

Florida Coalition of Christian Private Schools Accreditation

Early Childhood Program Accreditation 3.0



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Unless otherwise identified, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, King James Version (KJV)

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INTRODUCTION

One of the missions of the FCCPSA is to assist Early Childhood Program Center directors as they provide quality Christian education through local Child Care Facilities. The FCCPSA provides resources, accountability, and training in research-based best practices for child success, specifically in the areas of Christian Commitment, Family Community, and Quality Education. Striving for excellence is an ongoing process, and the FCCPSA is continually looking for opportunities to provide resources for our accredited Early Childhood Programs.

As a whole, the FCCPSA is committed to supporting quality Christian education at all age levels. Each Early Childhood Program Center that earns accreditation for Gold Seal by the FCCPSA is required to maintain a high level of integrity and accountability as detailed in these Standards, local and state statutory requirements, as well as the published policies of the FCCPSA.

Accreditation is a “seal” that denotes an institution has met the required standards of quality and an ongoing commitment to improvement and accountability. The accreditation process provides Early Childhood Program Centers the opportunity to validate their quality, to verify that they are an institution of excellence, to discover areas that can be improved and to provide guidance on developing a continuous improvement plan.

As a Christian organization, the FCCPSA believes that we have an even higher calling to exceed government-led institutions because we bear the name of Christ, which is why it is imperative that the programs of the FCCPSA offer, and the staff we put in the presence of children, be worthy of reflection of Godly principles.

This manual describes the quality standards of the FCCPSA and is used for the Early Childhood Program for Accreditation. Since FCCPSA had been recognized by the Children’s Forum as a Gold Seal Quality Care Accrediting Association since 2014, FCCPSA has taken an extensive review of its existing standards and has taken in consideration FCCPSA’s continual improvement plan and additional ongoing developing standards of the state of Florida, Department of Children and Families, Department of Early Learning to publish this manual.

ABOUT THE FCCPSA

AMOS 3:3 SAYS: “*CAN TWO WALK TOGETHER, EXCEPT THEY BE AGREED?*”

This principle applies to Private Schools and Early Childhood Program Centers. The FCCPSA’s Vision, Mission, Philosophy, and the Statement of Faith are the foundations upon which the organization operates. Before deciding to “walk together” with the FCCPSA for the purpose of Accreditation, it is important for the Early Childhood Program to evaluate whether the two organizations are in agreement.

Vision:

The FCCPSA supports the creation, growth and diversity of high quality Christian educational K-12 institutions and Early Childhood Learning Centers, specifically in the areas of Christian Commitment, Family Community, and Quality Education and supports Child Care Facilities with a Religious component.

Mission:

The FCCPSA’s mission is to support administrators, schools and early childhood child care facilities by:

- Providing accreditation services for K-12 Christian Private Schools and Religious Exemption from Licensure Child Care Facilities (Early Childhood Learning Centers) and Accreditation for Gold Seal for Child Care Facilities in Florida as a viable means of establishing a witness of excellence based on established best practices utilizing a peer review system.
- Establishing and publishing standards of accreditation for its member institutions and to ensure the maintenance of those standards through the ongoing evaluation process including but not limited to Self-Study, Site Visits and Re-evaluation.
- Providing on-going education and professional development for member administrators and staff utilizing a wide range of methods including, but not limited to, administrative manuals, web sites, newsletters and workshops.
- Representing and updating member schools with regards to governmental regulation and legislation for the protection of children, families, and educational institutions through the general improvement of educational standards in Florida.
- Developing cooperative relationships among members and other educational institutions.
- To engage in all lawful activities and efforts that may be reasonably intended or expected to promote and advance the mission of the FCCPSA.

Philosophy

Christian Commitment

The FCCPSA was founded and continues to be led by men and women who are devoted to Biblical truth and committed to the propagation of Christian values. All people have been created in God's image, and, therefore, the FCCPSA actively supports organizations that seek to cultivate this understanding and to assist them in fulfilling their purpose in the context of the varied methodologies incorporated by the individual school.

Family Community

The FCCPSA recognizes that parents/guardians are responsible for the training of their children in all areas, including academics. The FCCPSA assists and holds accountable member institutions throughout the state of Florida who have chosen to partner with families in this high calling. The FCCPSA provides direction to K-12 Non-Public Schools and Early Childhood Learning Centers on matters of academic and spiritual education, thereby developing a community that values truth, honor, and excellence.

Quality Education

The FCCPSA prepares member schools, child care facilities, administrators, and staff for excellence, and believes well-informed administrators will lead the way. When educational institutions apply the standards of excellence through the process of certification, accreditation, and professional development, communities enjoy the benefits of a safe and high-quality education.

Statement of Faith

There are many precious truths taught in the Bible over which Godly men have differed in understanding. Below is the Statement of Faith that is held by the FCCPSA. This may not be exactly the wording for accredited schools, however, an affirmation of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith need to be adhered.

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be verbally inspired of God and to be inerrant and infallible. We believe it is the only and final authority for faith and conduct. (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21).

We believe in One God, who is the Creator of all things by a direct act, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, John 10:30, 37-38).

We believe that man, created in the image of God, sinned, incurring not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God and which is inherited by every member of Adam's race. (Romans 5:12-21).

We believe by the miracle of the virgin birth, that the **Lord Jesus Christ**, eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, to reveal God and to redeem man.

We believe Jesus Christ shed His blood on Calvary as a substitutionary sacrifice and rose bodily from the dead for our justification and has ascended to the right hand of the Father, from whence He will personally return for His glorified Bride.

We believe Jesus Christ is now exalted at the right hand of God, that He is the Head of the Church, the Lord of the individual believer, that He is ministering as our Great High Priest and Advocate and that we are awaiting His bodily return. (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35, Hebrews 4:15, 7:25, 9:12, Acts 1:11, John 2:11, 11:25 and Revelations 19:11-15).

We believe salvation is the free gift of God (neither merited nor secured in part or in whole by and virtue or works of man) to be received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all true believers have, as a present possession, the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, Sonship in the family of God, deliverance and security from all condemnation, every spiritual resource needed for life and godliness, and the divine guarantee that they shall never perish. (John 3:16-19, 5:24, Romans 3:19, Ephesians 2:18-19, Titus 3:3-6).

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, a literal Heaven and a literal hell. All those who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord will inherit eternal life in Heaven. Those who have not accepted Him are lost unto eternal damnation. (John 5:28-29).

ELIGIBILITY, ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Early Learning Childhood Programs (Child Care Facilities) seeking accreditation to become an approved Gold Seal Quality Care Provider to participate in the VPK Program are required to complete this rigorous Early Childhood Program Accreditation Self Study Manual, which includes higher staff and academic requirements in addition to the FCCPSA's Religious Exemption from Licensure Standards and DCF's non-violation policy standards.

The process includes, but is not limited to:

1. **Eligibility Candidacy:** The Early Childhood Program (Child Care Facility) must be one of the following:
 - a. an integral part of a church or Christian school
 - b. approved Religious Exemption by the FCCPSA
 - c. must be licensed by DCF with no Class 1 violations or not more than three Class 2 violations and have a Religious component

2. **Candidacy Process for Accreditation Approval:**
 - a. **Application:** Submission of completed FCCPSA's Gold Seal Accreditation Application.
 - b. **Internal Review:** When a Child Care Facility applies for accreditation, they will be provided (either digitally or paper bound) with the Early Childhood Program Accreditation Self Study Manual, so the Child Care Facility may begin the process of reviewing their current practices. The Early Childhood Program Self Study Manual is designed to be an honest evaluation of the institution's current level of quality. A major component of the accreditation process is to identify and prioritize areas for improvement. All of the Standards are included in the review so that institution can evaluate both strengths and areas needing strength.
 - c. **Early Childhood Program Self-Study Manual:** Early Childhood Program Accreditation Self Study Manual is a process whereby the Child Care Facility begins documenting their level of compliance with the Accreditation Standards of FCCPSA. This process can be completed either via the printed Early Childhood Program Self Study Manual or the Digital Online version. Essential to completing the Self Study will require the Child Care Facility:
 - i. Provide a self-assessment
 - ii. Conduct Stakeholder Survey including staff and parents
 - iii. Create a Continuous Improvement Plan
 - d. **Review of Self Study:** Once the Self Study is submitted to FCCPSA, the Evaluation Chair will review the evidences and narratives contained in the Self Study. Areas of clarification and/or additional documentation will be communicated with the Director before the Site visit is scheduled.

Candidacy Process for Accreditation Approval: (continued)

- e. **Site Visit (External Review):** The site visit will include, but not limited to the following:
 - i. Review children files
 - ii. Review staff files
 - iii. Classroom observations
 - iv. Review stakeholders' surveys
 - v. Review staff surveys
 - vi. Examine additional artifacts and evidences as needed
 - vii. Conduct a thorough Safe, Sanitary and Secure inspection of the facility
 - a. See Appendix for FCCPSA's Checklist
 - viii. Conduct a Fire Drill
 - ix. Demonstrate appropriate financial management
 - x. Conduct Stakeholder Interviews with staff and parents

- f. **FCCPSA Accreditation Committee Review:** Once this External Review is completed, and the Site Visit is completed, the Chair will prepare a comprehensive report of the team's findings to the Accreditation Committee for review. The Accreditation Committee will then: a) vote to approve of Child Care Facility for accreditation, or b) provide a list of areas of improvement that must be met before accreditation can be earned.

THE FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENTS OF ACCREDITATION

The three fundamental requirements of the accreditation process are:

- Meeting the standards and accreditation policies,
- Demonstrating quality assurance through an internal and external review,
- Engaging in continuous improvement.

The FCCPSA philosophical framework of accreditation is based on a process that is committed to: quality standards, a quality process, a culturally competent team and a procedurally competent chair to oversee every component.

Accreditation is not designed to be an event that occurs once, or every few years when an institution is required to be re-evaluated. Accreditation is not an event, but a continual process. This process is not just about collecting evidence for a one-time event but rather evaluating the overall effectiveness of improvement efforts every day. The *School Quality Factors (SQF)*, serve as a roadmap for institutions on their *Improvement Journey*. The *School Quality Factors* are:

Clear Direction

The capacity to agree upon, define and clearly communicate to stakeholders the direction, mission and goals that the institution is committed to achieving.

Healthy Culture

The shared values, beliefs, written and unwritten rules, assumptions, and behavior of stakeholders within the child care center community that shape its social norms and create opportunities for everyone to be successful.

High Expectations

An institution's stated commitment and demonstrated actions in support of high expectations for all stakeholders, including excellent child learning outcomes and success, high levels of teacher quality and support, leadership effectiveness, proactive community engagement, and valuable parent involvement.

Impact of Instruction

The capacity of every teacher to purposefully and intentionally create an environment that empowers all children to be successful in their learning and reach expected levels of achievement, including readiness to transition to the next level of learning or career pathway.

Resource Management

The ability of a child care facility to plan, secure and allocate its resources (human, material, and physical) to meet the needs of every learner.

Efficacy of Engagement

The capacity to engage learners and other stakeholders in an effective manner to improve learning outcomes.

Implementation Capacity

The ability of an early childhood program to execute, with consistency, actions designed to improve organizational and instructional effectiveness.

STEPS FOR CONTINUOUS ACCREDITATION

The Accredited Early Childhood Program Child Care Facility must:

- Submit the FCCPSA's Annual Report detailing their progress on their Continuous Improvement Plan
- Engage in ongoing self-evaluation from valid data collection and stakeholder communication.
- Report substantive changes.

Note A: Accredited Early Childhood Program Child Care Facilities must appropriately refer to their participation in the accreditation program and report their status correctly and ethically, throughout the process. Any misrepresentation by an institution will result in the removing of the program from the accreditation process, loss of membership and forfeiture of any funds paid.

In the rare event that there is a transfer of ownership of the Child Care Facility, the Gold Seal recognition is not automatically transferrable to the new owner. The Child Care Facility would need to complete the Early Childhood Program Accreditation Manual 3.0 (See Standards Section 2: Governance and Administration which would include, but not limited to, providing supporting documentation regarding corporate structure, compliance responsibilities and fiscal responsibilities).

The Gold Seal Accreditation program is not transferrable to another facility or any other location.

Note B: Six months prior to the expiration date of their Gold Seal Accreditation anniversary date recognized by the Department of Early Learning, the Child Care Facility shall apply for accreditation renewal to ensure that a lapse does not occur.

MAINTAINING STATUS

There are ongoing minimum requirements for maintaining the status as an Accredited Early Childhood Program Child Care Facility, the educational institution must:

- To be legally authorized to do business in the State of Florida
- To certify that they are in compliance with Federal, State and Local regulations and/or requirements.
- Be a member in good standing with the FCCPSA
- Submit Annual Reports and annual dues to the FCCPSA
- Submit to an on-site visit every three to five years
- To be in compliance with DCF and its inspections
- Not to be assessed with a Class 1 violation from DCF for noncompliance

Loss of Accreditation Status:

Loss of accreditation status may be imposed for the following:

- Failure to fulfill policies, procedures, criteria, standards, as specified and required by the FCCPSA
- Receiving a Class 1 violation from DCF for noncompliance

This loss of status change or probation shall become effective immediately, or on the date specified on the notification. Notification will be sent by registered mail by the President upon authorization of the Directors. The Board of Directors, at a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting, shall give such authorization only after a majority vote of approval, with a quorum present.

Loss of Status, Appeal Process

Excluding a Class 1 violation by DCF, the Child Care Facility may submit an appeal in writing to the President of the FCCPSA requesting a reversal or modification of the action taken.

1. The appeal shall clearly set forth the appellant's position with regard to each aspect of the action(s) being appealed and provide any additional evidence or information for consideration by the Board.
2. The appellant shall be responsible for and shall pay all expenses incurred by the Corporation related to the appeal including, but not limited to, all travel and lodging expenses.
3. The appeal must be submitted to the President within 90 days of the action being appealed.
4. The President shall then present such appeal to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting or special Board meeting at which a quorum is present.
5. The Board shall evaluate the appeal on its merits, conduct additional investigations, and/or inquiry, if deemed necessary, at the sole discretion of the Board, and then notify the appellant of the Board's decision via registered mail.

Note: If the Child Care Facility is assessed a Class 1 violation, there is no appeal to the FCCPSA. Since Child Care Facilities are regulated by the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families, the Child Care Facility must make their appeal directly to the State.

EVIDENCE/DOCUMENTATION

The process of accreditation serves many purposes. A primary goal of accreditation is the establishment of credibility across a wide range of standards. This is accomplished through the examination of evidences, documentation, interviews and physical inspection.

In addition to establishing credibility, the accreditation process also provides an opportunity for the institution to internally examine a wide range of procedures and operations based on the institution's foundational principles. From that perspective, the self-examination process guides each member of the Site Team through a series of questions or statements within the context of its Standards. This process will be thought provoking, informative, and will lead to goal setting through the development of a Continuous Improvement Plan, based on best practice models illustrated within the Indicator.

Evidences

For each Standard in this manual, there are subsections that the Early Childhood Program is being evaluated in their current operation to determine: Standard met; Standard partially met; and Standard not met.

This is based on required evidences and examples determined either by observation or required documentation. The submission of evidences and documentation should be coordinated among the various internal accreditation team.

In cases where the current operation of the institution does not meet the Standard met, or Standard partially met, a narrative would include a description of the continuous improvement steps that will be developed for that component. This shall have an adverse effect on the scoring and recommendation for Accreditation approval.

THE SITE VISIT

Each Early Childhood Program is unique in that it takes on the personality of the director on how the director implements its vision, mission and philosophy.

While the documents and evidence submitted during the Self-Study phase will be reviewed as a part of the Site Visit, some items and/or requirements are best observed during the site visit. Several checklists are provided which will be used by the site visit team and should be carefully reviewed by the appropriate staff in preparation for the inspection.

- Compliance with state, local and funding organizations requirement.
- Classroom Inspection and Observation
- Playground Inspection
- Vehicle Inspection
- Kitchen Inspection
- Child File and Staff File Checklists

Objectives of the Site Visit:

The objective of the site visit is to verify that the operation of the institution meets Standards and matches the description and goals of the program. This goal is accomplished through a series of observations, interviews and inspections.

