
- Language: to use words to communicate with others, listen to and participate in conversations with others, understand the purpose of print, recognize letters and words, and begin writing for a purpose.

Children enrolled in our toddler and 3-year-old program focus on socialization skills, language development, and sparking their curiosity for learning. The four-year-old classes will learn the concepts that are required for enrollment in kindergarten and will continue their socialization and vocabulary development. Our students are well prepared and ready to learn when they are finished in our Pre-K programs.

Daily Schedule of Activities

We provide a variety of activities to engage children every day. Your child's teacher will keep you informed about the activities and events planned for the class.

A typical Half-day program might look like this:

9:00 – 9:15	<i>Opening circle (discussion, story, calendar, weather)</i>
9:15 – 9:45	<i>Playground or Social Hall</i>
9:45 – 10:30	<i>Art activity/Free play</i>
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Snack time</i>
10:45 – 11:15	<i>Music/special activity</i>
11:20 – 11:45	<i>Closing activities, dismissal</i>

A typical Full-day preschool program might look like this:

6:30 – 9:00	<i>Gathering room and classrooms for free play</i>
9:00 – 9:20	<i>Circle, story time</i>
9:20 – 9:55	<i>Playground or Social Hall</i>
9:55 – 10:20	<i>Bathroom and snack</i>
10:20 – 11:40	<i>Art or special activity/free play</i>
11:40 – 12:45	<i>Clean up/lunch</i>
1:00 – 2:30	<i>Rest time</i>
2:30 – 3:15	<i>Up, bathroom, snack, story</i>
3:15 – 3:45	<i>Free play, organized games/movement activities</i>
3:45 – 4:20	<i>Playground or Social Hall</i>
4:30 – closing	<i>Free play, art activities, games</i>

The children go to music class each week. They attend chapel with the Emilie pastor or Director of Congregational Life every other week. Programs and trips are also a part of our schedule to enhance our curriculum.

Arrival at School

All children must be accompanied by an adult when they arrive at school. Children are to be brought to their classroom and the adult will sign and initial the attendance log indicating the time the child arrived. For children arriving earlier than their teacher, please take their belongings to their classroom and then drop your child off in the Gathering Room – Room 107. The attendance log will be in the Gathering Room at this time.

Departure from School

All children must be picked up before closing time at 6:00 p.m. Children can only be picked up by adults who are listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The adult will be required to sign and initial the attendance log indicating the time the child was released from our care.

Please be sure that your child's teacher is aware of you picking up, if from the playground or downstairs play space. We often have multiple staff supervising

and this will ensure an accurate count of children. Also, be sure to close the gate when entering and/or leaving the playground to ensure safety.

When leaving Emilie, you must hold the green button to release the door. Please do not teach your child to hold the green button while you open the door. The system is designed so that a child cannot get out of the building by him/herself. However, two children together can successfully do this, if taught how it works. Tell them that the green button is for grownups only.

Anyone who picks up a child who is required to be in a car seat must have a car seat in their vehicle. We are required to report incidents where children are not in car seats to the police and/or Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services.

Be advised, in circumstances where, in our judgment, the individual who has come to pick up the child appears to be impaired, we will contact the police and another approved pick up person on your emergency contact. We will also report these incidents to Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services.

Who can pick up your child

If the family member who regularly picks up your child is not available to do so on a certain day, another adult may pick up your child provided we know in advance and we can positively identify them. Their name, address and phone number must be listed on your child's Emergency Contact Form or you must provide the office with this information. Have the new person go directly to the office. Please make sure they are prepared with their driver's license or state issued photo ID. We will match their identification with the information on the Emergency Contact Form, or additional information you provide. If the individual does not have a photo identification we will not be able to release the child to them. Once identified, the office team will assist the person in finding the appropriate classroom.

Under no circumstances will we release your child to anyone who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Form without parental permission and without proper identification.

If you wish to add a pick-up person, you must change the Emergency Contact Form in writing. You are welcome to update the form at any time.

