

**THE EARLY CHILDHOOD LABORATORY**  
**PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**2025 / 2026**

**Department of Early Childhood, Special Education, & Counselor Education**  
**College of Education**  
**University of Kentucky**  
**621 South Limestone**  
**Lexington, KY 40506-0657**  
**(859) 257-7732**

## **THE PROGRAM**

### **Philosophy**

The Early Childhood Laboratory, established in 1928, is a university-based center operated by the Department of Early Childhood, Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling within the College of Education. The Early Childhood Laboratory has a three-part mission:

1. The ECL serves as a model early childhood program in community. Four different types of programs for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years are provided - Infant/Toddler Laboratory, Preschool Laboratory, Summer Program, and the Extended Day Program. The ECL teachers serve as instructors for college courses, and trainers and presenters for other childcare workers.
2. The ECL serves as a teacher-training site for future early childhood teachers. University students learn about becoming teachers of young children through observation, participation, and teaching experiences.
3. The ECL serves as a site for research in child development and early childhood education. ECL children are occasionally involved in research projects conducted by university students. Prior to such involvement, parents are informed about the nature, purpose, and procedures of a given study. Consent from parents is essential before any child participates.

The three-part mission of our school provides a unique environment for children. Children at the ECL encounter numerous adults (e.g., university students), which allows classroom teacher's time and opportunity to respond to individual children's needs. We feel the low adult/child ratio facilitates in providing a climate, which will help each child to grow and learn.

We believe children learn by doing and that development is a process. We assume children are active, competent, and curious. We assume children want to learn. We believe children learn best in a safe environment, which encourages their active involvement in the learning process, promotes home-school continuity, and enhances the individual child's areas of development (i.e., cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development). As a result, the ECL offers programs for young children based on simple routines, careful planning, and developmental appropriateness. Children have opportunities for self-selected activities, small and large group activities.

The ECL follows constructivist theory – children build knowledge based on interactions with their environment, and interactions with others. We provide a developmentally appropriate environment for children and provide adult support to enhance learning. Curriculum for young children at the Early Childhood Laboratory is linked to the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards. The Early Childhood Standards provide a framework for children's development from birth to age four. Our daily curriculum focuses on individual and family goals and child interest.

The ECL is an inclusive program. Children with and without disabilities may be enrolled in each of the laboratory classes. Modifications and adaptations to the learning environment are made as needed and as stated in the child's IFSP, IEP, assessment information, or with input from the parents and teachers.

## **PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **Requirements for Enrollment**

Your child cannot attend school unless the following items are on file at school:

- Signed Enrollment Contract.
- A CURRENT Kentucky Certificate of Immunization. This must be valid and up-to-date. Parents who choose to use an alternative immunization schedule must receive a Medical Certificate of Exemption from their physician, outlining which vaccines the child may not have and why or a Religious Exemption Form from the Lexington/Fayette County Health Department. These forms must be attached to a current Kentucky Certificate of Immunization, which is signed and dated. Without the two proper forms, children will not be allowed to attend school. In the case of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, any unvaccinated children would not be allowed to attend school until permission is granted by the Lexington/Fayette County Health Department. The ECL encourages parents to fully vaccinate their children to protect not only them, but other children as well. All children should be scheduled to receive an Influenza vaccine in the Fall of each year. Some children enrolled at the ECL have significant, life-threatening health problems. Immunizations protect all of us.
- Physical Exam Form. A copy of a current physical examination must be provided to the ECL upon enrollment. A current physical is one within the last year.
- Signed Release Form/Permission for Pick-Up
- Completed Information Form
- Signed Emergency Consent Form

For children enrolled in the Fayette County Public School Preschool Program, paperwork from the ECL must be completed, along with paperwork from FCPS.

### **Calendar and Hours**

The Early Childhood Laboratory's calendar is a mix of UK and FCPS calendars. All parents will receive a school calendar at the beginning of the academic year.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is paid by the 15th of each month through automatic bank draft, cash or check. If parents choose to participate in the automatic draft program, parents must provide the school with a voided check, and complete the automatic draft application. If for any reason the draft is returned to UK (this would happen if there were insufficient funds available in the account), an additional \$10.00 will be charged to the checking account (in addition to any bank charges). Tuition will be charged for 10 months, beginning in August and ending in May. Deposits, charges for early care, and late pick-up fees must be paid by check. Parents who choose to pay their child's tuition by check or cash must pay tuition no later than the 15th of the month. Late fees of \$5.00/day will be added if tuition is not received by the 20th and the child will be suspended from attending school until tuition is paid in full including late fees. If tuition is not received by the 30th, the child will automatically be terminated from the program. Parents are strongly urged to participate in the automatic draft system as it reduces monthly payments and avoids possible late fees.

Please note that tuition payments from Kentucky's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) may not cover the full cost of the ECL's tuition. Families will still be responsible for covering any tuition costs that are not covered by CCAP.

Registration fees are **nonrefundable** and are payable upon the child's acceptance into the appropriate program. The purpose of the registration fees is to hold your child's space in the appropriate program. ***Please note: a space is not guaranteed without the payment of the registration fee.***

### **Re-enrollment, Enrollment, and Termination of Enrollment**

The re-enrollment period for lab programs is February. Parents will receive the request for re-enrollment letters by mid-February. The replies must be submitted by the end of February along with the appropriate registration fee(s) to ensure a space for the next year.

Preference is given in enrollment decisions to siblings of children currently enrolled at the ECL. This preference is given only if the child fits the age criteria, and there are openings in the program at the time parents are seeking enrollment. In keeping with group size and ratio mandates, the ECL cannot always accommodate a parent's wishes for when their child enrolls.

