

# Emilie

Christian Day School

To Learn

To Grow

To Become

## Family Handbook 2023-2024

[www.emiliechristiandayschool.com](http://www.emiliechristiandayschool.com)

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## Welcome

Dear Families, Welcome and thank you for choosing Emilie Christian Day School. We look forward to providing your child with the best in quality childcare and early education. Please review the information in this handbook as it is designed to ensure your family has a positive experience while enrolled in our programs. The director and teachers are available for individual meetings at a mutually convenient time to ensure good communication and a quality experience for your child. Changes to specific policies and or procedures will be distributed to families in writing. This handbook is to be used as a guide and is not inclusive of all policies and practices. We welcome your comments, questions and or concerns and can be addressed with the Director or by calling Emilie Christian Day School at any time. We look forward to caring for your child and welcome you to our ECDS family!

Sincerely,

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### **Social Media**

Please feel free to visit our website for information, upcoming events or health forms at [www.emiliechristiandayschool.com](http://www.emiliechristiandayschool.com)

Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/emiliechristiandayschool.com](http://www.facebook.com/emiliechristiandayschool.com) for happenings, snow closing announcements and parenting information.

Join our private group just for our families. Only enrolled families may participate in this group only including direct parents or guardians. Once a family or staff member is no longer attending Emilie, they will be deleted from this private page.

Help us promote our school by writing a positive review on our Facebook page, Yelp or other social media sites such as google!

## **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.

## **Vision Statement**

Growing through imagination, exploration and community!

## **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, 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 its vicinity. It is a non-sectarian, but Christian school.

We are grateful to the many parents, friends and educators whose warm praise, enthusiastic commendations 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. There is a bi-weekly chapel time in the sanctuary with the pastor or director of congregational life.

## **Statement of Philosophy**

Young children learn by doing. The complex process of learning begins at birth and results from the interaction of a child's own thinking and experiences. Maturity and emotional development are important contributing factors in learning because they provide a valuable framework which precedes learning.

Children learn by hearing, seeing, moving and touching. With a foundation of security, love and encouragement, children will explore and learn to understand the exciting world around them.

Knowledge is not given to children. They acquire information about their physical and social world through playful interaction with other children, adults and objects. They are motivated by a natural desire to explore and make sense of the world around them.

Each child is unique. A quality program recognizes the individual needs of children while providing an environment full of stimulating, as well as challenging materials and activities for all children. Our skilled teachers and staff closely observe the children in how and what they understand and construct additional experiences and challenges to expand the child's thinking even further.

Learning information in meaningful context is not only essential for a child's understanding and the development of concepts, but is also critically important for stimulating self-motivation in children.

Young children need basic understanding and skills to make their experiences more meaningful. Through play with various, diversified and similar items, children are able to classify, sort, count and so on.

Children learn language through daily, fun experiences, through the five senses, and through listening and talking to other children and adults. Staff can help children learn language by speaking to them continually about whatever they are experiencing at the time and by telling them the words they need to understand their experiences.

Children's ability to learn is directly related to their effective use of language. Children should be given every opportunity to express what they need and what they think. Conversations and questions should encourage thinking and require more than a simple answer from older children.

### **Organizational Structure**

EMCDS is a not-for-profit 501(3)(C) organization governed by a volunteer board known as the Emilie Christian Day School Board. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and oversees the operations of the organization. To provide wholesome feedback and help mold policies, a current employed teacher as well as a current parent are members of this board. The Educational Director alongside of the Executive Director oversees the programs at ECDS.

### **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.

### **Keystone STARS**

ECDS currently participates in the Keystone STARS Certification Program. Keystone STARS is a four-level program in Pennsylvania to evaluate and improve the quality of childcare. The program offers Standards, Training, Assistance, Resources and Support (STARS) to childcare providers to improve and recognize achievements. For more information about the Keystone STARS Program, visit their website at [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org) The Day School has earned a prestigious 4 stars in the program!

## Enrichment

### **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 a new school bus, playground equipment, Social Hall equipment, 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. Cut them out and place them in the box located right outside of the office. Or, have your child glue them onto the monthly coloring page that is sent home and add that to our box.

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!

### **Family Participation**

Throughout the year, school events and family dining events, are times for families to come together and enjoy an evening out. Families are also welcome to visit during the day as we provide an open-door policy if you need to stop by and ask any questions or express any concerns. We encourage you to attend our many family events, held throughout the school year in the evenings, to build relationships with your fellow families, as well as our staff.

Please remember drop off/pick up will occur outside of the classroom for continued germ and hygiene efforts.

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.

## Program and Curriculum

### **Days and Hours of Operation**

At Emilie, 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; an older toddler program for children who are 2 years old, preschool programs for children who are 3 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> and Pre K programs for those who are 4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

We also offer half day programming. Half day classes run from 9:00am – 1:00 pm  
Older Toddler half day classes: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 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-Fri

### **Summer Camp-Day School**

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, however there is a summer activity fee. The program is relaxed and fun-filled and will include crafts, fun in the sun, and special water activities. There will be weekly “in-house” field trips for the children to attend as well!

### **Summer Camp-School Age**

Our school age summer camp is for children finishing Kindergarten– and entering into 4<sup>th</sup> grade. These children enjoy weekly field trips, arts and crafts, games, outdoor activities and more. S/A camp may end earlier than regular camp and require a different summer activity fee. School age camp provides the flexibility to families to pick and choose which specific weeks they wish to attend when first enrolling for the program. Due to limited space for this specific camp, ECDS requires families to adhere to their chosen weeks and continue with payments. Families are responsible for any tuition payments for the weeks that are chosen upon enrollment. Vacation weeks should be planned in advanced and not chosen when signing up for School Age Summer Camp. ELRC families should alert their caseworker when not choosing specific weeks.

### **Curriculum**

Emilie Christian Day School offers a developmentally appropriate, educational curriculum for young toddlers through Pre-Kindergarten. Our programs integrate hands-on activities, imaginative play and real-life experiences which foster learning at each age level. We believe that play is work for young children, allowing them to develop a meaningful understanding of the world around them.

Across the United States, teachers use The Creative Curriculum® to prepare more than a million young children for success in kindergarten and beyond. There are 38 research-based objectives that define the path teachers take with children in the classroom. The objectives cover 10 areas of development and learning:

- Social Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science & Technology, Social Studies, The Arts and English Language Acquisition.