Field Trips

Emilie Christian Day School takes the children on field trips a few times each year. In the past we have visited Styers Farm, Silver Lake Nature Center, and various Bucks County Libraries. We also include a variety of health and safety programs. Families will be advised about field trips and will be required to sign permission slips in order for their child to participate.

On the day of the field trip the children will be asked to wear the school t-shirt that will be sent home with your child during the first weeks of school. Children are transported to field trips by school bus. One or two classroom parents join the group as chaperones. **All chaperones are required to obtain a PA state police clearance and PA child abuse clearance with no previous record.** Details about obtaining clearances are included in your Enrollment Packet and are available on the bulletin board in the lobby area. Clearances can take several weeks to process so please plan accordingly.

We do not permit children who are not enrolled in our program to participate in field trips.

Behavior and Discipline

All children have periods where their behavior is not appropriate for the classroom setting. Although inappropriate behavior is undesirable, it is part of the normal developmental process. The teachers and staff at Emilie Christian Day School use strategies that are logical, understandable and developmentally appropriate for the children in their care. We strive to provide a consistent structure and routine to the day so children know what to expect and what comes next. We will give children a verbal warning before transitioning from one activity and beginning another. We provide clear direction and expectations of desired behaviors and offer praise for a job well done. Our staff use positive behavior intervention strategies to provide a foundation to help children gain self-control. The staff will encourage children to respect people and property and to be responsible for their actions.

Your child's teacher will consult with you if your child's behavior is becoming disruptive. She/he will share techniques they are using in the classroom and offer strategies that can be used at both home and school.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

At Emilie, we strive to maintain a safe and healthy environment for our children, staff and families. Aggressive behaviors with the willful intent to harm others, self or staff, and/or the destruction of school property do not promote a safe environment for anyone. Inappropriate verbal outbursts are very disruptive and disrespectful to the teacher and other children. Undesired physical or verbal behaviors necessitate intervention and the development of an Action Plan. The following procedures will be followed:

Step 1: Staff will observe the child and identify the inappropriate behavior with regards to frequency, intensity and consistency. A log will be kept to document these behaviors.

Step 2: The teacher will meet with the director to assess classroom practices and develop strategies to teach and encourage positive behavior and modify undesired behavior.

Step 3: If behavior persists after a period of implemented modifications, a conference will be held with parents. Together, an Action Plan will be developed

to promote success in the classroom. The Action Plan will be put into place for a pre-determined period of time and data will be collected. At the end of the time period, the family and teachers will meet again to evaluate the success of the plan.

Step 4: At this point, the family may be referred to various Early Intervention agencies. On-going communication, including follow-up meetings and Action Plan amendments will continue as needed until an evaluation is complete and a behavior plan is put into place. If a child with behavior challenges has an IFSP/IEP already in place, the case manager will be contacted and a team meeting requested. New behaviors/concerns and responses may be added to the IFSP/IEP at this time.

Step 5: The program at Emilie serves children who are able to function successfully in a group setting. If, in the judgement of the administration, a child is not able to function in a group setting, or our school's program is not able to meet a particular child's needs, the school may require the family to withdraw their child.

Teachers will have access to support from the director and Care Plan Coordinator and have access to classroom coverage in order to meet with families. Emilie's Peer Support Group is an additional resource available to teachers, as are training opportunities offered through OCDEL and BCIU.

Biting

If you are enrolling a 1-, 2- or 3-year-old you will need to be aware that some toddlers and preschoolers go through a "biting stage," usually most prevalent at the beginning of the school year. Although biting is undesirable, this is a normal developmental process. It is a form of communication for a frustrated child. If a child does bite, we remove the child from the other children for a short period of time to provide redirection. While we understand the biting incident may have been traumatic for you and your child, we will work with both children and their parents through this developmentally appropriate stage. If you have questions or concerns, we will be glad to discuss this matter further, or supply you with information to help you better understand this stage. If biting continues to be problematic and additional support is warranted, families will be referred to Early Intervention Services or the Infant/Toddler Specialist Network.