Enrollment in each classroom is primarily based on age level:

- The Infant Classroom(s) enrolls children ages 6 weeks – 15 months of age
- The Toddler Classroom(s) enrolls children ages 15 months – 24 months of age
- The Young Preschool Classroom(s) enrolls children ages 24 months – 36 months
- The Preschool Classroom(s) enroll children ages 30 months – 48 months

Children typically stay in their assigned classroom for 9 – 12 months or longer depending on their age, developmental level and classroom enrollment. Parents will be contacted to discuss any changes in their child's enrollment before any changes are made. Parents always have input in any changes to their child's program. Children enrolled in the Fayette Preschool Program may remain in the Fayette County program until the child reaches kindergarten age.

The cut-off for kindergarten enrollment is August 1. If the child's parents and teachers feel they are not ready for kindergarten, and a space is available in the ECL tuition program, the child may remain at the ECL, only moving to the tuition paying program. If the child qualifies for therapy or additional classroom support, therapy and support must continue, with the cost of the service being picked up by the parent. This also applies to the Summer Program.

Please give one-month notice to the secretary if terminating enrollment at UK ECL permanently. If the termination of enrollment is temporary, parents are responsible for the entire tuition during that period in order to guarantee space. If the termination of enrollment is permanent, parents are responsible for the total year tuition unless another child can fill the space.

Unless enrolling mid-year, all newly enrolled children will typically start in August. If a child is newly enrolled, but will start attending at a later date, tuition must be paid each month starting in August in order to reserve the child's spot for when they begin attending.

### **Arrival and Dismissal and Security/Access to the ECL**

Upon arrival and dismissal at the ECL, parents should park in the lot by the front door. All families should display their ECL parking pass to ensure they do not receive a ticket while they are in the building. Parents are discouraged from leaving vehicles on or idling, since exhaust can enter the building, and idling is a security risk for children. Idling is also not environmentally friendly.

All parents will receive the security code and a parking pass at the beginning of the school year. If you forget your security code, please let the secretary know. UK employees may ask to have their UK ID badge activated, so they can swipe their card to enter the ECL. Only Staff, Parents and certain UK janitorial and maintenance personnel have access to the ECL. When parents enter the facility with their child, please do not allow others to come in as well, unless you know the person/family. All visitors must be buzzed in by the secretary and must be signed in to visit the ECL.

Arriving at school on time allows the child to receive the maximum benefit from their school experience. Also, parents who are prompt in coming to get their children foster the development of trust. It is very difficult for a young child to be the last one at school--waiting five minutes seems like eternity. In the Infant/Toddler Program, arrival times may vary according to parent need. We do ask that you speak with your child's teacher if you wish for your child to arrive at much later times. We want each child to experience all the ECL program has to offer – it is difficult if children miss activities and snacks. If your child arrives after the morning snack/breakfast, we ask that you make sure your child eats breakfast at home. If your child is ill, or will not be attending school, please call the main office to let us know. If your child is not at school, and we have not received a phone call, we will call you to confirm your child is well.

**The established departure times must be maintained.** Parents will be fined for late pickup. After the first late pick-up, each family will be charged late fees as outlined below. For the Infant/Toddler program and the Preschool programs, late fees will be charged

beginning at 5:31. **Upon the 3rd instance, the late fee will increase to \$10.00/minute and remain such for the duration of the school year.** The laboratory is licensed to provide care for children only up to 5:00 in the summer, and 5:30 in the semester programs. Adherence to our departure policy is mandatory. Parents who chronically ignore this policy will not only experience increased fees but will also compromise their child's enrollment in the program, as outlined on the Enrollment Contract. Chronic lateness can also be considered neglect and a pattern may be reported to the proper agencies, as is our legal responsibility.

The child is **never** dismissed to an adult not designated by the parent. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, or if s/he is to go home with another child, the Head Teacher must have written permission for this change. This is for the child's safety and protection. In an emergency situation, a phone call from a parent identifying the person who will pick up, along with personal identification provided by the person (driver's license) will be accepted.

### **Transportation and Parking**

Every child who attends the ECL should be transported to and from school in an approved car seat. Information concerning best practice when using car seats is given out yearly. **ECL teachers have the right to not release a child to a babysitter or carpool driver unless the proper safety restraint is available for transporting.** Therefore, it is very important that parents provide adequate protection for their child when someone else is picking the child up from school. **ECL teachers and staff also have the right to not release a child to a parent, babysitter, etc. if the teacher feels the parent is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In these instances, the other parent, emergency contact or campus police will be called to intervene in the situation.**

Very limited parking around the ECL is reserved for parents, and each parent is provided with an ECL parking pass. This pass must be displayed on the driver's side of the front windshield of the car. Due to limited parking space, parents' use of these spaces is limited to 5 minutes. This permit is only for dropping off and picking up children from the ECL. Parents who are also students, staff or faculty at UK should drop their child off, and then seek other parking.

Children should never be left in a car unattended for any amount of time. If you need help getting children into the school, please call the office or classrooms for assistance. Parents are also asked to not leave vehicles running while going in the school, to avoid exhaust from entering the school. This is especially important for parents parking in the back of the building, near the downstairs classroom.

### **Personal Toys**

As a general rule, we ask that children not bring their personal toys to the laboratory session (comfort items are allowed). If these items do make their way to school, the child will be asked to keep the toy in their "cubbie." In most of the ECL classrooms, children are encouraged to bring an item for show and tell each week (typically on a Friday). When choosing an item for show and tell, parents should not allow their children to bring toys with weapons – since the ECL has a peaceful school policy, and believe school should be safe for all children.

### **Inclement Weather**

The ECL Infant/Toddler, Young Preschool and Preschool Classrooms **follow a combined Fayette County Public School / University of Kentucky snow policy. This means all classrooms are closed when the Fayette County Public School District is closed for bad weather (see clarification below).** Listen to the local radio stations or the television news stations for school closing. An email will be sent to parents by 6:30 a.m. on a weather closure day.