#### **-The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos**

The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos helps caregivers and teachers provide care and experiences that are nurturing, consistent, and loving and that will help your child flourish. The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos will guide your child’s caregivers and teachers in creating a classroom environment filled with responsive daily routines and meaningful, individualized experiences that nurture your child’s learning and development. The routines will be familiar to you: hellos and good-byes, diapering and toileting, eating and mealtimes, sleeping and nap time, and getting dressed. These routines are an important part of your child’s day, and ensuring that they are consistent and nurturing will help your child build trust and form the positive relationships with his or her teachers that are the foundation for learning. In addition to daily routines, The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos will support your child’s caregiver or teacher every day as she engages your child in meaningful experiences, such as playing with toys, enjoying books and stories, creating art, and going outdoors. It will help your child’s teacher observe what your child does and select materials that match your child’s growing abilities and interests.

### -The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool will fill your child's day with rich learning experiences rooted in exploration, discovery and play. Constructive and purposeful play is essential for children's learning, encouraging discovery and exploration, and supporting children's academic growth. When children play, they acquire language, learn to solve problems, learn to control their behavior and feelings, and explore social roles. They learn about themselves, other people, their community, other communities, and the world around them. They find joy in learning. The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and play as a way of learning. It helps our teachers create a high-quality learning environment for the children in our care. Through studies, which are hands-on project-based investigations, The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool helps teachers build children's confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills- setting them up for success no matter where life leads them.

### -Parent Involvement is Important!

When teaching and caring for your child, we value your involvement, because a meaningful partnership with you helps our program to respond positively to your concerns and encourage mutual trust and confidence. Your partnership with us plays an enormous role in how your child experiences our program and what he or she will gain from the experience. 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.

### **Curriculum Enhancements**

Emilie Christian Day School offers several enhancements to the daily routines of our children. All classes are provided an additional music class either once or twice a week from our music program. In addition, electronic devices such as computers and I-Pads are used as a part of ECDS's curriculum to provide a visual, interactive learning environment for children in conjunction with the recommended screen time provided by Keystone STARS. Children attend chapel with the Emilie pastor or Director of Congregational Life every other week.

### [Enrollment](#)

#### **Enrollment**

The enrollment process begins with a tour of the facilities 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. School year enrollment is registering from September to June. Once you and the school agree upon an enrollment date contingent upon classroom availability, you will be provided an enrollment packet along with this family handbook. If your child is receiving outside services or has standing Court Orders, we ask that all of this additional information be included with the Enrollment Packet paperwork. When a particular room becomes full, ECDS will start a waiting list for that classroom. Placement on the waiting list is based on date of application and schedule requested.



- To reserve your child's placement, return the completed application form with your child's nonrefundable annual registration in the amount of 100.00. (ELRC covers registration fees only)
- Summer Activity fee also applies to summer enrollment (parents must still sign up for enrollment when re-enrollment opens before opening for public registration)
- Two week's tuition is collected as a security deposit. This security deposit will be applied to your child's last two weeks of enrollment. Families must provide two weeks' notice of termination to ECDS by providing last day of enrollment date

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.

### **Documentation**

The following paperwork is included in the Enrollment Packet. Families are to provide this documentation prior to their child's first day of school. If your child has an IFSP/IEP or Court Orders are in place, a copy of these documents is encouraged be shared as well.

*\*Application*

*\*Completed "Getting to Know You" form*

*-This meeting is offered between the Director, teacher and parents to create a partnership between the teacher and parent and discuss the child's learning opportunities in the program*

*\*Emergency Contact Form – reviewed every 6 months and newly completed annually*

*\*Medical Health Form/Immunization Record – updated every six months until the age of two and then annually*

*\*Civil Rights Compliance Form*

*\*Parent Handbook Sign Off Form-Handbook on our website*

*\*Fee Agreement – reviewed every 6 months*

*\*Emergency Plan Letter-annually*

*\*Food Program Enrollment and Eligibility Forms*

### **For Families whose first language is not English**

Emilie Christian Day School welcomes all families regardless of race, creed, color, background or ethnicity. It is the responsibility of ECDS to support educational growth of all children including children who are culturally and linguistically diverse. When a family enrolls whose first language is not English, every attempt will be made to communicate with that family in a way they can understand. We encourage families to meet with the teacher prior to the child's first day to discuss the child's native culture, experiences and address concerns. Our program will discuss how the child's native language (spoken or sign) can be used in the classroom. Staff will ask families for simple words or phrases that can be used to communicate with the child daily. Posters, printed labels, books etc. (spoken or sign) will also present to foster a child's native language while providing resources and opportunities to.

### **Health Insurance**

Families are responsible for providing their own medical insurance for their child. We require that families provide the health insurance coverage information on the child's emergency contact form. Families are responsible for keeping the health insurance

information up-to-date and accurate. Information on the CHIP insurance program is available at the end of this handbook in our community resources section.

### **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 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.

### **Early Intervention Services/Intermediate Unit Services**

Some children may need extra help and support that can be offered through 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 different 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 grow and change at their own rate, some children can experience delays in their development. Sometimes this is cause for concern. Early Intervention can help. Early Intervention services can include, among others, information on how children develop, early childhood education, therapies which help the child to move his/her body, information for the family to help enhance a child's growing and learning, and ideas for their classroom teacher to help the child in their early childhood program.

The first step is to determine if the child is eligible for early intervention. Families should contact their local Intermediate Units for more information (Bucks County it is the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22 1-800-770-4822). With the family's permission, the coordinator will do a screening. If the family continues to have concerns after the initial screening, they have the right to request a full evaluation.

If there are areas of delay, the child may be eligible for early intervention services or supports. A plan is developed for each child who is eligible. An IFSP or Individualized Family Service Plan, is written for young children. An Individualized Education Plan or IEP, is written for children ages 3 and older. This plan will outline the services that are needed, based on the identified needs of the child and will include the family's concerns, the child's strengths and needs from the evaluation.

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 child care setting or another community setting.