The FCCPSA is committed to a culturally relevant peer review process. All the individuals who will be part of the review team will have actual experience in a Child Care Facility setting. They will have knowledge to review the evidences and documentation requested and required by the Child Care Facility.

In accordance with peer review norms and accreditation policies and procedures, no Site Visit Team member will make any disclosure about any program's individual application for accreditation, nor will any member of the Site Visit Team make any disclosures about the investigations and recommendations that resulted from the site visit made in its report to FCCPSA. They may ask permission to borrow some of the best practices they have observed to make improvements in their program they oversee.

Preparing for the Site Visit:

Once the Early Childhood Program Accreditation Self-Study Manual has been reviewed by the accreditation team chair, the date for the on-site visit by the External Review team will be determined by the team leader and the institution's contact person.



The hosting school has the following responsibility for the External Team:

- 1) Secure hotel accommodations that are clean, safe and in close proximity. In addition, the hotel should have a restaurant, or a full breakfast bar, for the team's morning meal and a place to meet and review notes at the end of each day. The external team lead should be provided with the reservation details at least two weeks in advance.
- 2) Lunch on site. For efficiency, the lunch should be on-site and appropriate for a working lunch.
- 3) The visiting team will need a suitable workroom to review exhibits, supporting documentation, take breaks, conduct interviews, and hold team meetings. The workroom should be centrally located, large enough to accommodate the team including tables, secure for personal items, (laptops etc.), and not used by faculty or staff during the process. Access codes for the institution's internet system will be needed so that documents and reports can be updated in real time.

Arrival:

The Inspection Team is scheduled to arrive on campus between 8:00 and 8:15 am, which allows the team to observe the dropping off of children. This also allows the Administrator to have any last-minute issues settled so they will be able to sit in during the Site Visit. (We understand that issues arrive throughout the day, that must be attended to which will be accommodated as needed.)



Organization Meeting/Conference (and on-going Self-Study review)

The team will meet at the designated workroom, so all members of the team and the appropriate staff can review the Early Childhood Program Gold Seal Accreditation Manual throughout the process. This workroom needs to be at a good location for the team to deposit their laptops and paperwork prior to the initial walkthrough.

Program Vision/Mission Overview and Introductions:

Although members of the Site Visit Team will have reviewed the Early Childhood Program Accreditation Self Study Manual documentation before arriving on site, it is helpful for the Early Childhood Program’s Administration to meet with the visiting team and provide a quick overview of the program. This also allows members of the visiting team to know who the contact individuals will be throughout the process.

Initial Walkthrough:

A quick guided tour of the campus will provide the team members an overview of the institution and will allow planning for each inspection that will need to be scheduled. Safe, Sanitary, Secure inspection of all areas that children have access to, including specific checklist for: Classrooms, Bathrooms, Kitchens (if used), Playground areas, Buses and Vans will be inspected by the site visitation team.

Classroom Observation Schedule:

Each classroom should be scheduled for a minimum of twenty-minute observation by members of the site-visit team. A master schedule so classroom observations can be scheduled shall be provided.



Children and Staff File Review:

Using the FCCPSA’s Children and Staff Checklists, the team will review the procedures for setting up and maintaining Children and Staff files, including a review of the physical files. The Director, or individual responsible for setting up and maintaining children files, should be available to provide an overview of the process.

Safe, Sanitary Secure Inspection:

This inspection is conducted during and after the classroom observations. Beginning a few minutes before children are picked up, the team will position themselves to observe the safety procedures at the end of a day. If the program provides transportation, the vehicles will be inspected during the day before children are released.

- Children drop-off procedures are observed first thing in the morning.
- A Fire drill or other Emergency Procedures event will also be conducted, observed, and evaluated during the visit.

Standards Review, and Improvement Review.

All aspects of the Early Childhood Program Accreditation Self Study Manual will be reviewed systematically so the team can provide adequate feedback and review for the Accreditation Committee.



Interviews

The visiting team will conduct scheduled visits and interviews, as well as meetings with random parents, faculty, and support staff. The purpose of these interviews is to get a sense of the child care facility, how it is functioning, and procuring feedback with staff and parents.

Lunch

It is understandable that many facilities want to take the inspection team to a nice restaurant for lunch, however, to make the most of time and resources, it is preferred that a working lunch be provided on site.

Draft of the Report of the Site Visit Team:

Once the visiting team has completed all their observations, inspections, and interviews, they will meet to prepare a draft of the observations discuss any findings with the Director. Since accreditation is a continuous improvement process, the goal is to highlight areas of exceptionalism, as well as to identify areas that need strengthening which will be reviewed for improvement with the Director.

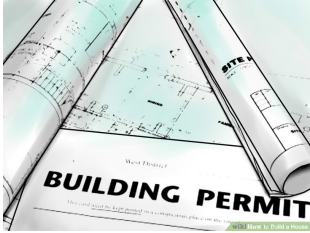
Final Exit Interview:

The exit interview with the Director and any additional staff (determined by the Director of the Early Childhood Program Center) provides the institution with an overview of the verbal review by the members of the visiting team and allows for follow up questions.

Final Draft and Report to the Accreditation Committee.

After the site visit, the chairman of the visiting site team will prepare a final draft based on the input of all members of the team, as well as the final exit interview. That report will be presented to the full accreditation committee. The accreditation committee will determine the appropriate accreditation status or follow up required to maintain or be granted accreditation at its next scheduled FCCPSA Board meeting.

1.0 VISION, MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES



Parents and/or guardians are responsible for their children's spiritual, mental, and physical development. They are the first caregivers, and have a lifelong commitment to their children, not just in the early years, but throughout the child's life. They instill and promote certain values, reward or reinforce specific behaviors, and shape choices that form life-long habits.

When a parent or guardian seeks out an Early Childhood Program Center, they are enlisting the help of an organization that will partner with them in the highest calling of their lives. The parent's role in quality child care is vital to do the following:

- Inquire about qualifications and experience of child care staff, as well as staff turnover
- Know the Program's policies and procedures
- Communicate directly with caregivers
- Visit and observe the facility
- Talk to their child about their daily experiences in child care
- Familiarize themselves with the child care standards

Early Childhood Program Centers have the opportunity to demonstrate:

- Quality Environment
 - Maintain a safe and secure environment for the children
 - Provide a clean and comfortable "child-friendly" atmosphere
 - Fosters the growing independence of the children
- Quality Caregivers
 - Friendly staff eager to care for children
 - Accept family cultural and ethnic differences
 - Use of pleasant tone of voice and frequent hold, cuddle and talk to children
 - Are attentive to, and interact with, the children
 - Provide stimulating, interesting, and educational activities
 - Demonstrate knowledge of social and emotional needs and developmental tasks for all children
 - Communicate with parents
- Quality Activities
 - Expressive in play, painting, drawing, storytelling, music, dancing and other varied activities
 - Include exercise and coordination development
 - Include opportunities for all children to read, be creative, explore and problem solve.
 - Activities are children initiated and teacher facilitated

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of the Early Childhood Program (which is most often described in a Statement of Faith, Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Philosophy of Education) is the foundation upon which the entire structure of the program is built. For a program to be properly evaluated, the process must begin with a clear vision or description of what the program is created to achieve, including expected children's outcomes. That goal will not be obtained unless all members of the team are unified in purpose, based on a clear understanding and agreement with the vision, and then applying consistent and directed efforts to accomplish the goal.

Statement of Faith:

There are many precious truths taught in the Bible over which Godly men have differed in understanding. Therefore, this is not a statement of all that is important to believe, but an affirmation of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. The Statement of Faith identifies the facility as distinctly Christian and allows believers to find a common unity with the facility's program.

The Vision Statement: (Declaration of the Program's goals)

The Vision Statement is the foundation upon which the entire structure is built and should provide a mental picture of what the school wants to achieve over time. It should provide guidance as to what the organization is focused on, what will be the foundation for all decisions, so that all employees, children and families understand what they are a part of and why; and it should be succinctly written so it is easy to remember.

The Mission Statement:

The Mission Statement of the Early Childhood Program is built on the Vision Statement and defines what it is all about to your families, employees and the community. It determines why it exists, or its reason for being. At a minimum, the Mission Statement should define to your clientele and describe the results that the program is designed to produce. The Mission Statement should, at a minimum, answer these three questions: What does the Early Childhood Program do? Who does it do it for? How does it do what it does?

The Philosophy of Education:

The Philosophy of Education defines the beliefs, principles and guidelines upon which the program is based. "Philosophy" means "love of wisdom." It is made up of two Greek words, "philo", meaning "love", and "sophos", meaning "wisdom". Education has been defined as "the process by which children develop knowledge, skills, and character, especially through formal instruction, training, and study".

The resulting Philosophy of Education reflects the program's beliefs about how children learn, describes the environment, and includes specific methodology and overall goals for children. It is the guiding set of principles upon which curriculum is purchased or designed, staff are hired and trained, environments are designed, relationships are nurtured, and lesson plans are implemented.

Having an understanding of a well-developed Philosophy of Education is critical to the ongoing evaluations that examine current practices and develop strategic plans for improvements in the program. Ongoing improvements include documentation of the level to which the program is meeting quality goals, professional development of staff, and communication with families.

A Final Note:

If these foundational principles are not clearly identified and understood by the governing authorities, administration, and staff, it is nearly impossible to communicate them to the parents and children you wish to serve. It is imperative that the Early Childhood Program not only state these principles in writing but should articulate them in practical and meaningful ways as you build your Early Childhood Program upon them to reach your community.

The accreditation process will require that the purpose, (vision, mission, and philosophy) be periodically and systematically reviewed. This does not mean that they are expected to change fundamentally or often. Mechanisms must be in place for periodic review to assure that:

- 1) Your Early Childhood Program is staying true to the founding principles.
- 2) The principles as stated address and cover the ever growing and changing plans the Program develops.
- 3) Stakeholders have input into the review and continual improvement process.

1.0 Vision, Mission and Philosophy of Education

Founding Principles

1.1 Vision, Mission and Philosophy of Education

1.1.1 Vision Statement: The Program has a written and published Vision Statement.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #1.1.1 Vision Statement.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Vision Statement clearly articulates what the Program would like to achieve or its defining purpose for existence.
- Standard partially met: The Program has a Vision Statement but does not clearly articulate what program would like to achieve or its defining purpose for existence.
- Standard not met: There is no evidence of a Vision Statement.

On-Site Activities: Interview the Program Director, Teaching Staff and Parents as applicable to determine their understanding and implementation of the Statement.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Director, and appropriate staff understand, support and apply the Vision Statement and base operational decisions in context.
- Standard not met: Director and appropriate staff do not apply the Vision Statement and base operational decisions in context.

1.1.2 Mission Statement: The Program has a written and published Mission Statement or Statement of Purpose.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #1.1.2 Copy of the Mission Statement.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Mission Statement clearly defines what the organization is, why it exists, its purpose and reason for being, and who the primary customers are.
- Standard partially met: The Program has a Mission Statement, but it does not clearly define what the organization is, why it exists, its purpose and reason for being and who the primary customers are.
- Standard not met: There is no evidence of a Mission Statement.

On-Site Activities: Interview the Program Director, and teaching staff as applicable to determine their understanding and implementation of the Mission Statement. To carry out the Mission Statement, the Director and teaching staff have developed clearly defined goals for the children which guides their curriculum planning for the educational, social, developmental, and Christian character of each child.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Director, and appropriate staff understand, support and apply the Mission Statement and base operational decisions in context.
- Standard not met: Director and appropriate staff do not apply the Mission Statement and base operational decisions in context.

1.1.3 Philosophy of Education: The Program has a written and published Philosophy of Education regarding the care and education of young children. The philosophy is based on "best practices" and is consistent with the program's vision and mission statements.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #1.1.3 The Program's Philosophy of Education Statement including research of "best practices" on which it is based.

Evaluation

- Exceptional compliance: It is evident that a substantial amount of research was used in developing the program's Philosophy of Education, and the philosophy reflects the mission and vision of the program.
- Standard partially met: The program has developed a Philosophy Statement. However, documentation of research was not provided.
- Standard not met: There is no written Philosophy of Education Statement.

On-Site Activities: Interview the Program Director and teaching staff as applicable to determine their understanding and implementation of their Philosophy of Education. To carry out the Philosophy of Education, the Director and teaching staff have developed clearly defined goals for the children consistent with the Child Care Facilities' Philosophy of Education

Evaluation

- Standard met: Director, and appropriate staff understand, support and apply the Philosophy of Education and base operational decisions in context.
- Standard partially met: The program has developed a Philosophy of Education Statement. However, clear connections to its understanding and implementation were not present.
- Standard not met: Director, and appropriate staff do not apply the Philosophy of Education and do not base operational decisions in context.

2.0 Governance and Administration

Founding Principles

The founding principles in the development of the Governance and Administration policies of any educational program should have as its base a commitment to sound stewardship. The long-term success and survival of any program is dependent on the leadership and faithfulness of its guiding board and/or administrator. Stewardship refers to processes and structures that manage, allocate, and monitor resources that are crucial to fulfill the program's academic mission. Areas of stewardship include compliance with government regulations, fiscal responsibilities, and integrity in all relationships.

The Program must function in a manner that ensures, on an ongoing basis, that all its operations align with and support its core academic vision, mission and philosophy of education. Understanding the Program's resources, and its responsibilities to the children and families it serves is the responsibility of all members of the team. To accomplish this, principles of good stewardship must be constantly taught and reinforced, so all team members understand and follow its principles at all levels.

These principles include, at a minimum, an appropriate respect for and use of the Program's resources. Rigorous and effective stewardship of the program's finances, with appropriate "checks and balances," is critical. Clear areas of responsibility and lines of authority, along with a means to ensure accountability, are needed. There must be a commitment to open communication and transparency among administration, staff, children and parents as to the rationale and decision-making process.

2.1 Corporate Structure

2.1.1 Incorporation: The governing body of the facility has met the legal requirements to operate in the state of Florida by filing as a corporation with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations, or has met the requirement as an Unincorporated Association.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.1.1 Florida Department of Corporations Certificate of Status, Annual Report or Church Charter if unincorporated.

Evaluation

- Standard met:

- Standard not met:

2.1.2 Bylaws: The corporate status of the entity having oversight of the Early Childhood Program, whether incorporated, proprietary, or religiously affiliated, has clearly articulated bylaws that include the Early Childhood Program.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.1.2A Bylaws

Self-study exhibit #2.1.2B Breakdown of sections that cover all operational details pertaining to the Early Childhood Program.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The corporate status of the entity, having oversight of the Early Childhood Program, program, has clearly articulated bylaws that include oversight and operational details of the Early Childhood program.
- Standard partially met: The corporate status of the entity, having oversight of the Early Childhood Program has bylaws. However, they do not include clear oversight, or operational details of the early education program.
- Standard not met: The corporate status of the entity, having oversight of the Early Childhood Program is not covered in the bylaws.

2.1.3 Minutes of Meetings: Written minutes of governance meetings are maintained on file.

Indicators of Compliance

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Copies of the governance minutes from three governance meetings referring to the Early Childhood Program are available on-site to the visiting team chair or to his/her designee.
- Standard not met: Copies of three governance minutes referring to the Early Childhood Program are not available on-site to the visiting team chair or to his/her designee.

2.1.4 Governance Entity: Programs under the auspices of *another organization and/or agency* are represented by a governing entity or committee responsible for the general policies and financial stability of the early education program.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.1.4 Diagram of the authority structure, if applicable.

Evaluation

- Standard does not apply; program is not under the auspices of another organization.
- Standard met: Authority structure of the parent organization or agency in relation to the early education staff, including who is responsible for the general policies and the financial stability of the early education program is clearly outlined.
- Standard not met:

2.2 Compliance Responsibilities

2.2.1 Civil Authorities: The program meets and/or exceeds all requirements of Florida Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing Program or have obtained Religious Exemption status through the FCCPSA. At a minimum, an outside authority inspects the program annually. Any reports of violations must remain on file for inspection.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.2.1A DCF license or FCCPSA Religious Exemption from licensure Certificate.