Once 3 days are missed for winter weather, the ECL moves to UK's winter weather policy. This means that on the 4th snow day for Fayette County Public Schools, and if UK is open, the ECL will open at 9:00 a.m. on a delay. If UK is closed for any reason – the ECL will be closed as well.

If FCPS are not in session, the decision to start school later or cancel school due to snow or ice is made by 6:30 on any given morning and will be communicated to parents by email.

### **Food**

Older Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers will be served a "breakfast-like" snack each morning. Menus listing food items and days served are posted outside each classroom, and inside each class on the bulletin boards. If your child has special food needs, please alert your child's teacher, and complete a food substitution form. Children who attend the ECL for a full day must bring lunch from home in a labeled lunch box. The meal must be suitable to be served from room temperature. **No meals will be warmed for serving and no meals will be refrigerated in the large preschool classrooms.** Food that needs to be kept warm may be placed in a labeled thermos. Food that needs to be kept cold should be stored in a lunch box with several cold packs. Meals served to children must be of sound nutritional value. If parents do not send a nutritionally sound meal for their child, the school will add food from the ECL kitchen.

Afternoon snack is also provided for children who stay for the extended day program. Milk, 100% juice or water will be provided by the school. Meals and snacks will be at least 2 hours apart, but no more than 3 hours apart. Menus for snacks are posted outside and inside each classroom.

All food sent from home must be of good nutritional value. Any soda, candy, junk food, or food that could be considered dangerous to children – nuts, whole grapes, popcorn, hotdogs cut into rounds or whole, peanut butter, hard pretzels, raw peas or carrots, and chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole will not be

served and will be returned home. Parents should not bring McDonalds or other fast food for their child, since we encourage healthy eating habits.

**\*\*\*Choking Hazards\*\*\* Please consider choking hazards for younger children (teachers have safety guidelines for each age available) and we ask that you prepare foods accordingly. It is the parent's responsibility for making sure their child's lunch items are cut and prepared before sending it to school. Classroom teachers and assistants will ensure all snack food is the appropriate size for safe eating.**

**\*\*\*Food Allergies\*\*\* Parents will be asked to supply food substitutions for their children with allergies. (example: soy milk) Any special milk from home needs to be sent daily in labeled cup, or a larger container may be kept in the kitchen refrigerator. For children with food allergies, parents will be asked for permission to post their child's allergy in the classroom. This permission is located on our release form, which is completed upon enrollment. THE ECL IS A PEANUT and TREE NUT FREE SCHOOL. NO PEANUT BUTTER/ PEANUTS/TREE NUTS ARE ALLOWED AT THE ECL.**

When a child's dietary needs do not follow recommended food practices by child care licensing standards, parents will be asked to complete a food substitution form, and send a substitute food to replace the nutritional value of the restricted food.

For children with special feeding needs, parents will need to substitute or furnish foods their child can eat safely.

### **Naps and Rest Time at the Early Childhood Laboratory**

All children in full day programs at the ECL must rest or nap during the day. This is a licensing requirement for child care. Infants up to age 12 months will sleep in a crib. Infants and Toddlers older than 12 months will sleep on a cot, provided by the school. Parents in the Young Preschool and Preschool/extended day classrooms are responsible for bringing a sheet and blanket for their child's cot. These will be sent home each Friday for washing, and should be returned on Monday. Sleep items will be stored in a plastic Rubbermaid container or a bag. This container will be labeled with the child's first and last name. Older children may also bring a sleep item (stuffed animal, special blanket). We ask that these items not contain batteries, or produce noise. Blankets, pillows or stuffed animals are not allowed in cribs.

Preschoolers may nap up to 2 hours at the ECL. Infants will be on their own nap schedule and may sleep several times each day. Toddlers typically are transitioning from two naps to one nap and will sleep accordingly. All infants are placed on their back to sleep. Once a child is old enough to roll, he/she will find a sleep position that is comfortable to them.

Infants can only be placed on their stomach with a note from a physician stating there is a medical reason for stomach sleeping. Infants under 12 months of age may only sleep in a crib while at school. Sleeping in bouncy seats or car seats is not allowed.

Children will not be awakened early from naps by teachers and teachers will not prevent children from sleeping, since this often results in a child who is unhappy, still sleepy, and has negative behavior. Home sleep schedules should be arranged so children can have quiet rest or nap time at school. Children who are in a school/group setting for many hours each day often need the entire 2 hour period for resting.

Older children who do not need a nap each day will be asked to rest for a short period of time. After this time, the children will be allowed to participate in quiet activities or read quietly on their cot. We encourage all

children to sleep when it is nap time. We have found children who do not nap often have a harder time being kind to others by the end of the day.

### **Bottles and Infant Feeding**

Infants who attend the ECL, and who still take a bottle must bring prepared bottles of formula or breast milk to school each day. All bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name and dated with the date mixed or expressed. Teachers will discard any unfinished formula or breast milk after one hour. Bottles containing breast milk may be stored for no longer 24 hours. Teachers are not allowed to microwave bottles for feeding – all bottles are warmed in water. If your child needs cereal or other foods microwaved, please send the food in a glass container. We are not allowed to heat food in a plastic container. The Infant classroom is the only classroom that heats food. All other classrooms encourage parents to either send food in a thermos or do not send foods that must be heated.

Children under 6 months of age are fed solids only with consent of the parent. Parents should communicate with teachers to inform them of the child's feeding practice and pattern. Parents are required to bring baby food or other first foods, until the child can be offered foods from our regular snack menu. Children under 12 months cannot be fed cow's milk at the ECL. Children under 12 months will only be given breast milk or formula provided by the parents. Once children wean from the bottle and no earlier than 12 months, whole milk may be offered in a sippy cup, with the parent's permission.