Your pediatrician, the local mental health provider, the blue pages in the phone directory and/or your insurance carrier can be a resource for additional social, mental, health, educational and medical 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 whose parents have concerns and for children who have IFSP/IEP's, a meeting is set up before the child's first day (discussions may occur during the tour). Families, the classroom teacher and a member of the office team 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 as accommodations will be made to access all classroom materials if needed. Our goal is to have our staff become partners with any and all support service personnel including therapists to help provide and facilitate continuity of care for the children we serve. Collaboration between these partners will lead to the success of your child in the classroom. Professional development is available to staff to provide the needed resources for staff to be knowledgeable in all competency areas to offer support to all those involved. ECDS also invites participation and input from community stakeholders such as PA Key, EITA, and other state and local technical assistance providers as we value their assistance in implementing inclusion all around. Conferences are held both in the fall and spring providing formal, scheduled opportunities for staff/family collaboration. Families can also elect to meet with their child's teacher at any time during the school year.

We also seek out support within the community to provide collaborative services to individual children and families whenever possible. Our building offers support to people with physical challenges through use of an elevator that allows access to all floors, a ramp to get up onto the sidewalk as well as straight pathways into the building.

If your child is already receiving services and has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) in place, please forward a copy of this document to the office at enrollment so we can be sure we are working on meeting your child's outlined goals. We will schedule a meeting with your child's teacher and a member of the office team prior to your child's first day of school to ensure good communication and successful programming for your child's needs and goals.

The Director will go over the *Voluntary Authorization to Release Information*, *Service Provider Handbook*, and *Permission to be Supervised by Service Provider* forms (children 3 and older) with families during enrollment. We will set up an introductory meeting or phone conference with the child's service provider(s) to discuss the individualized service/treatment plan goals, prior to the child's start date, or within the child's first 30 days of enrollment. Parents/caregivers will be encouraged to take part in the meeting. A plan for ongoing communication between the home, service provider and child care will be discussed during the meeting.

*Extreme individual situations may arise where ECDS needs additional classroom support from resources offered from behavioral health services. Behavioral health services may be requested by ECDS for safety reasons such as elopement and or severe aggression causing unsafe situations resulting in supervision and ratio being compromised. On such occasions, ECDS may temporarily pause childcare services*

while families are navigating through retaining behavioral resources. ECDS will re-accept the family when care for the specific child and other children in large group care, is deemed a safe fit.

### Program Day to Day Care

#### **Your Child's First Day**

Your child's first day in a new program can be a stressful time for everyone. We recommend meeting with the Director one week prior to your child's first day to review your child's enrollment, meet with the staff, and drop off supplies. This is a good time to review the 'getting to know you' document with the Director and staff. On the first day, plan your arrival to allow extra minutes of transition time. Feel free to call the school at any time to check on your child's adjustment and to assist the staff in further understanding your child's needs.

#### **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 two complete changes of clothes available at school at all times, including socks and underwear. Please place extra clothes in a zip-lock 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, 3 empty cups, multiple changes of clothes to stay at school, crib sheet & blanket for nap

-Older Toddlers: diapers, wipes, 3 empty cups, blanket & small sheet and multiple changes of clothes to stay at school

-Preschool/PreK: 2 changes of clothes to stay at school, bedding for nap time

-Half Day Friends: 2 changes of clothes to stay at school

#### **Helmets**

On bad weather days, (Children 3 and older by September 1<sup>st</sup>) 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. It is **recommended** by *Caring for Our Children* that children wear a helmet to play in the Social hall. **IF** you want your child to wear a helmet during bike riding, 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 children should fit him/her correctly.

#### **Daily Routine**

To keep you informed, each group posts a schedule of daily activities. All children should arrive at least by 9:00 AM. Parent parking is for drop off and pick up only and is limited to ten minutes. When leaving at the end of the day, check your child's hallway name for messages, children's artwork, or soiled clothing. Please replenish supplies the next day. Be sure to watch your child in the hallways and parking lot. Please do not allow your child to play in rooms that are empty at the end of the day.

## **Arrival at School**

All children must be accompanied by an adult when they arrive at school. Children are to be brought to their classroom depending on the morning routines provided by the Director. For children arriving early, please take their belongings to their classroom box outside their room and drop off in the designated drop off room.

## **Daily Schedule of Activities**

We provide a variety of play and learning activities for children every day. The teacher in your child's classroom 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>
12:00-1:00	<i>Lunch</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>

## **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 travel pillow and small blanket marked with the child's name. These items will be sent home each Friday for laundering. Pre-k children will only have a one hour rest time. No children are forced to sleep at any time. Children are required to keep their shoes on at all times while in our care.

## **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 the attendance log indicating the time the child was released from our care. Once the child has been released, we require that the adult and the child promptly leave the school. For liability insurance purposes we cannot be responsible

for children once they have been released from our care and discourage families from lingering on our premises after the child has been released.

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 the group's safety.

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 child protective 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 child protective services.

### **Outdoor Play and the Weather**

In order to play on our climbing structures, children need 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. Families are expected to send children in closed toe shoes.

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, twice per day, weather permitting. In colder weather, we will go outside if the temperature with wind chill is warmer than 25 degrees. Please dress your child appropriately for cold weather in a coat, hat and mittens.

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, staff may choose to 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.

### **Playground**

Our enclosed playgrounds are designed with age-appropriate equipment/surfaces, which meet the Department of Human Surfaces for child safety. Staff members check the playground to ensure safety each morning prior to the children's arrival.

### **Breakfast**

For children who arrive at school early, they can sit and eat breakfast in the designated drop off room. Bowls and spoons can be provided. It is expected that children arriving after 8:15 am would enjoy breakfast at home.

### **Breakfast, Snacks and Lunch**

As part of your tuition, ECDS provides a morning breakfast between the hours of 900-1015, a well-balanced lunch before any midday pick-ups and a mid-afternoon snack each day between 2:30-3:45. ECDS follows the USDA Food Guidelines for Young Children when partnering with the Philadelphia Archdiocese. Parents have the option of packing their own lunch so long as the lunch follows all required food groups. If a family

sends in a child without a lunch from home, ECDS will provide our daily scheduled lunch.

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 in the office and on their website at <https://www.myplate.gov/>

If you would like your child to enjoy a warm lunch, please send all food in disposable packaging as food will be heated up on a paper plate. Perishable foods that require refrigeration such as meat and dairy, will be labeled with your child's name and placed in the classroom refrigerator.