Self-study exhibit #2.2.1B Inspection Reports for the last 12 months, including violations from any source, and corrective actions taken to be in compliance.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The program meets/exceeds requirements of DCF and/or FCCPSA.
- Standard partially met: The program meets/exceeds some of the requirements of DCF or FCCPSA certification; however, some inspection items require correction.
- Standard not met: The program does not meet the requirements of DCF licensing or FCCPSA certification.

On-Site Observation Physically inspect proper posting.

Evaluation

- Standard met:
- Standard not met

2.2.2 Documentation of Inspections: The program is inspected by city/state agencies as applicable for licensing or exemption under state or federal law (i.e., fire department, health department, food services, etc.). Inspection documentations are on file. If the program is exempt from licensing, voluntary inspection has been sought, and recommendations for improvement have been followed.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.2.1A Fire Department Inspection.

Self-study exhibit #2.2.1B Health Department Inspection. (If applicable)

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program meets requirements of local Fire Department and/or County Health Department.

- Standard partially met: The Program meets some of the requirements of local Fire Department or Health Department; however, some inspections items require correction. The violations have time deadlines and are in the process of compliance.

- Standard not met: The Program does not meet the requirements of Fire Department or County Health Department certification.

On-Site Observation Physically inspect proper posting.

Evaluation

- Standard met:

- Standard not met:

2.3 Fiscal Responsibilities

2.3.1 Financial Stability and Integrity: The Program is not undergoing financial reorganization to protect itself from creditors.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Activities On-site inspector will verify with Administration/Director that the Program has not, and is not, in the process of filing for Bankruptcy.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program is not undergoing financial reorganization to protect itself from creditors.
- Standard not met: The Program is undergoing financial reorganization to protect itself from creditors.

2.3.2 Responsibility for Fiscal Matters: The governance or administration has oversight of the Program, and it reviews the financial position of the Program and ensures its stability. Operating budgets are prepared annually, and there is at least quarterly reconciliation of expenses to budget. A system exists to review or adjust the budget if circumstances change, and it includes a yearly audit. Budgets are reviewed and amended as needed. Fiscal records (such as revenue and expenditure statements, balance sheets, banking reconciliation, etc.) are kept as evidence of sound financial management.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.3.2 Describe how the information about the Program's activities and financial records is prepared and from whom the governance receives this complete information. Discuss whether these records and the reporting system are adequate and how the governance ensures the stability of the program's financial position.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program's financial records and financial reporting system are adequate, and ensures the stability of the Program's financial position.
- Standard not met: The self-study data do not satisfactorily demonstrate that the Program's financial records and financial reporting system are not adequate or that the stability of the Program's financial position is not secure.

2.3.3 Financial Records: The Program’s Financial Records include an annual internal review. General accounting procedures used by the program, have been validated by an appropriate outside source and provide evidence of sound fiscal accountability using standard accounting practices.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.3.3 The last internal review and verification that general accounting procedures used by the Program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A financial review report is available on-site, as well as verification that general accounting procedures used by the program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.
- Standard not met: One or both of the following are not available on-site: a financial review and verification that general accounting procedures used by the Program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.

2.3.4 Insurance: In order to ensure the stability of the Program in the case of a significant litigation, the program is covered by insurance, including accident insurance for children and assistants (if employed), liability insurance, and vehicle insurance with the following minimums: \$5,000 multiplied by the rated seating capacity of the vehicle, or \$100,000, whichever is greater (if children are transported).

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.3.4A Liability Insurance Declarations page

Self-study exhibit #2.3.4B Activity Insurance Declarations page

Self-study exhibit #2.3.4C Vehicle Insurance Declarations page

Evaluation

- Standard met: The governance maintains adequate liability and accident insurance as described in the standard.
- Standard not met: The governance does not appear to maintain adequate liability and accident insurance as described in the standard.

2.3.5 Staff Salaries and Benefits: The Program approves wages and benefits. Wages, benefits, recruitment procedures and staff retention are reviewed at least annually by the administration or governing body. Policies reflect an effort to compensate and retain quality staff by including benefits such as health coverage, sick leave, vacation leave, continuing education, Social Security, and an opportunity to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity, or other type of retirement plan on a prorated basis where applicable. *Paid planning time away from children is also provided.*

By offering a competitive salary and benefits package for full-time staff (after their introductory period of employment), the goal would have a teacher retention. Children feel more secure knowing their teacher will be their instructor and loving care throughout the year. This is true for children of all ages, from infants to 5 years old, a positive aspect for teacher retention.

A formal, written, merit evaluation program for every staff is formally reviewed by management annually. Individual professional development plan is developed for staff. The staff is provided feedback on areas of strength and areas that need strengthening.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.3.5 What percentage of the annual budget is reflected by wages and benefits for the staff? Define how wages are set and approved, what benefits are available to whom, and how often the governance reviews wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The governance approves wages and benefits that compensate staff as described in this standard, and the governance reviews wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention at least yearly.
- Standard not met: The governance does not approve wages and benefits that compensate staff as described in the standard, and/or the governance does not review wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention at least yearly.

2.4 Administration

2.4.1 Policies and Procedures: The governance establishes and maintains written governing policies and procedures that are consistent with the Program's philosophy. Confidential personnel records, including transcripts, resumes and ongoing professional development are kept in a secured location.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.4.1 Administrator's Manual (Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)) that details current policies and procedures for the early childhood program and/or inclusive of the early education program.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Program has an updated Administrator's Manual (SOP) detailing the policies and procedures that reflect the program's current practices and the program's philosophy.
- Standard partially met: Program has an Administrator's Manual (SOP) detailing the policies and procedures that reflect the Program's philosophy. However, they have not been reviewed and brought up to date in more than two years.
- Standard not met: The Administrator's Manual (SOP) of policies and procedures are not consistent with the Program's philosophy, is not up to date, or is incomplete.

2.4.2 Administrative Role and Responsibilities: The Program has clearly defined roles and responsibilities. New administration and board members are provided with an orientation when they join the team, including written policies defining roles and responsibilities of board members and staff.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.4.2 Define the roles and responsibilities of the Program and how new members receive orientation information.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The roles and responsibilities of the administration and board members are defined, and the orientation process includes written policies defining roles and responsibilities of board members and staff.
- Standard partially met: The roles and responsibilities of the administration and board members are loosely defined, and there is no orientation process described.
- Standard not met: The roles and responsibilities of the administration and board members are not defined, and there is no orientation process described.

2.4.3 Evaluation of Director: The governing board or administration ensures an annual evaluation of the early childhood administrator/director.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.4.3 Copies of the evaluation tools used that explain the process followed in the evaluation of the director.

Evaluation

- Standard met: An annual evaluation form used to annually evaluate the director is provided.
- Standard partially met: A satisfactory explanation of the director’s annual evaluation is supplied.
- Standard not met: Evidence of an annual evaluation is not supplied.

2.4.4 Evaluation of Program: The director submits an annual evaluation based on early childhood/child development theory, research, and best practices, and assists the administration or governing board in setting and prioritizing short-range and long-range goals for the Program. This written evaluation is based on annual surveys completed by the staff and parents (See Appendix for surveys). The feedback provided is to help maintain the high-quality standards of the facility and to review and maintain its mission, vision and purpose of the program.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.4.4 Copy of the last annual evaluation of the Program and a prioritized list of short-range and long-range goals for the program.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The last annual evaluation is provided, and the evaluation includes short-range and long-range goals.
- Standard partially met: A copy of the last annual evaluation or a copy of goals is provided, but not both.
- Standard not met: The data do not satisfactorily validate either an annual evaluation or short- and long-range goals.

2.5 Admissions

2.5.1 Admissions Policies: Clear admissions and operational policies are stated in writing, (Parent Handbook). These policies and procedures will not discriminate against any person or group of persons based on age, gender, race, color, ethnic origin, or physical disability. In addition, the Parent Handbook will cover at a minimum:

- Fees
- Payment Schedule
- Days and Hours of Operation
- Child Sick Leave Policy
- Termination Policies Are Detailed
- Guidance and Discipline
- Expulsion Policy
- Persons Authorized to Pick up Child
- Medication Administration
- Emergency Procedures
- Use of Screen Media
- Parental Participation and Conferences
- Field Trips
- Religious Activities

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.5.1 Parent Handbook

Evaluation

- Standard met: Clear admissions policies are stated in writing. These policies and procedures do not discriminate against any person or group of persons on the basis of age, gender, race, color, ethnic origin, or physical disability, including operational policies.
- Standard partially met: Clear admissions policies are stated in writing. However, they are lacking some components in regard to their non-discriminatory policy against some person or group of persons based on age, gender, race, color, ethnic origin, or physical disability, or operational policies are not detailed.
- Standard not met: The self-study does not contain clear admissions or operational policies.

2.5.2 Admissions Procedures: Clear admissions procedures are stated in writing, (Enrollment Packet). These policies and procedures provide an exchange of information between the provider and parent, working to assure a good match. Discussion includes a description of the program and policies as well as parents' values and wishes around such topics as eating, sleeping, toileting, and discipline. Family Enrollment Application/Contract must be notarized and include at a minimum receipt of the following:

- Parent Handbook and Agreement to Program Policies
- Written Disciplinary/Expulsion Policy
- Immunization Records
- Child Health Examination
- Listing of known allergies of the child
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Permission to Treat Emergencies
- Field Trips Transportation Permission (if applicable)
- Know Your Child Care Facility Brochure
- Influenza Virus, Guide to Parents Brochure
- Distracter Driver flyer
- Rilya Wilson Act flyer

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.5.2A Enrollment Packet.

Self-study exhibit #2.5.2B Family/Child Contract.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Clear admissions procedures are stated in writing. These policies include an exchange of information between the provider and parent, and include a description of the program and policies for a wide range of topics, including, but not limited to eating, sleeping, toileting, and discipline.
- Standard partially met: Clear admissions procedures are stated in writing. However, they are lacking some component in regard to exchange of information between the provider and parent, or detailed description of the Program's policies of an essential topic.
- Standard not met: The Program does not have clear admissions procedures.

2.6 Children's information

2.6.1 Records: The Administration/Director ensures that current, complete, confidential records for each child are kept and are available to authorized personnel only and are onsite in a locked file cabinet. (*Authorized personnel include administrative staff and appropriate regulatory authorities*). The file may include items such as the child's behavioral patterns, assessments of developmental and cognitive development, if appropriate. Within 30 days of enrollment the file will include at a minimum:

- Emergency contact information for the parent/guardian and alternate contacts
- Birth Certificate (copy)
- Immunization, DH680 or Religious Exemption, DH681
- Child Health Examination/Physical, DH3040
- Family Enrollment Application/Contract
- Meals/Snack Listing of Known Allergies of the Child
- Daily Attendance Records
- Accident/Incident Reports
- Behavior/Discipline Reports
- Observation Log
- Persons Authorized to Pick up Child
- All Correspondence with Parents

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation The site inspector will review children's records and the policies regarding who can see these records.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Current, complete, confidential children's records are filed in a locked file cabinet and available only to designated staff or authorized outside agencies. Current documentation of all Immunization Records and Child's School Entry Physicals.
- Standard partially met: Children's records are filed, but at least one of the following is true: the records (Immunization records or School Entry Physicals) are not current, they are not complete, or they are not stored in a locked file cabinet.
- Standard not met: Children's records are not kept or are not onsite.

On-Site Activities Appropriate staff will demonstrate how files are created and tracked to assure Immunizations, etc. are current.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Training of staff and understanding of procedures is excellent.
- Standard partially met: Incomplete understanding of procedures or requirements.
- Standard not met: Appropriate staff is untrained in children file management.

2.6.2 Discipline and Expulsion Policies: The Director oversees interaction between staff and children, publishing the Discipline Policies and Expulsion Policies and procedures for parents/guardians (Parent Handbook) and staff (Staff Handbook) and taking appropriate measures to maintain discipline. Corporal punishment or legally questionable practices will not be utilized. Food is never withheld as a disciplinary action to the child. The Expulsion Policy pertains to not only the children but also to the parent/guardians if certain policies of the parents/guardians are violated.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #2.6.2 The Program’s Discipline Policies and Expulsion Policies are listed and explained how staff is trained to enforce the policies and parents/guardians are informed of these policies.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A copy of the above described discipline policies, expulsion policies, training procedures, and information provided to parents/guardians is included. Parents/guardians sign the policies and are maintained in the children files.
- Standard partially met: The above-described discipline policies and expulsion policies are included, study, but there is insufficient documentation that staff training regarding the policies take place and that the program provides information regarding the policies to parents/guardians.
- Standard not met: The discipline policies are not sufficiently addressed.

On-Site Observation The site inspector will review children’s records to verify consistent application of the policies and communication with parents/guardians.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children’s records verify consistent application of the policies and communication with parents/guardians.
- Standard not met: Children’s records do not verify consistent application of the policies and communication with parents/guardians.

On-Site Activities Appropriate staff, including administration and teachers, will explain how they were trained in the discipline policies and expulsion policies, and how information is given to administration and parents/guardians.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Interviews with staff verify consistent application of the discipline and expulsion policies and communication with parents/guardians.
- Standard not met: Interviews with staff do not verify consistent application of the discipline and expulsion policies and communication with parents/guardians.

2.6.3 Policies regarding unusual occurrences: The Early Childhood Program must have a written plan for reporting and managing any incident or unusual occurrence that is threatening to the health, safety, or welfare of the children, staff or volunteers.

The following types of incidents must be addressed in written policy and staff need to be trained in the following policies:

- Lost or missing child
- Suspected maltreatment of a child
- Injuries or illness requiring hospitalization or emergency treatment
- Death of a child or staff member
- Presence of a threatening individual who attempts or succeeds in gaining entrance to the facility

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Self-study exhibit #2.6.3 Program's Policies regarding unusual occurrences are documented policies in the Staff Handbook or Standard Operating Procedures and are explained to staff, and staff are trained to implement these policies.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A copy of the above described policies are written in either the Staff handbook or Standard Operating Procedures and staff are well trained to implement these policies.
- Standard partially met: The staff have a general understanding of the above-described policies but these policies are not written down in either a Staff handbook or in a Standard Operating Procedures Manual.
- Standard not met: The policies are not written down and staff is unaware of how to specifically handle the above described policies of unusual occurrences.

2.6.4 Emergency and Security: Current emergency contact information for the Parent/Guardian and Alternate People authorized to take the child off of the premises is maintained for each child enrolled in the program.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children’s files include all the current emergency information described above.
- Standard not met: Children’s files do not contain all the current emergency information described above.

On-Site Activities Appropriate staff will demonstrate how emergency contact information is maintained and accessed in an emergency by appropriate staff.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff is well trained in maintaining contact information, and clear procedures are in place.
- Standard not met: Staff is not trained in maintaining contact information, and/or appropriate staff has not been trained in emergency contact procedures.

2.6.5 Provisions for Children with certain needs: The child care facility has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and health professionals to meet certain needs of the children. This includes but not limited to: obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur; children with allergies or other environmental health needs; allergies to dust mites; in need of hearing, speech or language and developmental screenings for the children.

On-Site Observation

Self-study exhibit #2.6.5 Provisions for children with certain needs.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The program has formal written policies and arrangements with local health authorities and health professionals to meet certain needs of the children including disease outbreaks, health needs and children in need of hearing, speech/language developmental screenings.
- Standard partially met: There is no formal written policies, but the program is in contact with local health authorities to obtain advice for the certain needs of the children.
- Standard not met: No policies are developed for children with certain needs.

3.0 Health, Safety and Transportation

Founding Principles

The Early Childhood Program has been given a great responsibility by the parent/guardian to ensure the health, safety, and general welfare of each child in attendance. It is then of the utmost importance that the staff have the best training in all areas of health and safety. Constant vigilance is required; not only to maintain the current level of safety, but also to be aware of how the surroundings may not prove safe for young ones. Active involvement from the teachers (including sitting on the floor in a classroom) will promote a view from a child's perspective.