In order to protect the privacy rights of our children we will not release information to any family member regarding the identity of a child involved in a biting incident. However, we will advise you of your child's involvement in such an incident through a standard incident report. Please do not ask our staff to violate confidentiality laws by asking who bit your child, or who your child bit.

Early Intervention Services

Children learn naturally during their early childhood years, by doing, by watching you and other children, and by being taught how to do new things. Sometimes you or your child's teacher may notice that your child is growing or developing differently than other children of the same age.

The five developmental areas are:

- Ability to move, see and hear – physical development
- Ability to talk, express needs – language and speech development
- Ability to relate to others – social and emotional development
- Ability to eat, dress, and take care of themselves – self-help (or adaptive development)
- Ability to think and learn – cognitive development

While all children develop at their own rate, some children can experience delays in the typical milestone events. Sometimes this is cause for concern and Early Intervention can help. Early Intervention Services can include information on how children develop, early childhood education, therapies which help the child to move his/her body, help for the family to support a child's growing and learning, and strategies for the classroom teacher on how to best support the child in their early childhood program.

The first step is to determine if the child is eligible for Early Intervention. After a family is referred and gives permission, a screening will be completed. If areas of delay are found, a full evaluation may be recommended to determine if the child is eligible for early intervention services or supports. If a child is found to qualify for services, a plan is developed. An IFSP or Individualized Family Service Plan, is designed for children 2 and under. An Individualized Education Plan or IEP, is intended for children ages 3 and older. This plan will outline the child's strengths and needs as indicated from the evaluation, define family concerns and detail services warranted. IFSP/IEP meetings can include families, therapists, early intervention specialists, the early childhood teacher and the director.

Services are delivered in the setting that is consistent with the needs of the child and family. Considerations are made to reflect the child's best place for learning. Services may take place in the school setting or another community setting, or in the home if the child is under two years of age.

Your pediatrician, the local mental health provider, and/or your insurance carrier can be a resource for additional services. Please see your child's teacher or office staff for more information regarding Early Intervention.

Inclusion

At Emilie, we believe all children should have access to quality care and education. We strive to provide children with the background knowledge and

experiences they need to be successful, life-long learners. Support begins when the family enrolls their child. For children who have IFSP/IEP's, a meeting will take place before the child's first day. Family members, the classroom teacher and the early intervention specialists, along with the director, meet to share information regarding the development of the child, his/her strengths and any concerns. Accommodating IFSP/IEP goals in the classroom is discussed as well as the potential need for additional classroom support. Additional referrals to other agencies will be addressed as needed.

For families who have developmental concerns or for concerns that arise as a result of screening or assessment, a teacher/family meeting will occur, led by our Care Plan Coordinator. Referrals to Early Intervention or other OCDEL supports will be made at this time.

As we strive to include all children, we will seek out additional support within the community to provide collaborative services to individual children and families whenever possible. Our goal is to provide each child with a quality, developmentally appropriate education. In addition, our building offers support to people with physical challenges through use of adapted door handles, an elevator that allows access to all floors, a ramp to get up onto the sidewalk as well as straight pathways into the building.

IV. Family Policies

Family and Teacher Conferences

Your child's teacher will keep you informed of your child's progress and interests during informal conversations at drop-off and pick-up times. We will schedule a formal Family and Teacher Conference once in November and again in May, to share information and concerns. We will also share our assessment of your child's skills and readiness to transition to the next level. A mid-year report will be sent home in February. Conferences are not scheduled at this time but can be requested. Please see your child's teacher to make arrangements.

There may be other times during the school year when it may be beneficial for the teacher and family to have a conference to address an issue of particular concern. If a family has a concern that they would like to discuss privately with the classroom teacher, they should notify the teacher who will schedule the conference as soon as possible.

Family Participation

Family members are welcomed and encouraged to visit and/or volunteer in our program after obtaining their Pennsylvania State Police and Child Abuse Clearances. We appreciate volunteers in the classroom, on field trips and occasionally to help maintain our playground. Families are also welcome to

visit during the day. We ask that you consider whether your child will be able to successfully separate from you when you need to leave in deciding whether or not to visit.