### **Food Allergies**

A list of each child's food allergies is maintained in the classroom where staff can view and/or wherever food is served. Food allergic reactions can range from mild skin or gastrointestinal symptoms to severe, life-threatening reactions with respiratory and/or cardiovascular compromise. Avoidance is the best practice and our staff are trained in First Aid and Infant & Children CPR that includes the administration of the Epi Pen. When your child has food allergies, you should provide a care plan prepared by your child's primary care provider, to include:

1. Written instructions regarding the food(s) to which your child is allergic and steps that need to be taken to avoid that food.
2. A detailed treatment plan to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, including the names, doses, and methods of administration of any medications that your child should receive in the event of a reaction. The plan should include specific symptoms that would indicate the need to administer one or more medications.
3. A signed NDS medical food allergy document must be submitted by families after getting it signed off by a medical professional.

#### *Necessary medications, proper storage of such medications, and the equipment.*

The written child care plan, a mobile phone, and the proper medications for appropriate treatment if the child develops an acute allergic reaction is routinely carried on field trips or transport out of the center. The Director or a lead teacher in her absence will notify you of any suspected allergic reactions, the ingestion of the problem food, or contact with the problem food, even if a reaction did not occur. The Director or a lead teacher in her absence will contact the emergency medical services system immediately whenever epinephrine has been administered.

If your child has food allergies, families are required to submit the food program medical form signed by a doctor so that ECDS can accommodate meals and snacks accordingly.

### **Birthdays**

At ECDS, we do more than provide healthy foods at snack time. We teach kids the importance of making healthy food choices themselves. We ask that in celebrating your child's birthday with his or her classmates, you consider healthy alternatives to cupcakes, cookies and cake. 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 so long as the special snack is store bought. 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). ALL products must be store bought and display the ingredients for ECDS to monitor allergies.

### **Transitions to a New Class**

The Director will determine the appropriate placement for all children at the school based on your child's birthday as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. Emilie Christian Day School typically doesn't transition children based on birthdays in the middle of the school year but rather children transition to new classrooms with a cluster of peers for the next school year together. This ensures your child doesn't have to repeat one of our classrooms twice in order to start in the school districts on time. This transition policy allows caregivers and children to develop a longer continuity of care promoting stronger relationships with each other. A "Transition Meeting" can be scheduled to meet with your child's new teachers for the following school year upon request. Families have the opportunity to participate at Meet and Greet held annually in September to meet the teacher and other families enrolled in the class.

### **Transitioning to a New Learning Program/Facility**

Upon your departure from ECDS, we will at your written request transfer all of your child's health forms, progress reports and any other information important to your child's years at Emilie Christian Day School. Be sure to include the address of the facility you would like it sent to and your signature. At the end of the year, at your request, for Kindergarten age students' families, a "Transition Meeting" can be scheduled to discuss the move and for Emilie Christian Day School to provide parents with local school district information and/or services. We feel it is important to help your child feel at ease when transitioning to a new learning environment and we will do whatever we can to help your child feel comfortable.

### **Field Trips**

Emilie Christian Day School takes the older children on field trips a few times each year. In the past we have visited Shady Brook Farm, the local library or the Bucks County Technical School. 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.

Children are transported to field trips by a school bus and families will be provided permission slips to fill out and submit in advance to the trip. We do not permit children who are not enrolled in our program to participate in field trips.

### *Behavior and Discipline*

We strive to create a positive and supportive play and learning environment. At times, limits must be set for the safety and welfare of each child. Children are redirected or gently removed from any problem situation. Staff members give choices and positive alternatives rather than punish negative behaviors. Physical punishment is unacceptable as a means of discipline at ECDS.

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

We believe that all domains of learning are supported during play and through strong, positive, interactions with adults. Promoting healthy social and emotional development,



including self-control, is one of the fundamental responsibilities our program. The early years are a critical time for children to learn to control their thoughts, feelings, attention, impulses, and behavior. They are learning how to get along with others and how to be a friend. We know that when children are given the opportunities and support to develop self-control and other social and emotional skills, it gives them the foundation needed for academic success. We support this development through:

#### Our Environment

- We provide children with materials and engage them in activities that are age appropriate
- We develop routines that meet the needs of young children and avoid long periods of wait time
- We are flexible in our schedule and follow the interests and needs of the children
- We regularly observe the environment and the children as they interact in it to ensure it promotes healthy social interactions

#### Our Teachers

- Work to develop a relationship with each child
- Encourage peer relationships by creating social opportunities and working with children to resolve conflict
- Always speak to children in a calm tone
- Put words to children's emotions
- Use social stories with young children to teach healthy social skills
- Strive to serve individual needs while ensuring the safety of all children
- Partner with social and emotional experts and other multidisciplinary team members to ensure a child's success.

#### Our Children

- Learn how to handle conflict in a healthy manner (using appropriate words and not hands)
- Develop skills to help them control their behavior and emotions

Every effort will be made to retain a child's enrollment here at ECDS. Because of this effort, IECMH Consultation services may be requested from the Director to ensure every community resource has been accessed to retain children at the school. classroom for Behavior concerns tell us that children need more time, support and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social and emotional health. On rare occasions, we may work with families to seek the best care for their child if all parties agree that our program can no longer meet the needs of an individual child.

### **Discipline**

We strive to create a positive and supportive play and learning environment. At times, limits must be set for the safety and welfare of each child. Children are redirected or gently removed from any problem situation. Staff members give choices and positive alternatives rather than punish negative behaviors. Physical punishment is unacceptable as a means of discipline at Emilie Christian Day School.

### **Dismissal**

For various reasons, some children may have difficulty adjusting to the child care, large group environment. In such cases, and in the best interest of your child, ECDS may ask that you withdraw your child. If this should occur, you will be given two weeks' notice in order to make alternative child care arrangements. However there could be safety situations that arise causing immediate termination At rare times a family may disagree with ECD'S policies and procedures. If disagreements cannot be resolved, a family may be terminated from the program. Emilie Christian Day School further reserves the right

to terminate service at any time, and without notice, to any family who violates program policy. If you have questions about this policy please contact the Director.

### **Biting**

As your child grows into a toddler, he or she may encounter incidents regarding biting. The behavior is very common among toddlers and even preschoolers. Biting incidents are managed within the classrooms and a plan of action is developed and communicated to both families. Children's names are kept confidential. We make every effort to extinguish the behavior and to protect the children in the classroom.