There may come a need for quick action, such as in the case of a choking child. Only with the repetitive use of training and practice will the actions of Pediatric First Aid/CPR or other interventions promote a positive response when there is not enough time to think. That is why repetitive training, even over areas of safety that have been reviewed previously, is continuously reviewed on a regular schedule. No matter how many times the playground has been inspected, it must still be inspected today BEFORE children are given access, because today may be the day when a hazard is present.

Note: Health, Safety and Transportation Standards are listed below; however, the *Indicators of Compliance* are not detailed. The accreditation visit is primarily focused on the standards that define the Early Childhood Program, from its Vision, Mission and Philosophy of Education, Governance and Administration policies, Curriculum and its implementation into all aspects of both the children and families that are served, including academic, social, and relationships.

Before the Early Childhood Program can progress to the accreditation level, it will have had to pass the Florida Department of Children and Families licensure process that focuses on the State's Health and Safety Standards. If the Early Childhood Program has obtained a Religious Exemption from Licensure through the FCCPSA, then it will have undergone a health and safety inspection. All FCCPSA inspectors are trained in Health, Safety and Transportation Inspections, and will use the detailed FCCPSA protocols and checklist as a part of the inspection process. For a copy of the Indicators of Compliance, the program director may contact the administration office and a PDF version will be provided. Several of the checklists, including, Kitchen, Playground and Vehicle Inspection, are provided in the Appendix Section of this manual.

Many standards that have a clear health and safety component are categorized in different sections of the standards. Teacher to Child Ratios and Class Size, as an example, are listed in Section 6 of the FCCPSA Standards: Personnel. Standards in this section that begin with the number 3, and are in bold type, indicate standards from health, safety and transportation. Standards that are underlined, but not in bold type, indicate standards that are duplicated here. This provides the Early Childhood Program facility with one combined list detailed in the order of the Florida Department of Education, Office of Early Learning, Health and Safety Checklist.

Note: Health and Safety is a category that is impacted by most, if not all, accreditation standards and is, therefore, reflected throughout all seven divisions of these standards. Crossover standards are included in this grouping for reference.

3.1 Supervision and Access

3.1.1 Supervision of Arrivals and Departures: Safe arrival and departure procedures have been developed that ensure all children in the Program are accounted for throughout the day and released only to authorized adults. Children are always supervised visually, and transition of children from one teacher to another or from one area to another is accounted for to ensure the supervision and whereabouts of children at all times.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Supervision of Arrivals and Departures

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children in the Program are accounted for throughout the day and released only to authorized adults. Children are always supervised visually, and transition of children from one teacher to another or from one area to another is accounted for to ensure the supervision and whereabouts of children at all times.
- Standard partially met: Although there are procedures in place to meet the standards, there is at least one area where the procedures are not followed consistently, or the policies need additional oversight added.
- Standard not met: Procedures are inadequate to protect children or are not followed.

Cross Reference to additional Supervision and Access Standards

6.2.1 Qualifications of VPK Program Director: Program Administrators must be at least 21 years of age and have a minimum of:

- Successfully obtain the Florida Director Credential Program
- Bachelor's degree
- Complete the Standards for Four-Year-Olds, or Florida Standards for Four-Year Olds Online (DOE course completed on or after 2011). *3 Hour Online or Instructor-Led Course*
- Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (DOE course). *5 Hour Online Course*
- VPK Director Credential (DOE course). *5 Hour Online Course*
- Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*
- Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*

Note: Individuals who were issued a Florida Director Credential before December 31, 2006 are considered "Exempt" from the VPK Endorsement retirements and are still eligible to be a director of a private prekindergarten program. However, these 'exempt' directors are encouraged to acquire the VPK endorsement.

6.3 Instructional and Support Staff Qualifications

All staff, regardless of position, must meet the requirements of 6.1.3 AHCA Background Screening and 6.1.4 Staff Orientation before they are permitted to work with children, alone or supervised. Primary Teachers must be at least 21 years of age, Associate teachers must be at least 18 years of age and all Teachers Aids/Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age.

6.5.2 Ratios and Group Size: When mixed age groups of infants and toddlers are in the same room, the child staff ratio is maintained according to the youngest child in the room. If the children in the mixed age group have children of one year old, but under two years of age, the ratio of staff to children shall not exceed 1 to 6. If all the children in the mixed age group are two years of age or older, the child-staff ratio is maintained according to the age group with the largest number of children within the group.

6.6.3 Attendance/Monitoring: The staff maintains direct supervision of children at all times. Direct supervision is always defined as visually within sight, including during nap time, diaper changing, toileting, bathing (within sight or hearing), changing clothes and when separated from other children due to illness or possible communicable disease.

6.6.4 Internal Communication Related to Supervision: Primary and Associate teachers are assigned specific classes or groups of children to supervise and are present with that class or group at all times. Staff members who are sharing the responsibility of a group of children communicate with one another to ensure smooth operation of the program.

7.2.2 Visitation Rights: The program has an open-door policy regarding visits by parents/guardians on the program's premises, including in their child's classroom. Policies concerning parent/guardian involvement (e.g., visiting, observing, and volunteering) are in place to ensure the partnership between home and program is maintained.

3.2 Transportation

3.2.1 Field Trip Permission and Emergency Treatment: Written permission and emergency treatment forms are obtained from parents/guardians for every child being transported. The form must be signed by a parent/guardian listed on the enrollment application. One permission form may be used for regularly scheduled pick up and drop off; individual permission forms must be obtained for any other scheduled event.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.2.1 Field Trip Permission and Emergency Treatment Form

Evaluation

- Standard met: Field Trip Permission and Emergency Treatment Form meets the standard, properly documented.
- Standard partially met: Field Trip Permission and Emergency Treatment Form has been provided, but is lacking in at least one component.
- Standard not met: No Field Trip Permission and Emergency Treatment Form provided.

3.2.2 Field Trip and Transportation Policies and Procedures: The Program has written field trip and transportation policies and procedures that ensure the supervision of all children at all times and thus promote the safety of the children. These policies are shared with parents/guardians and implemented by the program in the Parent Handbook. Attendance checks are logged before, regularly during, and upon return to the program's facilities. Trip logs are to be filed in the Program's office no less than weekly and remain on file no less than six months.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.2.2 Indicate where in the Staff and Parent Handbooks field trip and transportation policies are detailed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program has written field trip and transportation policies and procedures that ensure the supervision of all children at all times and thus promote the safety of the children. These policies are shared with parents/guardians and implemented by the program in the Parent Handbook.
- Standard partially met: The Program has written field trip and transportation policies and procedures that ensure the supervision of all children at all times and thus promote the safety of the children. However, these policies are NOT adequately shared with parents/guardians and implemented by the program in the Parent Handbook.
- Standard not met: Field trip policies and procedures are not provided or are inadequate.

3.2.2 Observation Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation View field trip logs to verify that attendance checks are logged before, regularly during, and upon return to the program's facilities. Trip logs are to be filed in the Program's office no less than weekly and remain on file no less than six months.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Attendance checks are logged before, regularly during, and upon return to the program's facilities. Trip logs are to be filed in the center's office no less than weekly and remain on file no less than six months. The transportation log must be signed by two individuals, the driver and another staff person.
- Standard not met: Trip logs are NOT filed or are incomplete.

3.2.3 Vehicle Inspection and Permits: Current documentation is available on all vehicle safety inspections and is retained in the vehicle. A certified mechanic verifying that all vehicles are in compliance with vehicle transportation safety requirements must inspect vehicles no less than annually.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Vehicle Inspection and Permits

Evaluation

- Standard met: Current documentation is available on all vehicle safety inspections and driver qualifications. A certified mechanic has completed a safety inspection at least annually. This report must be retained for the life of the vehicle.
- Standard partially met: Current documentation is available on all vehicle safety inspections and driver qualifications. A certified mechanic has NOT completed a safety inspection at least annually.
- Standard not met: Current documentation is NOT available on all vehicle safety inspections and driver qualifications. A certified mechanic has NOT completed a safety inspection at least annually.

3.2.4 Vehicles with Restraining Devices and Emergency Equipment: Vehicles are equipped with age-appropriate restraint devices. Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers never sit in the front seat of the vehicle; those over the age of 6 and under the age of 12 do not sit in the front seat of a vehicle with an active passenger airbag. Emergency reflectors in case of a break down, fire extinguisher, and a first aid kit are mandatory.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Visual inspection confirms that all above standards are met, and the vehicle is well maintained.
- Standard partially met: Visual inspection confirms all standards are met, however, the vehicle lacks maintenance.
- Standard not met: Visual inspection details safety issues and/or lack of proper maintenance.

3.2.5 Qualified Drivers: All drivers are named as drivers on the insurance policy and hold a valid Florida driver's license, including any CDL endorsements that may be required based on the vehicle's capacity. All drivers must have background screening clearance through the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA). In addition, all drivers must have current First Aid and pediatric CPR certification. Drivers must have a Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver Fitness Determination (DOT Form 649-F) verifying fitness to operate a vehicle based on Federal DOT standards.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: All drivers are named as drivers on the insurance policy and hold a valid Florida driver's license, including any CDL endorsements, if required. All drivers have current First Aid and pediatric CPR certification. In addition, drivers have a Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver Fitness Determination (DOT form 649-F) verifying fitness to operate a vehicle based on Federal DOT standards if required.
- Standard partially met: All drivers have not met all of state standards and the above requirements.
- Standard not met: Employee files for drivers are not complete.

3.2.6 Communication Devices, Contact Information: The driver or a member of the staff has a cell phone for communication as needed. The emergency contact information to the center, director or other staff members and emergency services is always with the vehicle or driver. Current contact information for the parents/guardians of each child being transported is present any time children are being transported.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Review field trip logs to verify that emergency and current family contact information is collected.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Trip logs contain emergency contact information, as well as the children's family contact information.
- Standard not met: Trip logs do NOT verify that the required information is collected.

3.2.7 Emergency Care/Medication: If any child (or children) has medical issues that may require additional care or intervention, necessary measures and supplies are available when the child is being transported.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation View field trip logs with special attention to medical issues and related supplies.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Field trip logs have appropriate notes with regards to special attention to medical issues and related supplies.
- Standard not met: Field trip logs not provided or do not have appropriate notes regarding special attention to medical issues and related supplies.

3.2.8 Children are NEVER left unattended in a vehicle. One worker must remain with the vehicle at all times when children are inside. An additional staff person is required to properly transition children from a vehicle into or from any building.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit 3.2.8 Provide details from the Administrative Manual and Staff handbooks that detail the Early Childhood Program’s policies and procedures regarding never leaving a child unattended in a vehicle. Include any training material used in ongoing staff training.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Administrative and Staff handbooks provide sufficient details on the center's policies and procedures regarding never leaving a child unattended in a vehicle. Those policies are adequate. Training material is used in ongoing staff training, and documentation of training is provided.
- Standard not met: Policy insufficient, or non-existent.

Cross Reference to additional Transportation Standards

2.3.4 Insurance: In order to ensure the stability of the program in the case of a significant litigation, the program is covered by insurance, including accident insurance for children and assistants (if employed), liability insurance, and vehicle insurance with the following minimums: \$5,000 multiplied by the rated seating capacity of the vehicle, or \$100,000, whichever is greater (if children are transported).

3.2.9 Vehicle Transportation Policies. The Program has the following policies in effect: Vehicles have operating seat belts and/pr safety restraints for children; No alcohol, drugs or smoking is allowed on transportation vehicles; the driver has AHCA background screening; the driver has Pediatric CPR/First Aid training; the driver has an annual physical; vehicle has emergency roadside breakdown kits and fire extinguisher; vehicle has first aid kit in vehicle; vehicle has annual mechanical safety inspection report; transportation log is maintained with driver and staff person signs off to ensure all children have exited the vehicle; the vehicle has installed an alarm system per Senate Bill 252; driver has taken ELC's vehicle safe practices training course.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Review all of the above transportation policies in 3.2.9

Evaluation

- Standard met: All of the above transportation policies in 3.2.9 are followed.
- Standard not met: One or more of the transportation policies in 3.2.9 have not been met.

3.3 Child Discipline/Discipline Policy

Cross Reference to additional Child Discipline/Discipline Policy Standards

7.2.1 Contents and Communication: Parents/guardians of the children in the program receive a Parent/Guardian Handbook that includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) The philosophy statement regarding the care and education of young children attending the program, including what discipline techniques will be used; discipline methods are not severe, humiliating or frightening; food is not used as a reward or punishment, and corporal or physical punishment is not used,
- 2) Policies regarding holidays, illnesses, hours of operation, fees, refunds, enrollment, and termination procedures,
- 3) An explanation of the program's day-to-day functioning,
- 4) Parents/guardians sign a statement acknowledging that they understand and support the program's policies as outlined in the Parent/Guardian Handbook.

3.4 Physical Environment

3.4.1 Lighting and Ventilation: The physical environment of the Program provides sufficient lighting, good ventilation. There are no ceiling lights not working and there are no dusty ceiling air vents.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The physical environment of the Program provides sufficient lighting, good Ventilation with no ceiling lights not working and no dusty ceiling air vents.
- Standard partially met: The physical environment of the Program provides sufficient lighting, good ventilation, with limited exceptions, or less than 5% of lamps needing replacement bulbs.
- Standard not met: The physical environment of the Program does NOT provide sufficient lighting, good ventilation.

3.4.2 Classroom Maintenance: The facilities are organized, well maintained, and free of vermin infestation, safety hazards, offensive odors or toxic plants.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The facilities are organized, well maintained, and free of vermin infestation, safety hazards, offensive odors or toxic plants.
- Standard partially met: The facilities are organized, well maintained, and free of vermin infestation, safety hazards, offensive odors or toxic plants, with minor exceptions as noted.
- Standard not met: The facilities are NOT organized, well maintained, and/or free of vermin infestation, safety hazards, offensive odors or toxic plants.

3.4.3 Cleanliness of Facilities: The facilities are cleaned on a daily basis, including sanitizing the bathrooms and removing trash. The facilities are free of mold. Also, there is no evidence of roaches, ants, or any other insect infestation.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The facilities are cleaned on a daily basis, including sanitizing the bathrooms and removing trash. The facilities are free of mold.
- Standard not met: The facilities are NOT cleaned on a daily basis, including sanitizing the bathrooms and removing trash. The facilities are NOT free of mold.

3.4.4 Sanitizing Toys and Equipment: The Program has an established plan of sanitizing toys and equipment regularly but provides more frequent sanitization as needed to maintain a healthy environment for the children. Toys that are put into the mouth by a child are not to be used by other children until sanitized immediately prior to another child's use. The minimum sanitizing schedule includes, but not limited to:

- Infants: daily
- Toddlers: semiweekly
- Preschoolers: weekly

In addition, if the classroom has classroom pets, the pets need to be fully immunized. The staff ensures proper care of the pets including handwashing if they come in contact with the pets. No reptiles are permitted in the classroom because of the risk for salmonella infection.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.4.4 Provide details from Staff Handbook on the Program's policies and procedures for Sanitizing Toys and Equipment and care for pets.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program has an established plan of sanitizing toys and equipment regularly, but provides more frequent sanitization as needed to maintain a healthy environment for the children especially in handling of the pets. Toys that are put into the mouth by a child are not to be used by other children until sanitized.
- Standard partially met: The Program has an established plan of sanitizing toys and equipment regularly but needs improvement or additional details.
- Standard not met: No policies provided, or policies are inadequate.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Visual inspection of sanitizing schedule and procedures.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program's policies regarding the sanitizing of toys and equipment regularly is followed, including providing more frequent sanitization as needed to maintain a healthy environment for the children especially in handling of the pets. Toys that are put into the mouth by a child are not to be used by other children until sanitized.
- Standard not met: The Program's policies regarding the sanitizing of toys and equipment regularly is not properly followed or documented, including providing more frequent sanitization as needed to maintain a healthy environment for the children.