### **Clothing**

Children attending the ECL should dress in comfortable, washable clothing for attending the laboratory session. There are "messy" art activities, sand and water experiences, outdoor activities, and cooking. **Clothes which parents are not concerned about soiling or staining are best for the children.** Also, please be aware that our playground does contain sand. Appropriate shoes, which protect your child's feet, should be worn to school (flip flops and crocs do not meet this criteria).

Adequately warm clothing for outdoor experiences is also necessary. Both the American Academy of Pediatrics & the American Public Health Association have publications which list the health benefits to children of participating in outdoor activities in winter. Children will go outside each day unless it is raining or the temperature/wind chill falls below 25 degrees F. Appropriate clothing for playing outside in the winter months includes a hat, mittens or gloves, a heavy coat or polar fleece and boots.

To encourage independence and some sense of control and competence, children's clothes need to be easily handled by them. Special attention should be given to having boots, which are easily manipulated by the child, zippers that operate easily, and buttons that are large enough to handle. For younger children, pants with elastic waistbands make toileting a more independent activity. Children should have available at school at least **one complete** change of clothes. When it is necessary to remove clothes for whatever reason, children feel best about having their own clothing to wear.

**\*Changes of clothes must be restocked promptly upon teacher's request.**

### **Outdoor Play**

Children will go outside daily unless it is actively raining, or the temperature or wind chill falls below 25 degrees F. If the temperature rises to above 95 degrees F, and there is a heat advisory in effect, the children will not go outside.

When children are playing outside in the sun, each child must have sunscreen or sun block of at least UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher applied, and/or wear a protective hat. Teachers will ask for written



permission from parents before sunscreen or sun block may be applied. Forms are in each classroom and included in the enrollment packet. Parents should put the first application of sunscreen on their child before coming to school each day. Teachers will apply sunscreen again before afternoon outdoor time.

Occasionally, mosquitoes are a problem during outdoor play. If you notice your child is getting mosquito bites, please apply repellent before school, or send a bottle to school. We may only apply repellents containing DEET and can only apply repellent to children older than 2 months. Repellent may only be applied one time each school day, and parents must fill out a medication form before teachers are allowed to apply repellent. Teachers have medication forms in the classrooms.

Teachers will monitor heat, pollution and other environmental advisories to ensure the safety of all children at the ECL.

### **Diapers**

Parents will furnish disposable diapers and wipes. Diapering procedures will be discussed with parents. If your child is not toilet trained, or in the process of training, yet still having more than 1 accident per day, **he/she must attend the ECL wearing a diaper.** Talk with your child's teacher about more information on toilet training.

**\*We must adhere to licensing regulations and change diapers according to strict time-lines – every 2 hours when children are awake, upon awakening from naps, and when soiled or wet. Diapers must be restocked promptly upon teacher's request. Fees will be charged to replace diapers that must be provided by the school.**

### **Tooth Brushing**

All children attending the ECL who are older than one year will be given the opportunity to brush teeth at least once each day. For toddlers and preschoolers, this opportunity is in the morning, after snack. Parents are responsible for providing 2 tooth brushes, and a tube of tooth paste (if their child uses tooth paste) at the beginning of the year. Parents must sign the permission form in the enrollment packet if they want their child to brush with toothpaste.

Parents of infants should consult their child's teacher regarding the cleaning of gums and first teeth after bottles.

### **Health and Safety Policies and Procedures**

Children benefit most from a group experience when they are healthy and safe from unnecessary hazards. The ECL programs are designed to provide your child with a comfortable, safe environment where they are free to explore and learn.

### **Insurance**

The Early Childhood Lab carries a group accident policy on all participating children. In case of an accident, forms can be obtained from the director or secretary. Your child's health insurance information should be included on the Emergency Information Card, in case of an accident that requires immediate medical attention while the child is at the ECL.

### **Hand Washing**

Upon arrival at the ECL, all children will be asked to wash their hands. This will ensure a healthier, cleaner environment and prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. Washing hands at home does not meet the criteria we are striving to meet. Hands must be washed at school, before touching and playing with the materials. Hand washing will also take place at many other times throughout the day (before and after eating, after toileting, after coming in from outside, etc.). Parents, and children if they want to, can sanitize their hands at the table by the front door. There are wipes available as well.

### **Universal Precautions and Transmission of Body Fluids**

In the unlikely event that children or teachers are exposed to blood, or another body fluid, the exposed child's parents or teacher have the right to ask for medical documentation from the source of the transmission documenting the child's health in regards to transmissible diseases. Exposures of this type could occur during biting incidents, accidents resulting in cuts and scrapes, and sharing of bottles. If an incident should occur, all parties involved would be contacted immediately. Documentation would be shared between physicians, to further protect the privacy of the families involved.

### **Health Policies**

The Early Childhood Laboratory requires that families adhere to several health regulations while children attend the programs. These regulations are listed below:

1. Upon enrollment, each child must have a current physical on file at the ECL. This form may be obtained from your pediatrician. A current immunization form (also furnished by your doctor's office) must also be on file at the ECL. These records must be current (physical form completed within the last year, immunizations current). If your child has an appointment for a physical, you may give a copy of the appointment card to your child's teacher. This will be accepted until you can get your child in for his/her appointment.
2. Parents must notify the Head Teacher of a child's allergies (especially food allergies or dietary restrictions) so that arrangements can be made to limit the child's exposure to these foods.
3. If your child is injured or becomes ill after arriving at the ECL, the parent is notified immediately. A completed Emergency Form is required for each child, so that prompt notification can occur. If your child needs transport to a medical facility for treatment, the teacher/ECL staff will call an ambulance. Please include all relevant information on this form concerning your insurance, and preferred hospital/provider. Please indicate on the form if the emergency contacts listed are authorized to have access to your child's health information.
4. If a child requires immediate medical attention, the parent will be called. Parents must sign an Emergency Medical Release Form in the event they are unavailable and medical treatment is essential for the child's well-being.
5. Parents are notified of all known minor injuries (scrapes, bumps, and bruises) or possible illnesses by the Head Teacher, Teaching Assistant, or Graduate Teaching Assistant on a daily basis through notes, phone calls or verbal communication.
6. Children are not permitted to attend with any of the following symptoms: unexplained rash, fever at or above 100 degrees F, ear ache, sore throat, diarrhea, chronic cough, vomiting, or discharge from the eyes.
7. A parent will pick up children developing any of the above symptoms or an injury during the day. The ECL does not have adequate isolation facilities for children with such symptoms. Children must be picked up within one hour from the time of the phone call.
8. In order to return to the ECL, a child must be free of illness for **24 hours**. If questionable symptoms are still present, Head Teachers may ask parents for verification from a doctor stating the child is free to return to school. If your child has symptoms of COVID, please get them tested and wait for results before bringing your child back to school.