We encourage you to attend our many family events, held throughout the school year in the evenings. These events help create relationships with fellow families, as well as our staff.

Emilie Christian Day School will not permit parents who are subject to a Custody Order to volunteer at times that do not fall within their visitation periods as specified in the Custody Order.

Communication

There are many ways parents can receive information at ECDS. Each classroom has a Parent Information Board listing various policies and procedures including daily schedules, special events, menus and emergency plans. Classroom teachers also send home a monthly calendar with special days and events marked. Each classroom has a dry erase board for teachers to write a daily note to parents about what went on during the day. Teachers will often place reminders on the sign-in clipboard to help parents remember special activities. In addition, parents of toddlers will receive a daily communication about eating/sleeping/diapering habits. You may communicate with staff through a notebook system or using the "Leave your Teacher a Message" form, located near the sign in sheet. Your child's teacher will then respond accordingly.

Communication from the office comes in several places as well. A monthly e-newsletter is sent to families sharing information about school activities and reminders. If you would like to receive our e-newsletter and did not otherwise share your email address, please stop by the office. There are also several bulletin boards and tables in the lobby area sharing health, immunization and licensing information as well as Early Intervention, CHIP and Childcare Subsidies brochures. Be sure to check the portable dry erase board in the hallway daily as the most pertinent and timely news/reminders are posted there.

Emilie Christian Day School also has both a public and private Facebook page. The public page shares special activities and community announcements our families and others might be interested in. Upon enrolling, you have the opportunity to request to join the private ECDS Family Page. A new page is opened each September and is only offered to families enrolled during the current school year. Here is where teachers may post pictures of activities and special happenings and includes pictures of the children, if permission has been given on the Media Release Form. It is also a place for families to share and connect.

For Families Whose Primary Language Is Not English

Emilie Christian Day School welcomes all families regardless of race, creed, color, national origin or ancestry. When a family enrolls whose primary language is not English, every attempt will be made to communicate with that family in a way they can understand. Interpreters will be provided as needed. For the child in the classroom, materials will be labeled in the native language and books will be made available in the native language. We encourage families to meet with the teacher prior to the child's first day to discuss the child's native culture, experiences, communication needs and address concerns.

V. Health and Safety Policies

Health Appraisal

All children who are enrolled in Emilie Christian Day School must have a health appraisal completed by a qualified, licensed medical professional within 30 days of enrolling in the program. Families will be provided with the Health Appraisal Form when the child is accepted for enrollment into the program. A printed shot record or list of immunizations is not sufficient. The Health Appraisal Form is also available on the school website at www.emiliechristiandayschool.com. The Department of Human Services which oversees our school requires that Health Appraisals be completed annually.

Immunizations

All children who are attending Emilie Christian Day School must have current immunizations as prescribed by the Department of Human Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Families with questions or concerns about the Health Appraisal or Immunizations should contact the Director.

Illness

Our staff make every effort to create a healthy environment for your child and we emphasize good health habits. For this reason, we request that you do not send your child to school if he or she is not able to participate in his or her usual activities. Emilie Christian Day School does not have the capability of providing care for sick children. Staff will deny care to any child who exhibits symptoms of illness such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea. Please note: administering acetaminophen/ibuprofen (Tylenol, Advil, etc) for a fever and then sending your child to school is not acceptable. That is when a child is most contagious. Children should be excluded from care until they are symptom free for 24 hours or until a qualified health care professional notifies the program, in writing, that the child may resume attendance. All families are required to sign our Health and Illness Policy containing this information, at enrollment. We ask for your cooperation in this regard.

When a child begins to exhibit symptoms of illness and/or is not able to participate in the day's activities, the family will be notified to come to pick up the child. We follow the recommendations in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, Third Edition* by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association to determine when a child should be excluded from school and the criteria to be met in order for the child to be readmitted to the program.

When children are exposed to communicable diseases while attending Emilie Christian Day School, families will be notified in writing. The note will contain information about the illness, symptoms to look for and the steps the family should take to care for their child if infected.