3.4.5 Proper Chemical Labeling and Storage: All chemicals, medicines, cleaning supplies, poisonous items and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in their original containers. All potentially dangerous products are stored in a locked area. An MSD (Material Safety Data) sheet is strategically placed near harmful chemicals. In the bathrooms, no cleaning supplies are kept in the cabinet unless there is a locking mechanism to prohibit the children from gaining access to these chemicals.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation All chemicals, medicines, cleaning supplies, poisonous items and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are inspected for compliance.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All chemicals, medicines, cleaning supplies, poisonous items and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in their original containers. All potentially dangerous products are stored in a locked area. An MSD (Material Safety Data) sheet is strategically placed near harmful chemicals.
- Standard not met: Missing any of the three minimum requirements: "original containers", "locked", and lack of an "MSD" is a serious danger to children.

3.4.6 Tobacco, Alcohol, Narcotics, etc.: The tobacco, alcohol and narcotics policies apply to all members of the staff, as well as parents/guardians when they are on campus, or assisting in any program activity. Tobacco products of any kind are not allowed on premises. Smoking cigarettes (including vaping and the use of electronic substitutes which will appear to children to be the same as smoking actual tobacco) or having any form of tobacco in the mouth is prohibited on campus, during any activity organized as an official part of the Program. Possession of, consumption of, or being impaired by the use of alcohol is prohibited. Possession of, consumption of, or being impaired by the use of narcotics or other impairing drugs, even if legalized by the State of Florida, is prohibited. The posting of a “No Smoking” sign is required.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.4.6 Indicate where in the Administrator, Staff, and Parent Handbooks the Program's policies on tobacco, alcohol and narcotics are detailed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The tobacco, alcohol and narcotics policy apply to all members of the staff, as well as parents/guardians when they are on campus or assisting in any Program activity. Tobacco products of any kind are not allowed on premises. Smoking cigarettes (including vaping and the use of electronic substitutes which will appear to children to be the same as smoking actual tobacco) or having any form of tobacco in the mouth is prohibited on campus, during any activity organized as an official part of the Program. Possession of, consumption of, or being impaired using alcohol is prohibited. Possession of, consumption of, or being impaired by the use of narcotics or other impairing drugs, even if legalized by the State of Florida, is prohibited.
- Standard partially met: Minor deficiencies in the policies as noted.
- Standard not met: No policy detailed, or the policy is inadequate.

3.4.7 Firearms/Weapons: Firearms or weapons are not permitted on campus, in program vehicles, or on any person located on the premises, with the exception of federal, state or local law enforcement officers.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.4.7 Indicate where in the Administrator, Staff and Parent Handbooks the Program's policies on Firearms and Weapons are detailed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Firearms or weapons are not permitted on campus, in program vehicles, or on any person located on the premises, with the exception of federal, state or local law enforcement officers.
- Standard partially met: Minor deficiencies in the policies as noted.
- Standard not met: No policy detailed, or the policy is inadequate.

3.4.8 Temperature: The physical environment of the Program maintains a comfortable temperature no less than 65°F or greater than 82°F.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The physical environment of the Program maintains a comfortable temperature no less than 65°F or greater than 82°F.
- Standard not met: Parts of the Program's center in which the temperature cannot be adequately controlled are occupied by children.

3.4.9 Telephone: At least one working telephone land line is available to all staff personnel during the hours of operation.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: At least one working telephone land line is available to all staff personnel during the hours of operation.
- Standard not met: At least one working telephone is NOT available to all staff personnel during the hours of operation.

3.4.10 Classroom Size: Classrooms are suitable for the age and activities of the children in the Program. Floor space meets or exceeds a minimum of thirty-five square feet of usable space per child, (or 20 square feet if licensed prior to October 1, 1992)

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Classrooms are suitable for the age and activities of the children in the Program. Floor space meets or exceeds a minimum of thirty-five square feet of usable space per child.
- Standard partially met: Classrooms are suitable for the age and activities of the children in the Program. Floor space in no more than one room does not meet the thirty-five square feet of usable space per child standard.
- Standard not met: More than one room used by children does not meet a minimum of thirty-five square feet of usable space per child.

3.4.11 Classroom Age Appropriate/Safe Furniture and Equipment: The environment facilitates optimal age-appropriate learning experiences with appropriate and safe furniture and equipment. Including, but not limited to:

- Shelving and storage units provide an organized flow to the room and thereby invite children to interact with materials and equipment,
- Heavy furniture, climbing equipment, swings, and slides are stable or securely anchored,
- Sturdy, low furniture is available for those who are learning to walk,
- If high chairs or boosters are used, they have a wide base or are securely attached to a table or another chair. They have a T-shaped restraint/harness that is fastened every time they are used,
- Cushioning materials are placed under all climbers, swings, and slides over 36 inches high, both indoors and outdoors,
- There are no movable baby walkers (stationary saucers are permitted),
- Children always wear a helmet while riding bicycles, skateboards, scooters, and in-line or roller skates.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The environment facilitates optimal age-appropriate learning experiences with appropriate and safe furniture and equipment.
- Standard partially met: Most but not all of the campus has optimal age-appropriate learning experiences with appropriate and safe furniture and equipment.
- Standard not met: Furniture and/or equipment are not optimal for the age, size and required learning experiences of the children present.

3.4.12 Classroom Arrangement: The physical environment of the classroom is arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children, but also to encourage exploration and experimentation. The following are examples:

- Infants have a protected space for crawling and playing away from more mobile babies,
- Mirrors, pull-up bars, and/or other interactive items are placed on the walls at babies' eye levels,
- Sturdy, low furniture is available for those who are learning to walk.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The physical environment of the classrooms is arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children, but also to encourage exploration and experimentation.
- Standard partially met: With minor exceptions, the physical environment of the classrooms are arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children, but also to encourage exploration and experimentation.
- Standard not met: The physical environment of many of the classrooms is NOT arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children, but also, to encourage exploration and experimentation.

3.4.13 Classroom Regulations and Postings: Each classroom must have posted in each classroom the following:

- Room Capacity Posted
- Each classroom provides separate learning “areas” that offer a variety of learning opportunities for children to work individually or with small groups.
- Emergency/Evacuation routes posted depicting regular and alternate (secondary routes)
- Written lesson plans and time schedules of activities
- Emergency telephone numbers in practical locations such as 911, Local Police #, County sheriff, Poison Control, Local Energy company, Child Abuse hotline, medical emergencies, etc.)
- Procedures written to protect children and adults from lead and asbestos according to local health requirements.
- Tamper-resistant electrical outlets or outlet covers
- Furniture which is age appropriate for children with sufficient tables and chairs of suitable size to meet the needs of the group and are safe (in good repair) for the children
- Classrooms are comfortable with soft pillows, rugs, etc.
- Furniture in each room is not wobbly and is properly secured and safe to prevent any possible harm to the children in case of accidental contact with the furniture
- The room is arranged to allow for adequate supervision of all children
- Availability for children and staff to wash/clean their hands as necessary and appropriate, to reduce the spread of germs
- Floor coverings should be kept clean and safe
- Play materials include toys for appropriate ages.
- Rooms are clean, in good repair and well maintained with sufficient lighting
- Rooms are adequately ventilated.
- The facility always maintains a temperature between 65° and 82°.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The classrooms meet the above requirements and facilitate optimal age-appropriate learning experiences with appropriate and safe furniture and equipment.
- Standard partially met: Most but not all of the classrooms have optimal age-appropriate learning experiences with appropriate and safe furniture and equipment.
- Standard not met: Furniture and/or equipment are not optimal for the age, size and required learning experiences of the children present.

3.4.14 Classroom Children's Storage Space: Children are provided with individual spaces, such as cubbies, in which they can store their work and personal belongings.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children are provided with individual spaces, such as cubbies, in which they can store their work and personal belongings.
- Standard partially met: Cubbies are provided, but not sufficient or individualized for each child
- Standard not met: Cubbies are not provided

3.4.15 Physical Environment/Play Area Classroom Flooring: The physical environment includes appropriate room flooring and soft areas that are comforting to children. All floors used by children are swept and/or vacuumed daily. Washable floors used by children are mopped with disinfectant daily.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation The physical environment includes appropriate room flooring and soft areas that are comforting to children. All floors used by children are swept and/or vacuumed daily. Washable floors used by children are mopped with disinfectant daily.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The physical environment includes appropriate room flooring and soft areas that are comforting to children. Appearance and logs indicate that all floors used by children are swept and/or vacuumed daily. Washable floors used by children are mopped with disinfectant daily.
- Standard partially met: The physical environment includes appropriate room flooring and soft areas that are comforting to children. All floors used by children appear to be swept and/or vacuumed daily, but documented logs were not provided. (Or) Logs were not provided indicating that washable floors used by children are mopped with disinfectant at least twice a week.
- Standard not met: The physical environment does not have appropriate flooring, and/or lacks upkeep and cleaning.

3.4.16 Classroom Materials: Classroom materials are in good repair, non-toxic, stored and used in a safe manner. Toys and storage areas are inspected on a regular basis to prevent injury from broken toys or equipment. No list can be exhaustive with children, but the following are examples for reference:

- Art and other materials are non-toxic,
- Music is pleasant, not over stimulating or distracting,
- Older children have a place to use materials without interference from younger children,
- Materials are stored in consistent places,
- If there is a toy chest, it has safety hinges and air holes, or there is no lid,
- Separate containers are provided for different kinds of materials
- Use of electronic media is limited to suitable educational development

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Classroom materials are in good repair, non-toxic, stored and used in a safe manner.
- Standard partially met: With minor exceptions, classroom materials are in good repair, non-toxic, stored and used in a safe manner.
- Standard not met: Classroom materials are NOT in good repair, non-toxic, stored and used in a safe manner.

3.4.17 Hot Water, Water Pipes, Heaters or Beverages: If heated water is accessible to children, it is not hot enough to scald or cause discomfort to children (110° or less). No hot water pipes or radiators are exposed in areas that children have access to. Hot beverages like coffee are not in areas where children can access them or cause a spill.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Heated water is not accessible to children, or it is not hot enough to scald, or cause discomfort to children (110° or less). No hot water pipes or radiators are exposed in areas that children have access to. Hot beverages like coffee are not in areas where children can access them or cause a spill.
- Standard not met: Heated water is accessible to children, and it is hot enough to scald, or cause discomfort to children (110° or less), (OR) Hot water pipes or radiators are exposed in areas that children have access to. Hot beverages like coffee are not in areas where children can access them or cause a spill.

3.4.18 Safe Electrical Outlets/Cords: If there are children under the age of 6, electrical outlets in the walls are covered with tamper-resistant devices, or child proof outlet covers. All electrical cords within children's reach are secured. This standard applies in every classroom or area where children play or have an activity, including mealtime, for the safety of the children.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Electrical outlets in the wall are covered with a tamper-resistant or child proof Device. All electrical cords within children's reach are secured. This standard applies in every classroom or area where children play or have an activity, including mealtime, to prevent children from being harmed by electricity.
- Standard not met: Electrical outlets are not consistently covered; electrical cords are within children's reach.

3.4.19 Windows: If windows more than 3 feet above ground can be opened, they cannot be opened more than 6 inches, or they are opened from the top and have safety guards, with bars no more than 4” apart. The safety guards must be removable from inside or outside by an adult in case of an emergency. Cords of window coverings are secured or out of children's reach. Windows that can be opened have screens in good repair.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation No windows that open are more than three feet above ground. (OR) Windows that are more than 3 feet above ground can be opened, but they cannot be opened more than 6 inches, or they are opened from the top and have safety guards, with bars no more than 4” apart. The safety guards must be removable from inside or outside by an adult in case of an emergency. Cords of window coverings are secured or out of children's reach. Windows that can be opened have screens in good repair.

Evaluation

- Standard met: No windows above three feet can be opened, or they have proper safety features installed to protect children at all times.
- Standard not met: Some windows are above three feet and can be opened more than six inches, (OR) windows that can be opened are in need of repair.

3.4.20 Director's Office: The Program includes appropriate office space for the director that is sufficient in size and location outside of the classroom to effectively administrate the Program.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program includes appropriate office space for the director of the Program that is sufficient in size and location outside of the classroom to effectively administrate the program.
- Standard not met: The Program does NOT include appropriate office space for the director of the Program that is sufficient in size and location outside of the classroom to effectively administrate the program.

3.4.21 Staff Meeting Room: The Program includes an appropriate area for staff meetings and breaks.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program includes an appropriate area for staff meetings and breaks.
- Standard not met: An appropriate area for staff meetings and breaks is NOT provided.

3.4.22 Storage Space: The Program provides suitable storage space, for limited use, or special event materials and for classroom items to be rotated.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program provides suitable storage space, for limited use, or special event materials and for classroom items to be rotated.
- Standard not met: The Program does NOT provide suitable storage space, for limited use, or special event materials and for classroom items to be rotated.

3.5 Outdoor Play Areas and Equipment

3.5.1 Outdoor Safety: The outdoor playground area provides a balance of sun and shade. The outdoor playground area has an area for seating in shaded areas. The Program ensures that the children will have accessible drinking water in the outdoor area. Also, the staff will bring a first aid kit with them when the children are outside. Ponds, wells, tool sheds, and other hazards are fenced or closed off. The outside activity areas are inspected *daily* (before children are allowed to enter) for insects that may cause injury such as ants, wasps, objects that may cause injury such as nails, glass, and other hazards including, but not limited to, broken equipment, (sharp edges, protruding parts, or flaws in equipment), fallen branches, sink holes, animal droppings, etc. If/when needed, a professional Pest Management company will be used to control pests and unwanted vegetation/weeds, the Program schedules this on the weekend when there are no children present. The outdoor playground is entirely smoke free. Staff monitors high levels of air pollution from smog and will limit the outdoor play time. All elevated equipment, including but not limited to, swings, sliding boards, etc., are surrounded by a perimeter of resilient surface depth of six inches of energy absorbing surface material (e.g. mulch, sand, rubber tiles, mats, etc.). If the program uses sandboxes, these are covered when not in use, and are cleaned regularly. A minimum of 75 square feet of outside play space is provided for each child playing outside at one time. To protect against cold, heat or insect-borne disease, parent provides one change of clothing for their child.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.5.1 Playground Daily Inspection Log

Evaluation

- Standard met: The playground inspection log details specific areas to be inspected daily and documented (before children are allowed to enter) for insects that may cause injury such as ants, wasps, objects that may cause injury such as nails, glass, and other hazards, including but not limited to, broken equipment, fallen branches, sink holes, animal droppings, etc.
- Standard partially met: A playground is inspected, but the inspection log does not document the inspection daily.
- Standard not met: A playground inspection log has NOT been provided or is insufficient to provide a safe environment for children.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Visual inspection of the playground, review playground inspection logs.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The outside play area provides a balance of sun and shade. Ponds, wells, tool sheds, and other hazards are fenced or closed off.
- Standard partially met: Minor maintenance and/or safety defects noted.
- Standard not met: The outside play area does NOT provide a balance of sun and shade. Ponds, wells, tool sheds, and other hazards are fenced or closed off.

3.5.2 Outside Security: For security, the outdoor playground is protected by fencing that is no less than four (4) feet at its lowest point. There should be no gaps or openings larger than 3 ½ inches. The base of the fence is at ground level to not allow inside or outside access by children or small animals.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The outside security meets all of the standards of 3.5.2.
- Standard partially met: The outside security meets the major standards of 3.5.2 with minor deviations that are adequately addressed.
- Standard not met: The outside security does NOT meet all of the standards of 3.5.2

3.5.3 Outside Maintenance: Equipment is safe and well designed for safe use and properly maintained. Outdoor Playground equipment is clean and has no mold or excessive dirt. Any metal painted equipment does not have any peeling or rust. Anchored equipment is placed not closer than six feet from any hard surface including fencing or another piece of equipment.

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The outside security meets all of the standards of 3.5.3.
- Standard partially met: The outside maintenance meets the major standards of 3.5.3 with minor deviations that are adequately addressed.
- Standard not met: The outside maintenance does NOT meet all of the standards of 3.5.3.

3.5.4 Swimming Pools: If the program has access to a swimming pool, a certified lifeguard or equivalent is always present. The individual serving as the lifeguard cannot be counted in the class ratio calculations for the group or be designated as the individual responsible for maintaining direct supervision.