9. **Children who are on prescription medication must receive a full 24-hour course of treatment before returning to the ECL.**
10. When the child is ready to return and medication is required, a "Medication Form" must be filled out and signed by the parent. **Please note that over the counter medication can only be administered according to the directions on the label (many over the counter medications state to consult a physician when the child is under two). Due to this, the ECL may only administer over the counter medications with permission from a physician for children under the age of 2. Permission for administering over the counter medications can be obtained from your child's pediatrician during well baby visits. (please see additional information under Medication Information).** No medication should be left at the ECL over-night. Please take all medication home with you each day.
11. Parents are asked to notify the Head Teacher or the Director when their child has been exposed to any communicable disease. If your child is absent due to illness, please call the ECL office and leave a message with the secretary.
12. It is our assumption that if the child is well enough to come to school, she/he is well enough to participate in the entire program, including both indoor and outdoor activities. If your child has an illness that prevents him/her from participating, or creates a greater need than staff can provide, it is best for your child to stay home.
13. All children will play outside daily, weather permitting. Due to staffing and ratios, teachers are not allowed to keep children inside due to illness. Again, it is our assumption that if your child is well enough to come to school, he/she is well enough to play outside.

It is important that all families follow these policies to protect each child in the laboratory program. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping the ECL a healthy, safe environment.

#### **Medication Administration at the ECL**

When a child who is enrolled at the ECL and requires either prescription or over the counter medication while at school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Parents must complete a medication form. Forms are available in each classroom.
2. All areas indicated by an asterisk (\*) must be completed by the parent.
3. Medication brought to school must be in the original container or in the prescribed bottle from the pharmacy.
4. All medication must be labeled with the child's first and last name.
5. Staff are only allowed to administer over the counter medication if there is a specified dosage for the child's age on the bottle of medication. If a child is under 2 years of age, the child must have on file a note from a physician outlining the child's dosage by age and weight. No over the counter medication can be given to children under 2 without this documentation.
6. Special medications such as epi-pens, inhalers, and medications for seizures or other health problems must be kept at the ECL. The medication will be kept in a locked medicine box or cabinet, with a medication form attached specifically describing when and what dosage is to be administered. **Epi-pens, inhalers and allergy medication are the ONLY types of medication that can be kept at the ECL over-night.**
7. Children who have either long term medical needs or allergies must have an allergy or emergency procedures form on file. Forms will be given out at the first home visit, center visits, or the first parent meeting. Children may not attend the ECL without the required forms.
8. After administration of medication, the signed form will be copied, and one will be kept in the child's school file. The other will be sent home with the child.
9. Teachers are not allowed to administer any medication that has been mixed with juice, or in a container such as a sippy cup or bottle.

**10. We prefer to NOT give medication at the ECL. If your child's medication can be given at home instead, please do so.**

**COVID**

Since there have been changes to COVID protocol, we treat it as most other viruses. If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep your child at home until they are fever free, and symptom free and they feel well enough to stay at school all day.

- Elevated Temperature of 100.4 degrees F
- Cough and trouble breathing or strider, which could be symptoms of RSV
- Fatigue and Muscle aches, which could be symptoms of flu.
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

**Wearing a Mask at the ECL**

The ECL has a supply of masks for children and adults. Parents may wear a mask while inside the school if they have any symptoms of Covid/Flu, etc.

**Communicable Disease Information Chart**

Name	Incubation Period	Symptoms	Exclude from Attendance	Re-Admission Criteria
Chickenpox	10-21 days	Fever, runny nose, cough, rash (pink bumps, blisters, and scabs)	Yes	6 days after onset of rash or sooner if all lesions are crusted and dry
Common Cold	1-3 days	Runny nose, watery eyes, coughing, scratchy throat, fever	No, unless fever is present	When fever is gone for 24 hours without use of medicine such as Tylenol
Conjunctivitis	1-3 days	Watery, itchy, red eyes with mucus	Yes	After at least 24 hours of treatment
Head Lice	Eggs hatch in 7-10 days	Itching and scratching of scalp. Pinpoint white eggs (nits) on head That will not flick off	Yes	24 hours after medicated shampoo or lotion treatment, and child is nit free
Impetigo	1-10 days	Red, cracking, oozing blister-like pimples or circular scaling rash	Yes	24 hours after treatment
Hand, Foot and Mouth	3-6 days	Sores in mouth and rash on hands and feet	Yes, if child has fever	Sores in mouth have healed and fever
Ringworm	Body: 4-10 days; Scalp: 10-14 days	Skin: reddish scaling circular patches with raised edges and central  Scalp: redness, scaling of scalp with broken hairs or patches of hair loss	Yes	24 hours after treatment
Strep	1-3 days	Sore throat, skin infections, other tissue infections	Yes	24 hours after antibiotic treatment

Most children with mild contagious illness do not need to stay home from childcare. However, if your child shows the symptoms listed below, your child should not attend school:

- fever and behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness as stated in the information chart above until medical professional determines child's wellness
- uncontrolled diarrhea (2 or more loose stools in a 2 hour period) or stool that cannot be contained by a diaper
- vomiting

- mouth sores with drooling, unless statement from medical professional that the illness is not from communicable disease
- rash with fever or behavior change
- pink eye with white or yellow eye discharge until 24 hours after treatment begins
- scabies, head lice or other insect infestation until 24 hours after treatment and the child is nit-free
- any of the contagious diseases (tuberculosis, COVID 19 impetigo, strep, chicken pox, whooping cough, mumps, hepatitis A, measles, rubella, shingles, herpetic gingivostomatitis).