First Aid and Emergencies

All ECDS staff are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR.

Staff will assess all injuries and provide first aid as appropriate. Families will be notified in writing when their child has been injured and will receive information about the first aid that was provided. Families are asked to sign off on this report and will receive a copy.

If the child's injury is more serious or involving the head, staff will contact the family during the day, to notify them of the incident. If the injury is very serious or deemed an emergency the staff will contact emergency services and notify the parent.

First aid kits are available in each classroom, on the playground and social hall, and on the bus. Staff take first aid kits and emergency contact forms on all outings.

Administering Medication

Emilie Christian Day School prefers that your child's medication, both prescription and over-the-counter, be dispensed at home. We understand that from time to time it may be necessary for your child to receive medication while they are attending the program. In order for our staff to dispense any medication you must comply with the following:

- Medication must be in its original container
- Written consent must be signed by the parent or legal guardian in the office
- Prescription medication must have instructions for storage
- Medication will not be dispensed after the expiration date on the container
- Medication must be given to the office staff by the adult who accompanies the child. Should you bring your child to school prior

to the office opening in the morning, the Gathering Room staff will accept the medication and direct you to sign the Medication Log.

Staff will complete the medication log when the medication is dispensed. The log will include the type of medication, the time given, the amount administered, and the name of the staff member who administered the medication. Should you pick up your child after the office has closed for the day, the medication and log will be in the Gathering room for pick up. **DO NOT LEAVE MEDICATION WITHIN THE REACH OF THE CHILDREN. WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT PUT MEDICINE IN THE CUBBY, LUNCH BOX OR BACKPACK.**

Children with Special Health Needs

Children who have special health needs may be required to provide a Care Plan written by their physician. A Care Plan is a communication tool used to share important medical information that we need to help us to provide appropriate care to a child. Conditions that may require a Care Plan include; asthma, diabetes, food allergies, chronic skin conditions, metabolic problems, sensory disorders, immune deficiency, and seizures. There may be other conditions or situations in which we request a family provide a Care Plan. Care Plans include information about a child's diagnosis, symptoms, medications, dietary and activity modifications, and emergency response plans. Care plans should be updated after every hospitalization or significant change in the health status of the child.

Health Insurance

Families are responsible for providing their own medical insurance for their child. The state requires that families provide the health insurance coverage information on the child's Emergency Contact Form. Families are responsible to keep the health insurance information up-to-date and accurate. Information on the CHIP insurance program is available in the lobby area.

Court Orders

If your child is covered by a Court Order we will abide by that Order provided we receive a copy of the Order. You are encouraged to speak with the Director if your child is covered by a Custody or other Court Order. We cannot take instructions from you to violate the terms of a Court Order. If the Court Order changes you must provide us with a new copy so we can abide by the new terms.

Parents who have visitation rights are only permitted to be at the school during the visitation period established in the Court Order. We will not allow visiting parents to be at the school for any reason other than at those times. Please be advised that we will not accept the responsibility of supervising visitation. We also will not allow supervised visitation to take place at our facilities.

School Closings

The School Calendar is distributed at enrollment and lists the dates the program will be closed. We close for certain holidays and for several staff in-service days each year. There may be times when the program may be closed due to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. The quickest, most accurate notifications can be found on our Facebook pages.

Severe Weather Conditions:

In the event of severe weather conditions, Emilie Christian Day School will follow the lead of two out of three of the neighboring school districts: Bristol Township, Neshaminy and Pennsbury School Districts in determining whether or not to close the school. The Emilie Christian Day School Facebook Page is the quickest form of communication. Information may also be posted on television stations (NBC10, 6abc, Fox 29 or CBS3) and the school answering machine. A delayed opening for the districts will mean that ECDS will open at 8:30 am. Half day classes will start at 9:00am as usual. An early dismissal announcement means school will close at 4:30 pm.