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: No swimming pool, (OR) a certified lifeguard is always present, and is not counted in the class ratio calculation for the group, or designated as the individual responsible for maintaining direct supervision.
- Standard not met: A certified lifeguard is NOT always present, or is counted in the class ratio calculation for the group, or is designated as the individual responsible for maintaining direct supervision.

3.5.5 Adequate Outdoor Space: To accommodate the children’s various play activities, including open space for active movement, some play equipment and materials, and places for open-ended explorations are provided. The Program provides adequate protection for the outdoor play area with at a minimum of 75 square feet of play area for each child according to the size of the group that is participating in the play area. The total amount of required play space is based on the maximum of 1/3 of the total center enrollment being outside at one time. The playground must accommodate a minimum of 50% of the capacity of the Program (excluding children under one year of age).

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The outdoor physical environment includes seventy-five square feet per child on the playground at any given time.
- Standard not met: The outdoor physical environment does NOT include forty-five square feet per child on the playground at any given time.

3.5.6 Playground Equipment: Playground equipment is varied and sufficient for the number of children on the playground at the same time. The playground is designed and equipped to provide optimal learning experiences for children. Outdoor play equipment is spaced to avoid safety hazards for active children. No trampolines are accessible to the children in care, except for therapeutic equipment used with supervision. There is a clearance area and fall zone that extends at least 6 feet beyond the stationary swing that surrounds swings and other climbing equipment. Each swing hangs at least 30 inches away from the support poles. Swing seats do not have pinch points or "S" hooks. Hooks at the top of swing ropes or chains are closed. Equipment is safe and well designed for safe use and properly maintained. All stationary equipment shall be firmly anchored and shall be free of sharp and jagged edges.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Playground Equipment meets all of the standards of 3.5.6.
- Standard partially met: Playground equipment meets the major standards of 3.5.6 with minor deviations that are adequately addressed.
- Standard not met: Playground equipment does NOT meet all of the standards of 3.5.6.

3.5.7 Playground Supervision: Children are always actively supervised, and the child-staff ratio is maintained while the children are on the playground. The entire outdoor playground is designed to allow the staff to always monitor and supervise the activities of the children.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.5.7 Playground Supervision: Indicate the sections of the Administrative and Staff handbooks that detail Playground Supervision Policies. The Handbook includes details of ongoing staff training in Playground Supervision.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Adequate policies are detailed to assure that children are supervised at all times, and the child-staff ratio is maintained while the children are on the playground.
- Standard partially met: Policies are provided but limited attention is given to assure that children are supervised at all times, and/or that the child-staff ratio is maintained while the children are on the playground.
- Standard not met: No Playground Supervision policies are noted, or they are insufficient in detail or training to provide adequate supervision.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Policies on playground supervision are followed at all times during the site visit.
- Standard not met: Policies on playground supervision were NOT followed.

3.5.8 Playground Surfaces: Resilient surfaces such as shredded rubber chips, mulch, sand, and other cushioning materials of adequate depths are used on all surfaces. Under fall zones of equipment, such as swings and climbing apparatus, six (6) inches is recommended. Allowing for wear and time and rainy conditions, the fall zone coverage is never less than three 3 inches in depth.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Shredded rubber chips, mulch, sand, and other cushioning materials of adequate depths are used on all surfaces. Under fall zones of equipment such as swings and climbing apparatus, six (6) inches is recommended. Allowing for wear and time, the cover is never less than three 3 inches in depth.
- Standard partially met: Shredded rubber chips, mulch, sand, and other cushioning materials of adequate depths are used on all surfaces. However, fall zones of equipment such as swings and climbing apparatus, are consistently less than the recommended six (6) inches.
- Standard not met: The resilient cover is less than three 3 inches in depth.

3.5.9 Inspections and Repairs: By way of routine inspections and resulting timely repairs, the outdoor play area is well maintained to prevent children from being injured by broken equipment, sharp edges, and rusty parts. If there is a sand area or sand box, it is covered when not in use. Sand is replaced when needed. Toys and small equipment, when stored outdoors, are in a weatherproof chest. After a rain, gathered water on playground equipment is removed and dried prior to children access.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The outdoor play area is well maintained to prevent children from being injured by broken equipment, sharp edges, and rusty parts. If there is a sand area or sand box, it is covered when not in use.
- Standard partially met: The outdoor play area is mostly well maintained to prevent children from being injured by broken equipment, sharp edges, and rusty parts. If there is a sand area or box, it is covered when not in use.
- Standard not met: The outdoor play area is NOT well maintained. (OR) There is a sand area or box that it is NOT covered when not in use.

3.5.10 Substitute and Adequate Space Indoors for Large Group Play: When inclement weather prevents children from playing outdoors, alternative activities are planned to ensure large-motor exercise and to foster large-motor development.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Adequate space for indoor or large group play activities are planned to ensure large-motor exercise and to foster large-motor development.
- Standard partially met: Space for indoor or large group play activities are limited, but are planned with modifications to ensure large-motor exercise and to foster large-motor development.
- Standard not met: There is not a sufficient spare area for indoor or large group play, or no adequate plans were provided.

3.5.11 Maintenance of Buildings Exterior and Grounds: There is a process in place that ensures proper maintenance of the buildings, grounds, and equipment. Play space, including neighborhood playground, if used, is free of animal feces, broken glass, paint chips, or trash. There is no flaking or peeling paint or bare soil within 15 feet of a structure.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.5.11 Maintenance of Building Exterior and Grounds. Provide details about the exterior and grounds maintenance. Include references from the Administrator or Staff Handbooks where applicable.

Evaluation

- Standard met: There is a process in place that ensures proper maintenance of the buildings, grounds, and equipment.
- Standard partially met: There is a process in place for maintenance of the buildings, grounds, and equipment, but it is limited in scope or documentation.
- Standard not met: Policies not provided, or they are not sufficient.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Visual inspection verifies that play space, including neighborhood playground, if used, is free of animal feces, broken glass, paint chips, or trash. There is no flaking or peeling paint or bare soil within 15 feet of a structure.
- Standard partially met: Visual inspection verifies that play space, including neighborhood playground, if used, is free of animal feces, broken glass, paint chips, or trash. There is no flaking or peeling paint or bare soil within 15 feet of a structure with limited minor exceptions.
- Standard not met: Visual inspection reveals that play space, including neighborhood playground, if used, is NOT free of animal feces, broken glass, paint chips, or trash. (OR) There is flaking or peeling paint or bare soil within 15 feet of a structure.

3.6 Sleeping Areas:

3.6.1 Sleeping Areas: Children are provided with sanitary, individual sleeping spaces or floor mats. Younger children will be provided with an adequate bed, cot, crib or playpen.

- Space will be provided allowing their faces to be at least 3 feet apart from each other.
- Each child will be no less than eighteen (18) inches apart.
- Floor mats are at least one (1) inch thick and covered with an impermeable surface.
- Children up to one year old are in their own crib, port-a-crib or playpen.
- Each child's bedding is stored so that it does not come into contact with other bedding.
- Personnel ensure that young infants are not capable of rolling over on their own and are positioned on their back on a firm surface when napping and sleeping.
- Sleeping areas for babies do not have any surface that can conform to the face, including a soft pillow, soft mattress, comforter, or stuffed animal.
- Even with lights dimmer or turned off, staff can still see each child clearly to maintain proper supervision.
- Double or multi-deck cribs, cots or beds are not used.
- All bedding, cots, mats, sheets, and blankets are labeled with child's first and last name.
- Trained staff identify choking hazards and remove them from the children's reach.
- Foot coverings for adults are required in areas where infants walk or play.
- Infants and toddlers do not have bottles while in a crib or bed.
- Teaching staff will feed infants whenever they seem hungry.
- Staff will provide the opportunity to for tooth brushing and gum-cleaning to remove food

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children are provided with sanitary, individual sleeping spaces and a floor mat. Younger children will be provided with an adequate bed, cot, crib or playpen.
- Standard not met: Children are NOT provided with sanitary, individual sleeping spaces and a mattress or floor mat. (OR) Younger children are NOT provided with an adequate bed, cot, crib or playpen.

3.6.2 Cribs and portable cribs: Both full size and non-full size which are used for babies have a date of manufacture label after June 28, 2011 or a Certificate of Compliance from the manufacturer. This does not apply to mesh/net/screen cribs, non-rigidly constructed cribs, cradles (both rocker and pendulum types), car beds, baby baskets, and bassinets that may be used. Cribs are inspected to ensure safety. Drop-side cribs are not used.

Staff to be aware of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Infants are to be placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface made for infants per the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Infants may eventually turn over when sleeping for comfort.

Nothing should be in the crib; this includes pillows, quilts, comforters, stuff toys and other soft items should never be in the cribs. In addition, the infant's head should always remain uncovered during sleep.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: All cribs, including portable cribs, have labels indicating date of manufacture after June 28, 2011 or a Certificate of Compliance and meets the standards of 3.6.2.
- Standard not met: Cribs do not have labels or Certificates of Compliance and does not meet the standards of 3.6.2.

3.6.3 Washing of Infant and Toddler Bedding: Infant and toddler bedding is washed at a minimum of twice per week and more often when soiled, and it is used by only one child between washings. Bedding used by toddlers is washed a minimum of once per week and more often when soiled and is used by only one child between washings.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.6.3 Washing of Infant and Toddler Bedding. Provide details from Staff Handbook detailing the Program's policy and procedures for washing of infant and toddler bedding.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Infant and toddler bedding is washed at a minimum of twice per week and more often when soiled, and it is used by only one child between washings. Bedding used by preschoolers is washed a minimum of once per week and more often when soiled, and is used by only one child between washings.
- Standard not met: Policies not provided, or the policies do not meet the minimum requirements.

3.7 Hand Washing

3.7.1 Hand Washing: Children and adults wash their hands after toileting, before eating or handling food, after diaper changing, after administering medication, and as otherwise necessary to prevent the spread of disease. Staff wash their hands after administering medication. Hand washing procedures (using soap and running water, dry thoroughly) are posted in all locations that are used by children to wash their hands. Hand washing posters are in display for the children to view and model after to ensure good personal hygiene and independence.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.7.1 Hand Washing: Indicate the sections of the Staff Handbook that details the Hand Washing policies and procedures.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Satisfactory policies are detailed to ensure that children and adults wash their hands after toileting, before eating or handling food, and as otherwise necessary to prevent the spread of disease.
- Standard partially met: Policies are detailed for children and adults to wash their hands after toileting, before eating or handling food, but are deficient or incomplete in one or more areas.
- Standard not met: Policies were not provided or fall below the minimum standard.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Hand washing procedures (Use soap and running water, dry thoroughly) are posted in all locations that are used by children to wash their hands. Hand washing posters are displayed.
- Standard not met: Hand washing procedures (Use soap and running water, dry thoroughly). No hand washing posters are displayed.

3.8 Toileting and Bathing Facilities

3.8.1 Accessible & Appropriate Sinks and Toilets: Sinks and toilets are readily accessible to children within 40 feet of indoor classrooms. The number of sinks and toilets (child-sized ones are recommended) must be adequate for the number of children in attendance and easily accessible, including staff assistance and step stools if needed. Bathrooms have barriers to prevent entry by unattended up to two years old.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Sinks and toilets are readily accessible to children. The number of sinks and toilets (child-sized ones are recommended) must be adequate for the number of children in attendance and easily accessible.
- Standard partially met: Sinks and toilets are readily accessible to children. The number of sinks and toilets (child-sized ones are recommended) is barely sufficient for the number of children in attendance and easily accessible.
- Standard not met: Sinks and toilets are NOT easily accessible to children. (OR) The number of sinks and toilets (child-sized ones are recommended) is not adequate for the number of children in attendance and easily accessible.

3.8.2 Bathroom Sanitization:

- Platforms and stools have surfaces that can be easily cleaned and sanitized as needed. Sanitizing toilet seats, toilet bowls, doorknobs and floors are immediately cleaned if visibly soiled.
- Soap, running water, and paper towels or hand drying machines are provided within reach of children.
- If a potty chair is used, it is washed and sanitized after each use.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Visual inspection confirms that all the standards of indicator 3.8.2 are met.
- Standard partially met: Visual inspection confirms that with only minor exceptions the standards of indicator 3.8.2 are met.
- Standard not met: Visual inspection reveals that all the standards of indicator 3.8.2 are NOT met.

3.8.3 Facility Bathroom: Except in Programs that only serves school-age children, at least one bathroom is available for staff members, which is not used by the children.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program only serves school-age children, or at least one bathing facility is available for staff members, which is not used by the children.
- Standard not met: At least one bathing facility is NOT available for staff members, which is not used by the children.

3.8.4 Bathroom Safety: Any area with access to water by children requires additional safety precautions. A secure step stool that will not slide from under younger children but can be moved for older children if the same facility is to be used. Children under the age of two may be held while washing their hands. Children cannot lock themselves into bathrooms. Privacy locks on bathroom or bedroom doors are inaccessible to children, or locks can be opened quickly from outside. No cleaning supplies, plungers, toilet brushes, etc. are accessible to children.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Areas with access to water by children have additional safety precautions in place. A secure step stool that will not slide from under younger children, but can be moved for older children if they use the same facility. Children under the age of two may be held while washing their hands. Children cannot lock themselves into bathrooms. Privacy locks on bathroom or bedroom doors are inaccessible to children, or locks can be opened quickly from outside. No cleaning supplies, plungers, toilet brushes, etc. are accessible to children.
- Standard partially met: Areas with access to water by children have additional safety precautions in place; however, additional precautions are indicated.
- Standard not met: Areas with access to water by children do NOT have the required safety precautions in place.

3.9 Diapering Area:

3.9.1 Diapering of Infants and Toddlers:

- The diapering area has a thick, impermeable surface in good repair and is cleaned with a sanitizing solution or disinfected after each use.
- Adequate supply of clean diapers, clothing and linens are on hand at all times.
- Soiled linens, or articles of clothing are changed promptly when soiled or wet.
- Diapering and toileting areas are separated from food areas. (No direct access to food prep areas.)
- All diapers are stored in a sealed, plastic lined container that is covered with a step-operated lid and is emptied and sanitized when full but no less than once daily.
- Diaper area is located out of reach of babies and toddlers.
- Disposable gloves are used by staff when diapering a child.
- There is a required hand washing facility in the diaper changing room which includes disposable towels or a hand drying machine, soap, and a trash receptacle after diapering a child near the diaper changing area.
- Diaper changing procedures are posted in the changing area and followed to protect the health and safety of the children and staff.
- Changing tables are sanitized after each use.
- Diaper changing does not take place near food preparation/snacks

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Diapering area meets all of the standards of indicator 3.9.1.
- Standard partially met: Diapering area is in substantial compliance with the standards of indicator 3.9.1.
- Standard not met: Diapering area is deficient in multiple components of the standards of indicator 3.9.1.

3.10 Fire Drills and Emergency Preparedness

3.10.1 Exits and Stairs: Evacuation/Fire Drills are practiced monthly. All exits are clearly marked and clear of obstructions. Doors are locked to protect from unauthorized access from outside. Multiple methods of exiting the building in the case of an emergency are provided. Exits are usable by toddlers and older children. Stairs, if present, have additional safety measures in place including, but not limited to:

- Each floor used by children has at least two exits that lead to the ground level,
- Stairs with more than 3 steps, or a total rise of 24 inches or more, have railings usable by the children,
- Railings are on the right side when descending, if possible,
- Secure and safe gates or barriers close off the top and bottom of all stairs adjoining areas used by children under the age of four (4),
- There are no pressure gates or accordion gates with openings large enough to entrap a child's head.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: All exits are clearly marked and clear of obstructions. Doors are locked to protect from unauthorized access from outside. Multiple methods of exiting the building in the case of an emergency are provided. Exits are usable by toddlers and older children. Stairs, if present, have additional safety measures in place.
- Standard partially met: Most of the standards are met; the remaining deficiencies are allotted for in emergency procedures.
- Standard not met: Some or all exits are NOT clearly marked and clear of obstructions. (OR) Some doors are NOT locked to protect from unauthorized access from outside. (OR) Limited methods of exiting the building in the case of an emergency are provided. (OR) Some exits are NOT usable by toddlers and older children. (OR) Stairs, if present, do NOT have additional safety measures in place.