### **Our Environment**

We provide children with materials and engage them in activities that are age appropriate - We develop routines that meet the needs of young children and avoid long periods of wait time - We are flexible in our schedule and follow the interests and needs of the children - We regularly observe the environment and the children as they interact in it to ensure it promotes healthy social interactions Our Teachers - Work to develop a relationship with each child - Encourage peer relationships by creating social opportunities and working with children to resolve conflict - Always speak to children in a calm tone - Put words to children's emotions - Use social stories with young children to teach healthy social skills - Strive to serve individual needs while ensuring the safety of all children - Partner with social and emotional experts and other multidisciplinary team members to ensure a child's success

Our Children - Learn how to handle conflict in a healthy manner (using appropriate words and not hands) - Develop skills to help them control their behavior and emotions Behavior concerns tell us that children need more time, support and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social and emotional health. On rare occasions, we may work with families to seek the best care for their child if all parties agree that our program can no longer meet the needs of an individual child. Dismissal For various reasons, some children may have difficulty adjusting to the child care environment. In such cases, and in the best interest of your child, ECDS may ask that you withdraw your child. If this should occur, you will be given one week's notice in order to make alternative child care arrangements. At rare times a family may disagree with Emilie Christian Day School's policies and procedures. If disagreements cannot be resolved, a family may be terminated from the program.

### Financial

#### **Registration and Security Deposit**

When registering your child for our school year, a non-refundable \$100 Registration Fee is charged. (ELRC covers annual registration only) Registration is required annually. When you enroll at any time during the school year, there is a Security Deposit due in the amount equal to 2 weeks of your child's tuition (N/A for ELRC). This deposit will be used as your tuition payment of the final two weeks of attendance if two weeks written notice is given. The deposit is forfeited if two weeks' notice of termination is not given. School year families wishing for their child to attend Emilie's Summer Camp must register and submit a non-refundable \$50.00 summer activity fee to hold a child's enrollment spot. School Age summer camp children are required to pay a 75 registration fee.

### **Re-Enrollment**

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 \$100 is needed. Registration for the following school year begins in January. Current families who re-enroll in the month of January will be offered a discounted registration fee of 75.00.

### **Summer Activity Fee**

Emilie Christian Day School will be collecting a Summer activity fee in the amount of \$50.00 per child. The activity fee doesn't apply to Young Toddler or School Age classrooms. Some activities may be too advanced for Young Toddlers and School Age Camp provides their own camp with trips from separate registration fees (75.00). The \$50.00 fee will be collected each Summer during the first two weeks of June before the first day of Summer Camp. This fee will help fund in-house field trips such as puppet shows, ice trucks and other fun filled events during camp.

### **Tuition and Late Payments**

All families sign a written Fee Agreement prior to their child's attendance at Emilie Christian Day School and again annually. 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. (Fee agreements must be reviewed and signed by both parties every six months).

Tuition is due, in advance, on the first attending day of each week. We ask that you pay your fee by check, cash, money order or electronically and leave it with the staff in the Day School office. Failure to pay can 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 so long as tuition is paid before time used. 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 another emergency. Please feel free to discuss any temporary financial problems with the office staff.

### **Methods of Payment**

Emilie Christian Day School tuition may be paid by the following methods: Cash, check or money order. Families may opt to utilize our electronic options through Square. Families can pay on-site with a credit card or debit card or can request a click to pay link sent to their email. Both electronic payment options come with parent convenience charges as most electronic payments charge fees.

### **Returned Check Policy**

Checks returned to us for insufficient funds, or any other reasons are charged a \$20 fee.

### **Late Pick Up Charges**

The facility is licensed by The Department of Human Services until **ONLY 6:00pm**. If you are picking your child up close to this time, please be sure you are arriving around

5:55 PM to avoid any late charges. Families who have not picked up their children by 6:00 p.m. are considered to be late. A flat 25.00 late fee will be due per child, when the child is picked up anywhere between 6:05PM-6:10PM. In addition to the 25.00 late fee, per child an additional 1.00 will be charged per minute starting at 6:11PM and thereafter. A 10.00 fee will be due per child, when the child is picked up anywhere between 1:06-1:10 PM. In addition to the 10.00 late fee for half day schedules, an additional 1.00 will be charged per minute starting at 1:11PM and thereafter. Frequent late pick-ups (3 or more in a 3-month period), may result in termination from the program.

## Schedules

### **Schedule Changes**

The Director must approve any schedule changes. During the re-enrollment process each school year, you may make changes to your child's schedule. Schedule modification changes will be based on classroom availability and accommodations may be placed on schedule change waitlist pending classroom space.

### **Leave of Absence**

ECDS recognizes there may be varying reasons for families needing their child to take an enrollment leave of absence. Family requests will be reviewed by the Director on a case by case basis. Enrolled families who plan on returning after a summer session are expected to keep two week deposits on their account for their Fall return.

### **Holidays, Sick, Emergency & Vacation Days/Policy**

Full fees are due for Holidays, Emergency, Weather and In-Service Days. Full payment is also due for all absences, including those due to sickness, weather, and non-weather emergencies. These fees must be paid to assure a continuing place for your child.

1. Holidays: Emilie Christian Day School is closed for the following holidays: Labor Day, Juneteenth, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, The Day After Thanksgiving, Christmas, Christmas Eve as we are also closed for the week between Christmas and New Year's, (all private pay families will not be charged tuition for the week) New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Maundy Thursday as well as Good Friday. (If the holiday falls on a weekend, ECDS is closed the Friday before or Monday after the holiday. Refer to the yearly calendar for all center closings.)
2. Sick Days: Please contact the school any day your child will be absent. If your child is absent for 3 days or longer, a doctor's note is required before they can return to the center. Families who do not make contact with their center for five consecutive days may be terminated from the program.
3. Emergency Days: We make every effort to remain open however in the event of severe weather, power outages or other emergencies Emilie Christian Day School may find it necessary to delay opening or close. Alerts will be sent through social media, Pro-Care app, local news media and all other alert notification tools as well. If we must close early or not open the center due to inclement weather or other non-weather emergencies, parents are notified by phone and/or e-mail. If the center closes early, children must be picked up before or no later than the early dismissal time. ECDS's late fee policy will still occur when the school closes early.
4. Vacation: Families in good standing are eligible for a tuition-free 'vacation' week any time from January through the end of the current school year, provided their child has attended Emilie for at least 6 months.