### **Disaster Drills and Procedures**

The following disaster drills are practiced at the ECL on either a monthly or every 3 month schedule. The following procedures are in place for each drill:

- **Fire drill** – When the fire alarm goes off, children are encouraged to stop what they are doing, and hold a teacher’s hand to evacuate the building. Children are evacuated to Building #200 at the Seminary. In the case of a real fire, parents would be notified to come and pick up their children. Teachers and staff take emergency information with them when leaving the building.
- **Tornado drill** – Tornado drills are practiced at least every 3 months. Children are evacuated from the classrooms, and moved to the inner hallway, by the staff offices. Children are asked to sit with their head covered by their hands. In the case of a real weather emergency, and if the ECL became un-inhabitable, children and staff would be relocated to Building #200 at the Seminary. If children must be moved from this location, we would evacuate to the auditorium at Taylor Education Building, or another location as decided by university officials. Parents would be notified by phone in this situation. If travel became impossible, staff would stay with children until all children were picked up.
- **Earthquake drill** – Earthquake drills are practiced at least every 3 months. Children are instructed to stop what they are doing and go under the classroom tables. The children are told to drop to the ground, take cover by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture, and to hold on until shaking stops. After shaking stops, children will be evacuated to the grassy area in front of the ECL, near the Seminary Chapel, or another area that University officials deem to be safe. Parents will be notified, and staff will stay with children until all children are picked up.
- **Active shooter/lock down drills** – Children will practice going into lock down every 3 months. Teachers will make this a fun drill, and will not talk with children about guns, shootings, etc. Children will go to their classrooms and teachers will lock the door until the all clear is given.

Parents are encouraged to not only have local emergency phone numbers available, but also long-distance and out of state contacts on file at the ECL. In the event of a natural disaster, it may be impossible to use local numbers. It is also vital that all parents have their child’s classroom phone number.

- Christy – (859) 218-2750
- Solita – (859) 218-2754
- Allyson – (859) (859) 218-3996
- Kim – (859) 218-3999
- Molly - (859) 218-2749
- Main Office – (859) 257-7732
- Charlotte’s Office – (859) 323-7533
- UK Campus Police – (859) 257-8573

In the event of a disaster, and if the ECL is evacuated to another location not listed above by the University authorities should be contacted. The phone number for UK police is (859) 257-8573.

### **Active Shooter in the Area or School**

- If UK Police issues an alert for an active shooter on campus near the ECL, the school will go into lockdown mode. This basically means all children will go into their classrooms and the classroom doors will be locked and blinds will be lowered. Children will stay in their classrooms until UK Police sends an all clear over the alarm system.
- If the ECL experiences an active shooter situation, teachers will lock classroom doors and children will gather in a specific location in the classroom, away from windows and doors. Doors will remain locked until UK Police comes to the school and unlocks the doors.
- If children are on the playground, and there is a threat inside the building, children will be taken to Sanders Chapel (the church like building near the playground). Children will wait there until UK Police deems the area to be safe.
- In the case of any of these emergencies, parents are encouraged to NOT come to the ECL until UK Police clears the area. Teachers would NOT be allowed to open classroom doors under any circumstances, so you would not be able to pick up your child.

Drills can be scary for children, even when practiced each month. We try to make drills fun and exciting and reassure children we are just practicing. In the case of a real threat, we will try to maintain this same demeanor, and reassure the children they are safe.

### **Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

As a licensed Child Care facility, we are required to report any suspected instance of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. (pursuant to KRS 620.030). If a teacher or other ECL employee is suspected of child abuse, the employee will be advised by the UK legal department. The employee will be suspended pending an investigation from KY Child Care Licensing.

### **Confidentiality of Children's Records and Information**

Each child's developmental and assessment information is kept confidential. Only the head teachers and graduate students have access to children's files and assessment information for classroom and individual planning. Office staff (the directors and secretary) may also have access to the child's file to obtain emergency information for the child. Parents may request to see their child's file, by contacting the director in the ECL office.

Since the Early Childhood Laboratory has partnerships with both Fayette County Public Schools, and Head Start, data and information on children enrolled in these programs will be shared with these agencies. Parents will sign consents upon enrollment in the school system, or Head Start.

### **Child Guidance Policy**

As adults who work with young children, we are responsible for helping children live safely and with satisfaction in the world and with others. Our interactions with all children are based on an attitude of respect for each child as a valued person. Adults are guided by accurate knowledge and understanding of child's growth and development with sensitivity to the range of individual differences.

Growing up is a long, complicated process. It takes time to internalize standards for appropriate behavior. Young children do not always act in ways which adults find acceptable. They must sometimes learn by testing the limits set by adults. A child needs and has a right to a certain degree of freedom to explore, discover, and create his/her own standard for behavior. She/he can only develop a personal sense of autonomy and initiative when the adults around him/her are loving and firm. Such adults permit only behavior that does not harm or

produce anxiety in or rejection of the child. We have confidence in the child and in ourselves and we believe that in time and with support and help from us, the child will learn to be assertive at appropriate moments.