3.10.2 First Aid Kits: The Program maintains sufficient first aid supplies that are conveniently available in the classrooms and all activity areas, but not to the children. The program has a system of maintenance to ensure that kits are re-stocked regularly. The program maintains a detailed medical log regarding the use of these items: NOTE: No First Aid Kit will have medications of any kind, including aspirin.

- Thermometer
- Soap and hand sanitizer
- Small water bottle
- Cotton balls or applicators
- Minimum of one instant ice pack
- Adhesive Bandages (minimum of 12)
- Sterile gauze pads and rolls
- Adhesive tape
- Pre-moistened wipes
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Disposable non-porous gloves
- Current resource guide on First Aid/CPR procedures

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.10.2 Indicate where in the Administrator and Staff Handbook's First Aid Kits Required Inventory and Maintenance Schedule and Responsibility are detailed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program maintains adequate first aid supplies that are conveniently available in the classrooms and all activity areas, but not to the children. The Program has a system of maintenance to ensure that kits are re-stocked regularly.
- Standard partially met: The Program maintains adequate first aid supplies that are conveniently available in the classrooms and all activity areas, but not to the children. However, the Program does NOT have a system of maintenance to ensure that kits are re-stocked regularly.
- Standard not met: The Program does NOT maintain adequate first aid supplies that are conveniently available in the classrooms and all activity areas, but not to the children. (OR) The Program does NOT have a system of maintenance to ensure that kits are re-stocked regularly.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Visual inspection confirms that the Program maintains adequate first aid supplies that are conveniently available in the classrooms and all activity areas, but not to the children. The Program maintains a detailed medical log regarding the use of these items.
- Standard partially met: Visual inspection confirms that the Program maintains adequate first aid supplies that are conveniently available in the classrooms, and all activity areas, but not to the children. However, the Program does not maintain a detailed medical log regarding the use of these items.
- Standard not met: First Aid kits are not maintained, OR contain non-sanctioned items, and/or the Program does not maintain a detailed medical log regarding the use of these items.

3.10.3 Fire Drills: An ongoing system of Fire Drills is in place to assure children are prepared for an emergency evacuation.

- A minimum of one each month.
- Drills are conducted at various days of the week.
- Fire Drills are conducted during different times of the day, including one during naptime.
- Fire Drills must consist of eight regular drills, one alternate drill, one emergency lockdown drill, one inclement weather drill and one napping/sleeping time drill.
- The staff person designated as the individual responsible for maintaining direct supervision accompanies staff out of the building with the day's current attendance record, which is used to account for all children.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Visual inspection of the Fire Drill Logs confirms that an ongoing system of Fire Drills is in place to assure children are prepared for an emergency evacuation.
- Standard not met: Fire Drill Logs not provided, or they indicate that an ongoing system of Fire Drills is in place to assure children are prepared for an emergency evacuation has not been provided.

3.10.4 Conducting a Fire Drill during inspection: Fire Drills must be conducted monthly and documented. In one year, the Fire Drills must consist of eight regular drills, one alternate fire drill, one emergency lockdown drill, one inclement weather drill and one napping/sleeping time drill. The emergency/evacuation routes in each room is to clearly indicate the routes in which the children are to exit the building. The exits must not be blocked at any time.

The Program maintains a fire drill log which would include date, time of day, number of children in attendance, number of staff, time taken to evacuate the building to a safe, designated place, and comments on the fire drill. Fire drill logs must be maintained for two years.

The fire drills are timed to indicate when the drill first starts, to the final destination of the children in the safe, designated place after all children are accounted for.

The director or the designee performs a sweep of the building to ensure that all children have exited the building during the fire drill.

The staff must take attendance to ensure all children are accounted. This needs to be reported to the director via cell phone, walkie talkie, or visually indicated by holding a Green card to indicate all children are accounted for. If the staff holds up a Red card, this would indicate that a child is missing.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The fire drill complies with all the standards of indicator 3.10.4.
- Standard partially met: The fire drill complies with most of the standards of indicator 3.10.4., but there is some area for improvement.
- Standard not met: The fire drill indicates several areas of deficiencies which needs to be corrected immediately.

3.10.5 Emergency Preparedness Plans: The Program has a general disaster plan and/or an Emergency Crisis Manual that includes evacuation procedures and inside actions in the event of a disaster or crisis (e.g., snowstorm, tornado, lightning, flooding, fire, bomb threat, violence, and hostage situation). The plan includes at a minimum:

- Directions for disasters common to the geographic area,
- Staff members are trained and familiar with routes and procedures,
- The address and directions to the facility and emergency phone numbers including ambulance, fire, police, poison control and the Florida Abuse Hotline are posted near all phones,
- Emergency evacuation routes are posted in each classroom, and staff regularly practice drills with the children.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.10.5 Emergency Preparedness Plans: Upload the Emergency Procedures Manual (exhibit 3.10.5) or indicate where in the Administration, Staff and Parent Handbooks the Emergency Preparedness Plans are detailed. Include training materials used to train staff and a schedule of training.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program has a general disaster plan and/or an Emergency Crisis Manual that includes evacuation procedures and inside actions in the event of a disaster or crisis (e.g., hurricane, tornado, lightning, flooding, power outage, fire, bomb threat, violence, and hostage situation).
- Standard partially met: The Program has a general disaster plan and/or an Emergency Crisis Manual that includes evacuation procedures and inside actions in the event of a disaster or crisis (e.g., snowstorm, tornado, lightning, flooding, fire, bomb threat, violence, and hostage situation). However, training in those procedures has not been detailed.
- Standard not met: A general disaster plan is not provided or is lacking in essential details.

3.10.6 Fire Extinguishers and Detectors: Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are provided and checked on a regularly maintained schedule.

- All staff members are trained in the use of fire extinguishers, within the first 30 days of employment.
- A working ABC-type fire extinguisher is located in or near the kitchen and on each floor used by children, with instructions for its use attached or posted.
- The recommended dates on fire extinguishers are not expired.
- A qualified inspector annually inspects fire extinguishers.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are provided and checked.
- Standard partially met: Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are provided, and up to date, but a regular maintenance schedule was not provided.
- Standard not met: Fire extinguisher and/or smoke detectors are not maintained.

3.10.7 Fire Safety: Flammable materials are not stored in areas used for childcare. Children do not have access to matches or lighters.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Flammable materials are not stored in areas used for childcare. Children do not have access to matches or lighters.
- Standard not met: Flammable materials are stored in areas used for childcare. (OR) Children have access to matches or lighters.

Cross Reference to additional Fire Drills and Emergency Preparedness Standards

2.2.2 Documentation of Inspections: The Program is inspected by city/state agencies as applicable for licensing or exemption under state or federal law (i.e., fire department, health department, food services, etc.). Inspection documentations are on file. If the Program is exempt from licensing, voluntary inspection has been sought, and recommendations for improvement have been followed.

3.11 Background Screening and Certifications

3.11.1 First Aid Certified Personnel: At least 90% of staff members have Pediatric First Aid/CPR certification and are always present on the premises. All new personnel should be scheduled to complete Pediatric First Aid/CPR training within ninety days of employment. One staff is trained in managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children for each classroom.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: At least 90% of staff have pediatric First Aid/CPR certification and are present on the premises always. All new personnel should be scheduled to complete Pediatric First Aid/CPR training within ninety days of employment.
- Standard partially met: Less than 50% of staff do not have Pediatric First Aid/CPR certification. New Staff have not completed pediatric First Aid/CPR training within ninety days of employment.
- Standard not met: There are times when no staff member with pediatric first aid certification is present. Less than 50% of staff has not completed pediatric First Aid/CPR.

Cross Reference to additional Background Screening and Certifications Standards

6.1.3 Background Screening: The program's hiring procedures include AHCA Level 2 background screening and fingerprinting to obtain a history regarding abuse and any criminal convictions for all employees and for others who have direct access with the children in the program. This includes ALL staff that come in direct contact with children in the Early Childhood Program.

6.2.13 Personnel Files: The Director maintains a confidential personnel file on each employee, volunteer and substitute. The file should contain, but not be limited, to the following and/or contain information that civil authorities require:

- Resume
- Application
- Copies of college or university transcripts
- AHCA Background Fingerprints/clearance
- Pediatric First Aid/Child CPR Certification
- Annual staff evaluations
- Documentation of any grievances
- Evidence of in-service training
- Copy of contract/work agreement
- I-9 form (Not required for volunteers)

3.12 Personnel Training

Cross Reference to additional Personnel Training Standards

6.2.1 Qualifications of Program Director: Program Administrators must be at least 21 years of age and have a minimum of:

- Successfully obtain the Florida Director Credential Program
- Bachelor's degree
- Complete the Standards for Four-Year-Olds, or Florida Standards for Four-Year Olds Online (DOE course completed on or after 2011). *3 Hour Online or Instructor-Led Course*
- Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (DOE course). *5 Hour Online Course*
- VPK Director Credential (DOE course). *5 Hour Online Course*
- Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*
- Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*

Note: Individuals who were issued a Florida Director Credential before December 31, 2006 are considered "Exempt" from the VPK Endorsement retirements and are still eligible to be a director of a private prekindergarten program. However, these 'exempt' directors are encouraged to acquire the VPK endorsement.

6.4.4 In-Service Training: See 6.4.4 for detailed information.

3.13 Communicable Disease Control

3.13.1 Children or Other Personnel Who Are Ill: A written policy regarding the attendance of children or staff members who are ill, have been diagnosed with a contagious disease, or have been found to have a communicable condition has been developed and made available to parents/guardians. An isolation area is made available for ill or contagious children while they wait for someone to take them home. The isolation area is:

- Adequately ventilated,
- Temperature controlled,
- Equipped with a bed, mat or cot,
- Linens or other materials can be easily cleaned, sanitized and disinfected after use and they are removed and properly cleaned, sanitized and disinfected, immediately after use,
- Any child or staff member who has a condition that is easily transmitted is not permitted to return until treatment has been completed and verified.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.13.1 Illness Policy: Indicate the sections of the Administration, Staff and Parent Handbooks that detail the Illness Policies of the center.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A written policy regarding the attendance of children or staff members who are ill, have been diagnosed with a contagious disease, or have been found to have a communicable condition has been developed and made available to parents/guardians.
- Standard partially met: The written policy regarding the attendance of children or staff members who are ill, or who have been diagnosed with a contagious disease, or have been found to have a communicable condition needs additional details or wider distribution to parents/guardians.
- Standard not met: Written policy not provided or lacking sufficient details.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The written policy regarding the attendance of children or staff members is followed. An isolation area is made available for ill or contagious children while they wait for someone to take them home.
- Standard partially met: The written policy regarding the attendance of children or staff members is NOT followed. (OR) An isolation area is NOT made available for ill or contagious children while they wait for someone to take them home.
- Standard not met: Isolation area is not adequate, and/or policies are not followed.

3.13.2 Notification of Local Health Departments: If the outbreak of any communicable disease is suspected, the local Health Department is notified immediately. The center will then comply with any and all directions provided by the department.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.13.2 Notification of Local Health Departments: Provide the details from the Administrative and/or Staff Handbook covering the policy on Notification of Local Health Departments on the outbreak of communicable diseases.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Policies are in place for when a communicable disease is suspected, and the local Health Department is notified immediately.
- Standard not met: No policy provided, or the policy needs additional details.

Cross Reference to additional Communicable Disease Control Standards

2.5.2 Admissions Procedures: Clear admissions procedures are stated in writing. (Enrollment Packet) These policies and procedures provide an exchange of information between the provider and parent, working to assure a good match. Discussion includes a description of the program and policies as well as parents' values and wishes around such topics as eating, sleeping, toileting, and discipline. Family Enrollment Application/Contract must be notarized and include at a minimum receipt of the following:

- Parent Handbook and Agreement to Program Policies
- Immunization Records
- Child Health Examination
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Written Disciplinary/Expulsion Policy
- Permission to Treat Emergencies
- Field Trips Transportation Permission (if applicable)
- Know Your Child Care Facility Brochure
- Influenza Virus, Guide to Parents Brochure
- Distracter Driver flyer
- Rilya Wilson Act flyer
- Listing of known allergies of the child

3.14 Medication

3.14.1 Administering Medicines: A written policy for administering and storing medications has been developed and made available to the parents/guardians of the children in the program in the Parent Handbook. Whenever possible the parent/guardian should visit the center to administer any medication. Medicines are securely stored and can only be accessed by authorized personnel.

The provider does not administer any medications and other remedies without:

- Written directions from a health care professional,
- Parent/guardians signed permission.
- Prescription medication is only administered from the original container.
- The written directions on the label are always followed.
- Descriptive medical logs are maintained to detail medication administered

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.14.1 Administering Medicines: Provide the details from the Administrative and/or Staff Handbook covering the policy on administering medicines.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A written policy for administering and storing medications has been developed and made available to the parents/guardians of the children in the Program in the Parent Handbook. The policy stipulates that whenever possible the parent/guardian should visit the center to administer any medication.
- Standard partially met: A written policy for administering and storing medications has been developed, but needs additional safety measures and/or is not adequately made available to the parents/guardians of the children in the program in the Parent Handbook. (OR) The policy does not stipulate that whenever possible the parent/guardian should visit the center to administer any medication.
- Standard not met: Written policy was not provided, or is not adequately made available to parents/guardians.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Administering Medicines:

Evaluation

- Standard met: Medicines are securely stored and can only be accessed by authorized personnel.
- Standard not met: Medicines are NOT securely stored and can only be accessed by authorized personnel.

3.14.2 Medical Log: A detailed medical log is maintained that includes a record of all medications given to children, time parent/guardian was notified, and by whom, the time and dosage of the medication and the person administering the medication.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.14.2 Medical Log: Provide a copy of the center's Medical Log Sheet.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A Medical Log is provided that has adequate details for recording all medications administered to children, including the time the parent/guardian was notified, and by whom, the time and dosage of the medication and the person administering the medication.
- Standard partially met: A Medical Log provided but additional details required
- Standard not met: A Medical Log not provided, or log is insufficient.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Visual inspection shows that a Medical Log is maintained
- Standard not met: Medical Log is not being properly maintained.

3.15 Food and Nutrition

Cross Reference to additional Food and Nutrition Standards

4.1.2 Nutritional Guidelines: The meals and/or snacks provided for the children meet the nutritional guidelines regarding food groups and quantities that are age appropriate for the children, as suggested by the Child Care Food Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. If parents bring food, the provider assures that it is nutritious, appears fresh, or supplements it.

4.1.3 Food Storage: Food (including breast milk) is stored, prepared, and served to children in a safe and sanitary manner. Stored food and drink must be stored in such a manner as to be free from dust and dirt.

- Food must be stored in sealed waterproof containers that snap closed or zip closed at the end of each day and dated.
- Leftover food items may be served within five calendar days from date of preparation.
- After five calendar days, leftover food items must be discarded.
- If parents bring food, perishable items (including baby bottles) they are to be labeled and refrigerated immediately with the child's first and last name and date of preparation.
- Baby formula is in factory-sealed containers, or powdered formula is used.
- Breast milk and infant formula remaining in bottles after feeding are discarded within one hour.

4.1.4 Meals and Snacks: Meals or snacks are available at least every 3 hours.

- Safe drinking water is available at all times, and Children are encouraged to drink water frequently.
- These times are relaxed, with some conversation; meals are not rushed.
- A written menu is posted daily or weekly and modified if it is changed - or parents bring food.
- Children's food allergies are posted in the food preparation and eating areas.
- The temperature of heated foods and bottles is tested to prevent injury before feeding to children.
- Foods that may be a choking hazard must be chopped up to age appropriate sizes.
- There is no use of screen media during mealtime.
- Food is never used as a reward or withheld as a punishment.
- Children do not drink from bottles or Sippy cups of milk, juice, or other beverages while lying down or walking around.