Other Emergencies:

Other situations, including but not limited to, electrical power failure, lack of water, lack of heat or air conditioning, hazardous road conditions, or other situations which may endanger the safety or health of children and employees, may result in Emilie Christian Day School being closed. If school is in session, families will be notified by telephone when these conditions occur. If the closing is during the program day and we are required to relocate the children, you will be advised as to where your child may be picked up either by phone, posted message on the school door or local media. In the event the nature of the emergency does not necessitate relocating the children, families are asked to comply with the instructions of emergency workers when attempting to pick up their child.

Emergency Operations Plan:

Our Emergency Operations Plan provides for responses to a variety of situations that may occur. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

- Immediate evacuation – students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.
- Shelter in place – sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related accidents may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.

- Evacuation – total evacuation of the school may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, the children will be relocated to a relocation facility. Our plan for a walking evacuation is to relocate to the Levittown-Fairless Hills rescue squad or Magic Cottage in Appletree. Should an evacuation be necessary which would require transportation, we would rely on local and/or county emergency personnel to establish the location and provide transportation. You will be notified of our location through phone, posted message on school doors or local media.

We ask that you do not call the school during an emergency. This will keep the main phone line open. We will call you to let you know that we've taken one of these protective actions and will call when we have resolved the situation and it is safe for you to pick up your child. We will use the information supplied to us on the Emergency Contact Form to make the calls. We will also utilize the information you have provided on the form in order to release your child in the event of an emergency. For these reasons, please ensure that the phone numbers and other information on this form are kept current and that only the persons you list on the form attempt to pick up your child.

We will review and practice our Emergency Operations Plan, including the shelter in place and immediate evacuation plan at least annually. We have regular fire drills in accordance with state law. We also have drills for other emergency situations.

Security

Emilie Christian Day School strives to keep every child safe while they are in attendance. The entrance doors to the school are locked at all times. You must obtain an access card from the office (for a \$10.00 refundable deposit) to get in and out of the building each day. If you come to the school and do not have your access card, you will need to ring the bell. A staff member will greet you at the door and allow you to enter. Whenever the staff member is not familiar with the person at the door, the person will be questioned about their business at the school and ID may be checked, before they are admitted and escorted to their destination. Likewise, we ask that you do not open or hold the door, allowing an unidentified person to enter our building.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Our staff are Mandated Reporters and are trained to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect. They are therefore required by state law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Staff who fail to make a report of suspected abuse or neglect are subject to disciplinary action, including termination, and may also be subject to criminal prosecution. Staff are not permitted to discuss their suspicions with a family or to disclose that a report was made. Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect are made to Childline. If you have questions or concerns about this policy please contact the Director.

VI. Additional Information

Confidentiality

The individual dignity of children, families, and employees will be respected and protected at all times in accordance with law. Information about children, families, or employees will not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive such information. This policy extends to both internal and external disclosure.

Staff are not permitted to give a family any information about another child or family in the program, including addresses and phone numbers without parent permission. This includes even those situations that appear evident, such as discussing why a child uses a wheelchair. Staff may not openly discuss a matter about another child with you. This would also include information about an incident in which your child was involved. For example, staff cannot tell you who bit your child. They can only tell you your child was bitten. Please do not put staff in the position where they may violate policy and be subject to disciplinary action by asking for any information about another child.

Emilie Christian Day School will only release information about your child with your express written consent. If you want records provided to another facility, school or service provider, you must sign a Release Form before we will provide the information. Release forms are available in the Director's office.

Staff are also strictly prohibited from discussing confidential information about another staff member. For example, there may be a time when an employee is absent for the day. There could be many reasons for the absence including illness or vacation. In order to protect their privacy, staff may not discuss this information with you. If you have concerns about a staff member you should discuss them with the Director.

Our staff are strictly trained about confidentiality. We will do everything to protect your family's right of privacy and ask that you respect the rights of others at Emilie as well.