Our main goal in guidance is the development of internal self-control. We help in the following ways:

- Accept the child's need to assert him/herself
- Take action when action is needed
- Set reasonable limits
- Use brief removal from the group with a teacher as a way to help a child re-set behavior
- Develop skills in defining and explaining limits
- Plan the environment and the schedule with the child in mind
- Model acceptable behavior

In more practical terms, we follow four basic rules in guiding and setting limits for young children.

1. The child does not hurt him/herself, another child, or the classroom materials. If one of these does occur, however, the behavior is stopped; the appropriate behavior is explained to the child and the consequences of his/her particular situation.
2. The child is redirected, if necessary, to another activity. It is our desire that initially the children be allowed to work out their own problems and the teacher intervenes or redirects when this is not possible.
3. If redirection or an alternate activity is not the solution, a child may be taken to a quiet place in the classroom with a teacher to gain control of him/herself. This removal will be brief (30 seconds to 1 minute), and the child may choose when s/he is ready to return to the group.
4. Parents will be notified of repeated inappropriate behavior by note or phone call on the day of the occurrence. In keeping with our beliefs about development, and the child's ability to self-regulate and function in a group setting, not all small occurrences of misbehavior will be reported to parents. While we understand that some children struggle more with self-control than others, if a child is showing undue aggression, or a repeated pattern of aggression throughout a school day, parents will be notified. If a behavior is on- going and disruptive to the classroom, harmful to other children and/or adults, the child's teachers and parents will meet to write an individual behavior plan for the child.

We believe that positive reinforcement is the key to positive behavior; we complement a child's positive behavior and ignore the negative as much as possible. We do this by saying, "John, I like the way you are building with the blocks today, you've worked hard and built a tall tower." We attempt to tell children what they can do rather than repeating don'ts. For example, "The blocks are for building, the hats are to wear on your head."

Again, our goal is to teach young children to think about their behaviors and the consequences. The end result is a child who is intrinsically controlled, considerate of others and a responsible person within the community. At no time in the ECL program will physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion occur. All teachers and staff are trained in the appropriate methods for guiding young children.

### **Aggressive and Challenging Behaviors/Suspension and Expulsion**

The ECL policy on guiding children is composed of an understanding that all children go through periods of aggression and behaviors that could result in hurting other children physically or hurting other children's feelings. While this is an expected happening in early childhood, the expectation we have for children is that as they age, they begin to understand social norms, and develop a caring attitude toward others, while learning to control their anger in socially acceptable ways. The overall goal of our guidance policy is that children are never suspended or excluded from the Early Childhood Laboratory.

A challenging behavior is defined as any behavior that (a) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play, (b) is harmful to the child, other children or adults, or (c) puts a child at risk for later social problems or school failure. When severe, on-going problems arise with a specific child's behavior, the ECL will build on the approach mentioned previously. Parents will be contacted, and after careful observation of the child interacting with others, and working independently in the classroom environment, parents and teachers will meet to devise an individualized behavior plan. This plan will assess the function of the behavior and will work with families and other professionals to develop an individual plan to address the behavior. The plan will also include positive

behavior supports as part of the plan. The plan will be evaluated no less than every week for progress. Part of the behavior plan may include referral for services through the public-school system, or a developmental pediatrician or other therapist. If a child exhibits excessive aggressive behavior as defined by repeated biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, cursing and other acts of aggression directed to teachers or children, and shows no progress on his/her behavior plan and the parents refuse to seek advice/therapy from other professionals, the child may be dismissed from the ECL program. If repeated acts of aggression happen more than 3 times in a day, and a child or children are injured, parents will be called and asked to pick their child up from school. This gives the child a chance to break the cycle of aggression and protects others from possible repeated aggressive acts.

Occasionally, a child may be aggressive to the point of repeated injury to another child(ren) or teachers. The ECL will work with parents and children to ensure the safety of others, and to help the aggressor develop the skills needed to interact with others appropriately. Depending on the level of aggression, suspension or expulsion will only be considered in the following instances:

1. After following the behavior plan for 1 month, if there is no improvement in the child's behavior.
2. The child's parents or guardians do not seek help from a therapist, or other service provider.

### **Assessment Policy and Plan**

The Early Childhood Laboratory relies on several formal and informal screening and assessment methods, for a variety of purposes. Assessment is used for the following at the ECL:

- Curriculum planning
- Evaluation of child progress
- Identification of children's interests and needs
- Program evaluation and planning for professional development for teachers

The main assessment used at the ECL is the AEPS (*Assessment, Evaluation and Programming Systems*). The AEPS is a child friendly assessment that allows teachers to observe children in a play environment and note their performance on certain items that are indicative of development at the early childhood level. The AEPS is not a standardized assessment. The child's progress is measured over time using the AEPS. The following areas of development are assessed using the AEPS:

- Social-Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development
- Language and Communication
- Self-Help and Adaptive Behavior Skills
- Physical Development

Children are screened and assessed in their classroom by adults who are familiar with and to them. Each Head Teacher and Graduate Teaching Assistant has been trained through college coursework and professional development to administer the assessments used at the ECL. The AEPS is used 2 times each school year to



collect information on each child at the ECL. Parents will also be asked to complete a portion of the AEPS. Results are kept confidential, and scores and progress will be discussed with parents at parent conferences (scheduled in mid-fall and late spring). If for any reason a parent or teacher suspects a child has a delay, and further evaluation is needed, the ECL will refer the child to the appropriate agency, with parental permission.

In the Infant and Toddler Classrooms, parents are asked to complete the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* (ASQ) in the second month of school). After completion, parents and teachers will meet to discuss the results. The AEPS is also used in addition to Ages and Stages, and results are shared two times each year. Parents will receive a copy of the parent conference form, including assessment reports at each conference.

In preschool, all children are screened using the Brigance Preschool Screen in the 2nd month of school. This is a checklist of activities that is implemented with each child. Scores from the Brigance will be shared with parents at the first parent conference in mid fall.