5. In-Service Days: Emilie Christian Day School is closed on designated In-Service days as follows: June-1 in-service day, September-1 meet and greet day and 1 staff workshop day, Fall Conferences in November (on Election Day) and lastly Spring Conferences (on Election Day).

### **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.

Families who can provide valid documentation to show a parent has Veteran Status, first responder status or proof of EUMC membership, will be offered a 10% discount.

Discounts may be combined at the Executive Director's discretion.

### **Childcare Subsidies**

Emilie Christian Day School accepts subsidy care through the Child Care Works program (CCW/CCIS/ELRC) distributed by your local ELRC office. The Bucks County Childcare Information Service (ELRC) will determine eligibility for childcare subsidy as well as co-pay information.

### **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, upon request.

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.

### **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. Two-week deposits are kept on accounts for children who are enrolled for current school year and has signed up for the following school year while taking a leave of absence from the summer schedule. 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.

## [Communication](#)

### **Communication**

Communication is always welcomed at ECDS! It's easy to reach both our Educational Director as well as our Executive Director in the office via phone or email. Contact information can be found in the front of this handbook. Messages left after normal business hours will be attended to on the next business day. The school phone number

and email can be found in the front of this handbook. Communication from the office comes in several places as well. ECDS relies heavily on our communication app, Tadpoles. Please always check your child's daily report and any messages that may come through the app. There are also several bulletin boards 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 private Facebook Page daily as the most pertinent and timely news/reminders are posted there titled *ECDS A Community of Enrolled Families*.

### **Online Communication**

Emilie Christian Day School also has its very own Facebook page as well as a private Facebook page for currently enrolled families to access only. We are excited that lots of you have found us and are following us regularly. Our goal is to share some great information with you about nutrition and recipes for kids, fun community events, educational articles, great things that your children are doing during the year and much more!

### **Photos**

Emilie Christian Day School staff are snapping pictures regularly of the children learning, creating art and enjoying in-house activities to share with you! These pictures are posted on your child's Tadpole App or featured on our private Facebook page as events unfold for you to enjoy. Pictures may also be spotlighted on our public Facebook page or private website however ECDS will ask permission to share any photos outside of our private page. We also share center happenings with our local communities and use photos for promotional materials. At ECDS we are excited to watch your children grow and we are proud to share their accomplishments. In order for us to do so, parents are asked to sign the photo release on the Emergency Contact form. We know you'll enjoy sharing the photos with friends and family! Professional photographs are taken at the school in the Fall and Spring available for parent purchase.

### **Tadpoles**

ECDS utilizes the Tadpoles, an app for safely and securely communicating with parents about their children. This communication tool allows teachers to give families insight into their child's daily routines and experiences with real-time updates, photos, observations and more. This parent app engages families in the learning process and allows them to feel connected to their child's day.

There are many other ways parents can receive information at ECDS. Each classroom has a Parent Information Board listing daily schedules, special events, menus, emergency plans and other information. ECDS will send home a monthly calendar with special days and events marked. Teachers will often place reminders on the sign-in clipboard or on your child's daily report to help parents remember special activities.

### **Assessments and Family Conferences**

1. Screenings: Developmental screenings using the 'Ages and Stages Questionnaire' are conducted within 45 days of program entry for each child. The Ages and Stages tool evaluates a child's progress in four developmental domains of social/emotional, cognitive, physical and language/literacy. Results of these assessments are used for referral to community resources as needed. Family and school will work together to complete this screening.

2. Observation: Teachers collect information about each child's development through on-going observations. The results of these observations are used for curriculum planning, assessment, and individual child planning and referral to community resources.

3. Assessment and Family Conferences: After completion of assessments, utilizing The Ounce and Work Sampling assessment tool, family conferences are offered to discuss the child's developmental progress and behavioral, social and physical needs. Conferences will be held in Fall and Spring. Specific dates will be posted at those times. Conferences may also be requested by families or the Director at any time, to discuss issues that may arise. Assessments are done in the Fall, Winter and Spring for all children.

Your child's teacher will keep you up to date on 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.

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

### **Family Questionnaires**

Each January, we email families a link to fill out an annual questionnaire about ECDS. The confidential results are tallied and comments are shared with Center Directors and Staff. This information lets us know what we are doing well and how we can improve our services.

### **Back to School Night**

Parents are invited to a Back-to-School Night held each September. This is a night where parents come to school and re-meet with their child's teachers to learn about classroom curriculum and activities.

### [Security](#)

#### **Secure Entrances**

Emilie Christian Day School is secured by a key card entry system. Enrolled families receive a key card used to gain entry to the center. For security reasons, we ask that families do not give this card to anyone (even an alternate pick-up person). Anyone without a security card will use doorbell at the front door to seek entry. Entry will be permitted after the person is identified.

#### **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 key is returned upon termination of services.

## **Parking**

Emilie Christian Day School has a parking lot for families and staff behind the building. The first five parking spaces in each row are designated for parents. Please park your car in one of these designated parking spaces 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, be mindful of other children and parents walking to/from the building and never leave an unattended care running.

We also ask that families do not use the funeral home parking lot, entering off New Falls Road. Other entrances and exits should be utilized to maintain neighborhood safety.

## **Child Pick Up**

We cannot release children to anyone other than their parent/guardian without specific written authorization. If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up your child, please inform your Center Director in writing. This person must be listed as an alternate pick-up person on your child's Emergency Contact Form and must present picture identification upon picking up the child. Anyone responsible for dropping off and picking up children must be at least 18 years of age. Any situation involving special custody arrangements requires written legal documentation/a court order which must be given to the Director and will be kept on file. ECDS staff will not release a child to a pick-up person who appears to be or whom the staff suspects, under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Staff will stay with the child at the Center and contact an alternate pick-up person. If the pick-up person insists on taking the child, staff will contact an emergency pick-up person and the police. Children of any age should not be left unattended in a car or anywhere in the parking lot during drop-off and pick-up times. All children must be secured in the proper car/booster seat. Cars are not to be left running in the parking lot. 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 have their name, address and phone number on file and they provide positive identification. This information should be available on the Emergency Contact Form that was completed upon enrollment. **Under no circumstances will we release your child to anyone who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Form without permission.**

Please let us and your child know when someone other than the regular pick-up person will be picking up your child. Tell them to go directly to the office. We will match their identification with the information on the Emergency Contact Form. Please make sure they are prepared with their driver's license or state issued photo ID. 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.