Fundraising

As with most schools, our commitment to providing quality education and experiences for our children and families is tempered by limited funds. We have several programs in place to help raise money to support ECDS. Monies collected may be used to replace worn materials or add a major upgrade to the program. In the past we have purchased new playground equipment, new Social Hall equipment, new shelves and many, many new toys. We typically host two catalogue fundraisers during the school year, one in the fall and another in the spring. We also have ongoing fundraisers. These include:

Giant Foods Rewards Points - If you shop at a Giant Foods Grocery Store, you can donate your rewards points to Emilie Christian Day School! Simply sign up online with our school code and rewards will be automatically transferred to ECDS.

Box Tops for Education – Look for Box Tops on familiar packaged foods. Typically, these are cut out and placed in the box located right outside of the office. Scanning receipts is the new program that is being offered, instead of cutting Box Tops. More information can be found in the lobby area.

Ink Cartridge Recycling – We collect used ink and toner cartridges which we send in for a refund.

Please stop by the office for further information on any of these fundraisers. While participation in all fundraising activities is completely voluntary, we truly appreciate your support of these efforts!

Summer Camp

Summer camp is from mid-June until the Thurs before Labor Day. Parents of children already enrolled in school must sign up separately for camp, but registration is free. The program is relaxed and fun and filled with a variety of activities relating to a monthly theme, including water play and a field trip.

Our school age summer camp is for children finishing 1st – 4th grade. These children enjoy swimming twice a week, plus a weekly field trip, arts and crafts, games, outdoor activities and more.

Licensing

Emilie Christian Day School is licensed by the Department of Human Services in accordance with the Childcare regulations established by Pennsylvania. A copy of our current certificate of compliance and the DHS regulations book is posted on the parent board in the lobby area. We also participate in the state Keystone STARS Program which rates programs based on rigorous quality standards. The Day School has earned a prestigious 4 stars in the program!! You can find out more about this program at

<http://papromiseforchildren.com/choose-a-quality-program/keystone-stars/>.

Professional Affiliations

Emilie Christian Day School is a member of the following organizations:

Keystone STARS Program

Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children (PennAEYC)

Quality Child Care Coalition of Bucks County (QCCC)

Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)

VII. Family Code of Conduct

We believe that people are individuals who have different thought processes. It is the role of every person at Emilie Christian Day School to treat staff, families, and children with respect and dignity. We expect that all adults in our program settings conduct themselves in the following manner:

- With courtesy,
- With respect,
- With patience,
- By treating people the way you want to be treated,
- By modeling how we want our children to treat others, and
- By acknowledging and celebrating the cultures and practices of other people and families.

Under no circumstances will the following behaviors be allowed:

- Physical or verbal punishment of children,
- Threats to staff or parents/guardians,
- Swearing and cursing,
- Smoking,
- Quarreling, verbal fighting, raising of voices with other staff or parents/guardians,
- Doing things that are against school safety practices and policies,
- Bringing drugs, alcohol, or weapons to school or events, and
- Violation of any program policy.

If the above behaviors occur, parents/guardians will be asked (privately if possible) by a staff person to stop the inappropriate behavior. If family members continue to quarrel, verbally fight, or threaten, staff will call the police.

Emilie Christian Day School reserves the right to terminate service to any family who violates this Code of Conduct.

“Helping your little one adjust to a new program”

Going to a new school is a big step for a child. Some take it in stride and other need assistance getting used to a new experience. Some things to do:

- Talk about going to school with your child. Explain that he will be going there while you are at work. Always assure him that you will come and get him every day after work. Even young children benefit from being talked to about what’s going to happen.
- Take your young child to the new program for a short visit before dropping her off for the first day. Show her where she will play, eat and take naps. Talk about the kinds of things she will do each day while there.
- Read stories together about going to school/child care.
- When the first day arrives, establish a goodbye routine and keep it the same every day. Children feel secure when they can depend on familiar rituals for their routines. Never sneak out without saying goodbye. It can be frightening for a child if a parent suddenly is not there.
- Say one goodbye and then leave. Prolonged goodbyes are difficult for children.
- Send in a favorite stuffed animal from home for rest time.
- Talk with the staff and decide together what will be most helpful for your child.

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Thank you for choosing Emilie Christian Day School.
We look forward to getting to know you and your child!!