The ECL program is evaluated yearly by the parents and staff. This is done confidentially, and the results are tabulated and reported to the parents and staff. Results are used for program improvements, to focus professional development training for staff, and to make changes to the ECL program.

All assessment data and results are kept confidential in the child's folder. Assessment information is shared with parents, teachers and graduate students in the ECL program. Classroom data may be used to plan curriculum and improve instructional practices.

Parents are always invited to share in the assessment process with the ECL teachers. Parents are asked at several times each school year to report on their child's likes, dislikes and interests. On the first home visit, parents are asked to fill out a "Reach for the Stars" interest form. Parents may also be asked to fill out a parent questionnaire for the AEPS.

If parents have questions or concerns about the assessment process, please contact your child's teacher or the director.

### **Children's Birthdays and Other Holidays**

Because birthdays are important to young children and because they need a continuous routine they can come to count on, we celebrate birthdays in the same way for all children. The ECL takes a low key approach to the celebration of birthdays. On their child's birthday, parents may make plans with the child's teacher to bring a special snack to school. Healthy snacks are defined as fruit, healthy cookies (oatmeal raisin, etc.) or crackers. A list of possible snacks will be sent home by the head teachers in each classroom.

Special food items (other than fruit) must be commercially wrapped in the original package. **Parents should not plan to bring party hats, balloons, birthday cakes or other birthday memorabilia.** The last Friday of each month will be \*Birthday Celebration Day\* for parents who would like to treat the class to pizza, in honor of their child's birthday. Parents should not feel the need to provide pizza, volunteer in the classroom and send a special snack on their child's birthday. Each family should do as much, or as little as they wish.

On your child's actual birthday, or as close to it as the school year will allow, we will sing happy birthday and blow out the candles from our wooden cake. We do encourage parents to take the opportunity to spend time in their child's classroom on their birthday as a way of "celebrating the day". Parents may also spend time in their child's classroom any other day they wish.

**If you choose to have a birthday party outside of school for your child, please do not put invitations in children's cubbies unless you are inviting the whole class.**

Because young children are often confused by the meaning of various holidays and the ECL children represent a wide range of ethnic, racial and religious groups, holidays are not the focal point of the ECL program. Instead we learn about different cultures and ethnic groups throughout the year. If holidays are recognized, certain criteria guide us: (a) the routine continues; (b) continuity of experiences and concepts are fostered; (c) planned experiences are developmentally appropriate; (d) information is historically accurate; (e) families are not asked to expend additional resources; (f) food served is nutritional; and (h) gifts are not exchanged.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

We value a close family-preschool relationship and see it as essential for the program to be fully responsive to the child's needs. Such a relationship also assists the child in obtaining the most benefit from the early childhood experience.

### **Observation**

Parents are invited to observe from the observation windows in each laboratory room at any time. Observing allows you to note age and individual similarities and differences. Behavior patterns can be seen, and your child can be observed as s/he interacts with other children and adults in the preschool environment.

### **Parent Participation**

Parent participation is welcomed at the ECL. Parent participation can take many forms, and parents will be assisted in finding a meaningful way to participate in the laboratory, if desired. Some ways in which parents may choose to be included are:

- Feeding and playing with the infants and toddlers
- Field trip supervision
- Assistant teaching (occasionally or on a routine basis)
- Leading or assisting in special projects (carpentry, sewing, music, cooking, science experiences, cultural experiences, etc.)
- Participating in workdays to maintain and improve indoor and outdoor spaces
- Construction or collection of materials for use at the ECL such as paint aprons, raw materials for art projects, dress-up clothing, dramatic play props, carpentry materials, etc.
- Contributing to the ECL information center.
- Volunteering as a parent advisory board member.

### **Home-Preschool Communication**

We believe it is important to keep parents informed about the activities and experiences being provided for the children in the ECL programs. As a result, parents will receive a weekly detailed outline of the curriculum. Periodically other communications are made with parents. Sometimes these include copies of short, informative articles the ECL staff has found and sees as particularly important to share with parents. Also, it may include short summaries of special activities that are planned for a particular classroom.

Parents of children in the Infant/Toddler lab will receive an information form at the end of each day. Information about eating, sleeping and daily activities are included on this form.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. Conferences and home visits are important parts of any educational environment. They enable the parents and staff to become better acquainted as well as provide opportunities to discuss the children's growth and development within the laboratory setting. In addition, conferences and home visits are valuable because of the information exchange between the home and the learning environment. If a child has a special need, parents and teacher can identify it together and cooperatively agree how to meet this need. Also, learning resources, such as books, records, or games, may be suggested that would enhance the child's development if they were available at home.

Parents should feel free to ask questions about their child's development at any time. It is only natural to be concerned and curious. Conferences can be scheduled at either the teacher or parent's request throughout the year. It is wise for the parents to have observed or participated in the preschool before a conference. This enables parents to better relate to the teacher in his/her role. Parents also observe behavioral differences in their children from the home to the preschool.

### **Parent Meetings**

Social and educational parent meetings are held throughout the year (dates and times are listed in the school calendar and sent out through classroom letters and emails). In order that these meetings might relate to the interests of parents, a need's assessment is attached to the first newsletter of the school year. Parents are asked to pick from several topics of interest, and the ECL will schedule meetings around these topics. Social events such as potlucks and picnics **MAY** also occur throughout the school year,

### **Grievance Issues**

In case of a grievance issue between a parent and the school, the following procedures will be followed:

- The parent will meet with the director to discuss the problem. Any staff involved in the dispute will also be present.
- If the problem cannot be resolved from this meeting, the parent, directors and staff will meet with the Chair of EDSCE in the College of Education.
- If a resolution is not found, all parties will meet with the administration in the College of Education to come to agreement.