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. Otherwise forms are reviewed every six months and a new one is submitted yearly.

## **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, about any communicable disease that is in the classroom.

### [Health and Safety Guidelines](#)

#### **Illness**

We as a staff make every effort to create a healthy environment for your child and we emphasize good health habits. We ask for your cooperation in this regard. 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.

When a child begins to exhibit symptoms of illness during the program day 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*, 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.

If a child is displaying any of the following symptoms, they should stay home until they are healthy enough to rejoin group care.

- Fever, temperature 100.4 or higher
- Chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Diarrhea, vomiting or stomachache

If an enrolled child or household member tests positive for Covid-19, **families are expected to make immediate contact with Emilie Christian Day School Administration** to receive an isolation plan and instructions on returning to school. Because ECDS is licensed by DHS and OCDEL, if either agencies implement any Covid-19 instructions or changes, ECDS is required to adhere to any provided changes.

From time to time, children are exposed to communicable diseases while attending Emilie Christian Day School. Families will be notified in writing whenever their child may have been exposed. The note will contain information about the illness, symptoms to look for and the steps the family should take to care for their child.

## **Hand Washing Policy**

To comply with Keystone STARS and to maintain a healthy environment, Emilie Christian Day School has adopted a hand washing policy. ECDS staff will wash your child's hands before and after eating, after outdoor play, after diapering and periodically throughout the day.

## **Health Evaluations/ Immunizations**

All children who are enrolled in Emilie Christian Day School must have a health appraisal completed by a qualified 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 in the program. It is also available on the school website at [www.emiliechristiandayschool.com](http://www.emiliechristiandayschool.com). The Department of Human Services that oversees our school requires that Health Appraisals be completed every six months until the child is two and then annually thereafter. 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. For your child's protection, we recommend that all children receive the recommended standard immunizations. A handwritten parent exemption will be required for any missing immunizations per the recommended immunization timeline. We require a physician's statement of inoculations and general medical health upon enrollment. Medical Health Forms must be updated according to the age schedule on the reverse of the form to comply with PA Department of Welfare regulations. Failure to provide updated records may result in the termination of your child from the program. **An updated health form is collected from families every six months until a child turns two and then yearly thereafter according to the written date of the child's last physical.** A printout list of vaccinations won't be accepted unless accompanied by the required health form signed and dated by the doctor.

## **Influenza Immunization**

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices as well as the Early Childhood Education Linkage System recommends the influenza vaccine for children, especially in group care. Documentation for children 6 months and older is required to prove the annual influenza vaccine OR an exemption letter for a medical reason from a physician and or written by the family-stating there is a religious or strongly held belief for not immunizing against the flu vaccine.

## **Dispensing Medication**

It is our policy not to administer any medication (including all over-the-counter medications and prescription ointments) at the Center unless it is an emergency. Please request a medication schedule from your doctor so that the medicine can be given at home. If your child must have medication during school hours, a parent should arrange to come to the school to give the medication. Medication will be administered only when the schedule cannot be altered and with physician approval. Due to air droplets, nebulizers are not permitted to be given at school. These additional guidelines must be followed:

1. Provide written instructions from your doctor with date, name of medication, name of patient, dosage amount, dosage frequency, a tool for correct measuring of the medicine and reason for medication.
2. Medicine must be labeled with child's name, name of drug, prescribing physician's name, pharmacist's name, dosage, time and frequency to be given.
3. Give all medications and written permission to Director (or lead teacher in her absence). Written permission from parents and Director's approval are required for medication to be administered.

4. A Medication Form from the center must be filled out and signed before medication will be given

Fever and Pain reducing medication will require the doctor's note to indicate the medicine is being administered specifically pain and not for fever. Staff will complete the medication log when the medication is dispensed. The log will include the type of medication, the time dispensed, the amount dispensed, and the name of the staff member who dispensed the medication. **DO NOT LEAVE MEDICATION IN THE CUBBY OR LUNCH BOX.**

### **Care for Children with Asthma**

When your child has asthma, you should provide:

1. An Asthma Action Plan (AAP) provided by your child's primary care physician to prevent and to treat the Asthma attacks.
2. Medications including the names, doses, and methods of administration and equipment (inhaler, spacer, mask) with a written instruction. Nebulizers are not authorized to be used in the building.

### **Care for a Child with a Disability or a Child with Special Health Care Needs**

Although Emilie Christian Day School is not a center whose primary purpose is to serve a population with disabilities or special health care needs, we encourage staff take a flexible approach to combine and deliver services to children with varying forms and severities of disabilities or special health care needs. When your child is determined to have a disability or special health care needs by your child's primary care provider, any authorized service coordinator, or any provider of intervention services, you, parents/guardians, may arrange the therapeutic services through consultants or outside programs serving children with disabilities or children with special health care needs. These services may be available through the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or through special health personnel such as RNs or LPNs under RN supervision. ECDS requires a care plan to be sure we are meeting all of the child's needs. You must be involved to assure that the plan is compatible with their care and determine the type and frequency of the services to be provided within our center, but agreed between you and the Director. The formulation of a plan on how to best meet your child's needs should be based on the assessment process and by your child's medical care plan which is created by your child's primary care provider in collaboration with the child care health consultant and you. Such a plan should be written, reviewed with you then it should be maintained as part of your child's confidential record. Your child's teacher may become a member of the IFSP or IEP team if you so request and attend the IFSP or IEP meeting for an assessment or a review.

### **Emergency**

In case of an accident or sudden illness, the following procedures are followed:

1. A phone call is made to 911.
2. Child's parent (or emergency contact person) is called.
3. Child and health records are taken to emergency service at the nearest hospital. In all cases, an incident report is completed and given to the parent by the Director. It is very important, especially in instances of illness or emergency that the contact information we have on file is correct. Promptly report any changes in address, phone number, employment, physician, or health insurance information to your Director

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 whereabouts 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 (215-945-3131). 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 monthly fire drills in accordance with state law. We also have drills for other emergency situations.

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.

All ECDS staff are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR as well as Fire Safety.

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.

If the child's injury is more serious than the typical scrape or bruise, or if the head is involved, staff will contact the family to notify them of the injury and the care the child received. If the injury is very serious or deemed an emergency the staff will contact emergency services and notify the parent.

Incident Reports Minor incidents that occur at the center are recorded on an Incident Report Form and reviewed with the Director who will share the information with families. Families are asked to sign (with complete signature) the incident report which will be kept in your child's file. When more than one child is involved, the other child's name will not be disclosed due to confidentiality.

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

### **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.

### **Severe Weather Conditions**

In the event of severe weather conditions, Emilie Christian Day School takes determining whether or not to close the school very seriously, keeping in mind that families have to work but also respecting family and staff safety. Families are instructed to watch television stations (NBC10, 6abc, Fox 29 or CBS3), call the school answering machine, check our Facebook page and be on the lookout for emergency closing information. Alerts will also be distributed through Tadpole messaging. A delayed opening for the districts, will mean that ECDS will open at 8:30 am. These only effects children whose start time is before 8:30AM. Half day students are still scheduled to arrive at 9:00 AM. An early dismissal announcement will be specified by the Director on a case-by-case basis.

### **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 is trained regularly 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.

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect/ Shaken Baby Syndrome**

Our staff is 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.

Our staff is trained about abuse and neglect and their obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect. 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 at 1-800-932-0313 as per DHS regulation 3270.19.. If you have questions or concerns about this policy please contact the Director.

## **Staff Trainings**

All ECDS staff are certified in Pediatric First Aid, CPR, Fire Safety and Active Shooter Preparation. Staff maintain their certifications through trainings provided by ECDS. Additionally, in-service trainings take place throughout the year.

### **I. 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 dressing appropriately,
- 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.

## **Community Resources**

County Assistance Office (CAO) Pennsylvania residents can seek assistance with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), help with childcare, health care coverage, home heating assistance (LIHEAP), school meals, Select Plan for Women, long-term living services and cash assistance through their local County Assistance Office. For more information, visit [www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov).

Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC)- Formerly CCIS ELRC agencies are the hub of childcare information in your local area. ELRC agencies provide you and your family with information on quality childcare and personalized childcare referrals to childcare providers based on your specific needs or preferences. ELRC agencies also administer the Child Care Works subsidized childcare program. For all of your childcare questions and needs, contact the ELRC agency for your local area or call the Child Care Works Helpline at 1-877-4-PA-KIDS.

Car Seat Clinics Pennsylvania State Law requires that children under age 4 be restrained in a federally approved car seat or booster seat that is appropriate for the child's age, height and weight. Children ages 4 to 8, must use a booster seat if they are no longer in a car seat. To find a Car Seat Clinic to help with the proper installation of your car seat, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The NHTSA may also be able to help with reduced cost or free car seats. Child Safety Seat Program at CHOP The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia offers child car seats at no cost through its Child Safety Seat Program at CHOP. Anyone who cannot afford to buy a child safety seat can be referred to this program by a healthcare provider. To be eligible, you must be currently receiving public assistance and have a green EBT Access card. In order to obtain a car seat, you must have a written prescription/referral from a healthcare provider (doctor, nurse, social worker, etc.) along with an EBT Access card and photo identification. The prescription/referral form must state your need for a child safety seat and that you cannot afford to buy a safety seat. Please call the Safety Center at 267-426-5000 to schedule an appointment. There is no cost for this program. However, a donation is always welcome.

Early Intervention Services The Pennsylvania Early Intervention program provides support and services to families with children birth to age 5 with developmental delays or disabilities. Parents who have questions about their child's development may contact the CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288. The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children ages birth to age 5.

Pennsylvania's Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) LEARN teams build support networks in every county for organizations and individuals interested in quality early education. LEARN Teams bring together early childhood programs, families, school districts and child-serving organizations to assess what quality early learning programs are currently available in the community and to develop ways to encourage quality early learning. They also work with school districts and community-based early learning programs to develop ways to make smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten for child, families, and teachers.

Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC) WIC is a federally funded program that provides healthy supplemental foods and nutrition services for pregnant women, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants and children under age five in a supportive environment.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Pennsylvania's program to provide health insurance to all uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance. Regardless of the reasons your children might not have health insurance, CHIP may be able to help you. 1-800-986-KIDS.

Mobile Crisis- If you are in a crisis situation call 1-200-499-7455 to speak to a trained crisis worker anytime, day or night. Lower Bucks-215-785-9765 Central and Upper Bucks- 215-345-2273

Bucks County Opportunity Council- 215-781-2661-Helping parents with resources during poverty such as, housing, bills, food and other possible emergency needs

United Way Bucks County-215-949-1660-Provides community service opportunities and charity opportunities while supporting the needs of the community

## “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.

--Reprinted from Bucks County Midweek, 2/23/00

Thank you for enrolling your child at Emilie Christian Day School. We look forward to seeing your child grow through the years with us. Emilie Christian Day School is a non-profit, equal opportunity organization dedicated to the care and education of young children. Admission is open to all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. ECDS does not discriminate in admission policies, programming policies, meal service, the use of facilities or employment on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin (including those with limited English proficiency) or disability. ECDS is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under US Internal Revenue Code Section 501 [c] [3] organization and as such contributions to the organization are tax deductible. ECDS’s tax ID # is 23-1534662.

### **Professional Affiliations**

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

Keystone STARS Program

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Bucks County Association for the Education of Young Children (BCAEYC)

Pennsylvania Association Childcare Association (PACCA)

Quality Child Care Coalition of Bucks County (QCCC)



FAMILY HANDBOOK  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AGREEMENT

I acknowledge receipt of the Emilie Christian Day School Family Handbook and agree to be bound by its requirements as a condition of my child's acceptance into the program. I understand this handbook represents current policies and procedures. I will be notified of any changes or additions to the handbook.

I further agree that, if a two week notice of withdrawal from the program is not submitted, I will be responsible for payment for the days which my child would ordinarily be scheduled to attend during the two-week period.

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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PARENT SIGNATURE

DATE

FAMILY 1 E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY 2 E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please read and sign this acknowledgement form  
and return to your Director.*