4.3.1 Standards for Mealtime: Mealtime is to be cultivated as a pleasant social time. Staff members sit with children and encourage healthy social interaction, appropriate table manners, and good eating habits. Children are either individually fed or supervised and are offered age-appropriate food.

4.3.2 Size of Furniture: There are a sufficient number of tables and chairs used for snack/mealtimes that are appropriate for the sizes of the children.

3.16 Record Keeping

3.16.1 Accident and Incident Reports: If a child receives an injury beyond a minor scrape or bruise, the Program contacts a parent/guardian as soon as possible. Parent/guardian is given a written accident report the same day, which includes a description of the accident, action taken, outcome, and how the child responded. Parent/guardian must sign the report to validate notification along with the Teacher and the Director. Accident reports are then filed within the children's file and retained for a minimum of two years.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #3.16.1 Accident and Incident Reports: Reviewing the Program's Accident or Incident Reports.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Accident and Incident Reports includes a description of the accident, (or Incident) action taken, outcome, and how the child responded. Parent/guardian must sign the report, along with the teacher and Director to validate notification.
- Standard partially met: The Accident and Incident Reports lacks a detailed description of the accident, action taken, outcome, and how the child responded. (OR) Parent/guardian did not sign the form.
- Standard not met: Accident and Incident Reports not provided, or lack signatures or not signed by the parent/guardian the day the incident happened.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Accident reports are in the children's file.
- Standard not met: Accident reports are NOT in the children's file.

Cross Reference to additional Record Keeping Standards

2.6.1 Records: The Administration/Director ensures that current, complete, confidential records for each child are kept secure and are available to authorized personnel only and are onsite. (*Authorized personnel include administrative staff, parents/guardians, and appropriate regulatory authorities.*) The file may include items such as the child's behavioral patterns, assessments of developmental and cognitive development, if appropriate. Within 30 days of enrollment the file will include at a minimum:

- Emergency contact information for the parent/guardian and alternate contacts is possible
- Birth Certificate (copy)
- Immunization, DH680 or Religious Exemption, DH681
- Child Health Examination/Physical, DH3040
- Family Enrollment Application/Contract
- Meals/Snack Listing of Known Allergies of the Child
- Daily Attendance Records
- Accident/Incident Reports
- Behavior/Discipline Reports
- Observation Log
- Persons Authorized to Pick up Child
- All Correspondence with Parents

6.5.3 Attendance/Monitoring: The staff maintains direct supervision of children at all time. Direct supervision is defined as within hearing and sight at all times including during nap time, diaper changing, toileting, bathing, changing clothes and when separated from other children due to illness or possible communicable disease. If children are dropped off and picked up directly into a classroom, the Primary or Associate Teacher will be the staff person designated as the individual responsible for maintaining direct supervision will maintain the attendance records. If children are dropped off or picked up at a central location, the supervisor at that location must communicate with the classroom teacher to ensure an accurate total, and individual group or class counts are maintained. Attendance records are file in the administrative office for a period of no less than one year.

3.17 Plan of Activities

Cross Reference to additional Plan of Activities Standards

5.1.3 Schedules and Routines: See 5.1.3 for details of this standard

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5.3.2 Emotional Development, Self-Awareness, and Self Esteem: True self-esteem comes from the Biblical understanding that all children are precious and have value and purpose. The idea that children have great worth apart from their behavior must be cultivated. The classroom should not be a place where children are ‘good’ when they behave and ‘bad’ when they misbehave. Rather, children should feel loved and be taught the benefits of making right choices as a way of being a successful part of the group and honoring those around them. Teachers and all staff working with children will:

- Help children to gain awareness of other people’s feelings and to understand how their own actions affect others.
- Guide children in resolving conflicts and disagreements by finding peaceful resolutions, including the use of asking for and giving forgiveness.
- Provide age appropriate program that assists children in preventing and avoiding physical and mental abuse.
- Teach children the preciousness of others and to be respectful of the belongings of others.
- Help children understand and respect people who are different from themselves and will look for effective ways to respond to teasing, bullying, and other forms of discrimination.
- Support children as they grow in the areas of self-awareness and self-acceptance.
- Acknowledge children’s individual achievements, accomplishments, and efforts, especially in areas where they have made great improvement.
- Understand children’s emotional needs as they maneuver through the changing aspects of dependent and independent behavior.
- Correct children in a positive manner and never tease, put-down, criticize, or use humiliation.

4.0 Nutrition and Food Services

Founding Principles

Nutritious foods contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children.

Nutrition plays a vital role in improving the quality of Early Childhood Programs for children. There are more children in these centers today than ever before. Some spend more time in these centers than they do at home. The meals and snacks that they are served are an important part of their growth and development.

Improving child nutrition is an important focal point of the Early Childhood Programs. The Early Childhood Programs play a key role in children's lives. By working with children each day, they help children learn and grow. By serving children nutritious meals and snacks, they help children get the nourishment and energy that children need to learn and grow - and be healthy.

Research has shown that there are crucial relationships between nutrition and health, and nutrition and learning. Early Childhood Programs are in a special position to show children what it means to eat for good health, including how important it is to eat a variety of foods.

Nutrition is important especially for children because it is linked to all aspects of their growth and development. By helping to promote proper nutritional habits in the children, Early Childhood Programs allow children to partake in more activities and with greater enjoyment. In addition, the social aspects of meal and snack time are one of the best environments to promote social skills that will be essential to a child's further developments.

For an Early Childhood Program, the job does not end with the goal of healthy food. The proper equipment to prepare food must be acquired and maintained. Food must be preserved in the proper storage area or units. A system must also be in place to assure that items are used in a timely manner while they are at their peak of freshness.

Daily sanitizing and safety systems must also be in place to protect the child from harmful germs and bacteria.

4.1 Food Preparation

4.1.1 Response to Civil Authorities' Standards: If food is prepared on the premises, the Program must be in compliance with the requirements of local and state authorities for food storage, preparation, and service. Food may be prepared at an approved licensed facility and transported to the program in approved containers and at approved temperatures.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.1.1 Describe the level of prepared food on site. (*Full Kitchen, limited to healthy snacks, etc.*) Describe how the kitchen equipment is monitored to ensure healthy and sanitary conditions and how often this monitoring is performed. Include any food service inspection reports if applicable.

On-Site Observation Inspection conducted by on-site inspector using the FCCPSA Kitchen Inspection Checklist.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program meets all requirements governing the storage, preparation, and serving of food on the premises. Kitchen equipment is monitored for healthy and sanitary conditions on a regular schedule, and inspection reports are included if applicable.
- Standard not met: The Program does not meet all requirements governing the storage, preparation, and serving of food on the premises. Kitchen equipment is not monitored for healthy and sanitary conditions.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the Program.

4.1.1.A Civil Authorities' Inspections: (If Applicable) Some city/county have local requirements to have a kitchen or health inspection where food is being prepared.

Indicators of Compliance

- Standard met: The Early Childhood Program has passed the above inspection.
- Standard not met: The Early Childhood Program has not passed the above inspection.
- Standard not applicable: Local city/county does not require health inspections for kitchens.

4.1.2 Nutritional Guidelines: The meals and/or snacks provided for the children meet the nutritional guidelines regarding food groups and quantities that are age appropriate for the children, as suggested by the Child Care Food Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Meals and snacks shall be planned, written, and posted and dated at the beginning of each week or month and sent home to the parent/guardian. Daily meal and snack menus shall be maintained for a minimum of six months.

If parents bring food for their child(ren), the provider assures that it is nutritious, appears fresh or supplements it. If the parent brings a lunch that needs refrigeration, the facility will ensure that the food will remain cold until served. Also, the facility will ensure that the food the parents brought in is nutritious, and the lunch box container is labeled with the child's first and last name.

Note: Any food allergies that the child may have is posted in the classroom and also in the kitchen (if necessary).

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.1.2A Provide menus and nutritional guides used in the preparation for the last 30 days.

On-Site Observation Inspector will view posted menu and compare with actual servings

Evaluation

- Standard met: Meals and snack meet the nutritional guidelines as suggested by the Child Care Food Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Standard not met: Meals and snack do not meet the nutritional guidelines as suggested by the Child Care Food Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the Program.

On-Site Activities Review with staff the labeling and storage of food items brought by parents.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Policies were clearly understood and followed by staff.
- Standard partially met: Policies were mostly followed by staff.
- Standard not met: Policies are not known to staff; procedures varied.

4.1.3 Food Storage: Food (including breast milk) is stored, prepared, and served to children in a safe and sanitary manner. Stored food and drink must be stored in such a manner as to be free from dust and dirt.

- Food must be stored in sealed waterproof containers that snap closed or zip closed at the end of each day and dated.
- Leftover food items may be served within five calendar days from date of preparation.
- After five calendar days, leftover food items must be discarded.
- If parents bring food, perishable items (including baby bottles) are to be labeled and refrigerated immediately with the child's first and last name and date of preparation.
- No cow's milk is ever provided for infants younger than 12 months.
- No milk, including breast milk and other infant foods are ever warmed in a microwave oven.
- Baby formula is in factory-sealed containers, or powdered formula is used.
- Accepting milk for infants must have baby's first and last name on it and stored in the refrigerator and retained no longer than 24 hours.
- Breast milk and infant formula remaining in bottles after feeding are discarded within one hour.
- Program may provide a comfortable place for breastfeeding with the infant's mother.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.1.3 Food Storage Guidelines from Staff Handbook

Evaluation

- Standard met: Program has published guidelines that meet all benchmarks.
- Standard partially met: Program has published guidelines but is lacking details.
- Standard not met: No guidelines were provided.

On-Site Observation

- Observe handling of food acceptance from parents, labeling as needed, and storage by staff.
- Raw fruit and vegetables are washed prior to being served or cooked to prevent contamination.
- All foods, including milk containers, must be rotated per expiration date when new products are brought in.
- All expired food must be discarded by the close of the business day.
- Each refrigerator/freezer must contain an accurate appliance thermometer. Refrigerator temperature must be at 41° F and the Freezer at 0° F.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Food Storage Guidelines meets all of the standards of observational indicator 4.1.3.
- Standard partially met: The Food Storage Guidelines met some of the standards of observational indicator 4.1.3.
- Standard not met: The Food Storage Guidelines did not meet the standards of observational indicator 4.1.3.

4.1.4 Meals and Snacks: Meals or snacks are available at least every 3 hours.

- Safe drinking water is available at all times, and children are encouraged to drink water frequently.
- These meal/snack times are relaxed, with some conversation; meals are not rushed.
- A written menu is posted daily or weekly and modified if it is changed - or parents bring food for their children.
- Children's food allergies are posted in the food preparation and eating areas.
- The temperature of heated foods and bottles is tested to prevent injury, before feeding to children.
- Foods that may be a choking hazard must be chopped up/sliced to age-appropriate sizes.
- There is no use of screen media during mealtime.
- Food is never used as a reward or withheld as a punishment.
- Children do not drink from bottles or sippy cups of milk, juice, or other beverages while lying down or walking around.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.1.2A Provide menus and nutritional guides used in the preparation for the last 30 days. (this exhibit should already have been completed and filed from standard 4.1.2)

Self-study exhibit #4.1.4 Meal and Snack Guidelines Section from Staff Handbook or Training Manual.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Program has published menus and guidelines that meet all benchmarks.
- Standard partially met: Program has published menus and guidelines but is lacking details.
- Standard not met: No menus guidelines were provided.

On-Site Observation Observe meal and/or snack time.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff followed published guidelines.
- Standard not met: Staff actions were inconsistent with published guidelines or safe practice.

4.1.5 Kitchen Safety: Kitchen equipment is monitored to ensure healthy and sanitary conditions. Lower cupboards are free of sharp and dangerous utensils, cleaning supplies or other chemicals or have locks.

Note: Children are not present during food preparation.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.1.5 Indicate Section of the Staff Handbook that describes how the kitchen equipment is monitored to ensure safe conditions and how often this monitoring is performed. Include any food service inspection reports if applicable.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Kitchen equipment is monitored for safety on a regular schedule, and inspection reports are included.
- Standard not met: Kitchen equipment is not monitored for safety.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the Program.

On-Site Observation Visual inspection of Kitchen to confirm all relevant safety procedures are followed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Kitchen equipment is monitored for safety on a regular schedule, and inspection confirms submitted procedures are followed.
- Standard not met: Kitchen equipment is not monitored for safety.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the Program.

4.1.6 Kitchen Sanitation: Dishes, utensils, cooking and serving items, and bottles are washed in a dishwasher, or washed in clean, hot, soapy water, rinsed, and air dried in a sanitized drying area, or disposable dishes, cups, and utensils are used. Containers for wet garbage are plastic-lined and covered with a step-operated lid and are located out of reach of children. A cold pack or equivalent is kept in the freezer or refrigerator. Cutting board must be cleaned and sanitized after each use and may not be made of wood. Kitchen sinks cannot be used for hand washing. Effective restraints to keep hair from food in food preparation areas. Disposable gloves are used when handling food.

All litter wastes and rubbish are placed in suitable covered, leak-proof, non-absorbent containers until properly disposed of daily, and disposed in a dumpster which is no closer than ten feet of buildings.

Poisonous/toxic chemicals or cleaning products must be stored separately from food. Products must not be stored on shelves above food preparation areas, and/or food products intended for human consumption, unless placed in bins that are impermeable.

The program has a three-compartment sink that must be labeled, “washing”, “rinsing” and sanitizing”. These sinks are not to be used for handwashing. There must be a separate sink labeled “handwashing only”.

Staff working in the food preparation area must wear proper head covering, such as a hair net or hat. Outer garments worn are to be clean and not soiled. Staff workers wear disposable gloves in the food preparation area.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.1.6 Section of the Staff Handbook that describes how the kitchen and equipment is sanitized to ensure safe conditions and how often this monitoring is performed. Include any food service inspection reports if applicable.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Kitchen sanitization procedures are in place.
- Standard not met: Adequate sanitization procedures are not included.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the Program.

On-Site Observation Visual inspection of Kitchen to confirm all relevant sanitation procedures are followed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Kitchen equipment is monitored for safety on a regular schedule, and inspection confirms submitted procedures are followed.
- Standard not met: Adequate sanitization procedures are not followed.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the Program.

4.1.7 Kitchen Facility Safety Requirements:

On-Site Observation

- Ventilation hoods...if used, must be inspected annually and approved by a certified city/county inspector.
- There must be a three-compartment sink that must be labeled, “washing”, “rinsing” and “sanitizing”. These sinks cannot be used for handwashing by staff.
- There must be a separate sink labeled “hand washing only” for staff to use for no other purpose but handwashing.
- All litter waste and rubbish are placed in suitable ‘covered’ leak-proof, non-absorbent containers until properly disposed of daily, in a dumpster which is no closer than ten feet of building.
- Poisonous/toxic chemicals or cleaning products must be stored separately from food. Products must not be stored on shelves above food preparation areas and/or food products intended for human consumption, unless in bins that are impermeable.
- Staff working with food preparation must wear disposable gloves.
- First Aid kit is located in the food preparation area.
- There is a fire extinguisher available, located in the food preparation area.
- Observe handling of food acceptance from parents, labeling as needed, and storage by staff.
- Raw fruit and vegetables are washed prior to being served or cooked to prevent contamination.
- All foods, including milk containers, must be rotated per expiration date when new products are brought in.
- All expired food must be discarded by the close of the business day.
- The floors, walls, shelves, tables, utensils and equipment in the food preparation area are constructed to be easily cleaned and kept clean.
- This area is well lighted and ventilated.

On-Site Observation Visual inspection of Kitchen Facility Safety Requirements indicator 4.1.7 to confirm all relevant sanitation procedures are followed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Kitchen Facility Safety Requirements meet all of the standards of observational indicator 4.1.7
- Standard partially met: The Kitchen Facility Safety Requirements meet some of the standards of observational indicator 4.1.7
- Standard not met: The Kitchen Facility Safety Requirements did not meet the standards of observational indicator 4.1.7

4.2 Parent/Guardian Information

4.2.1 Availability of Menus: Parents/guardians have access to written menus that meet all nutritional guidelines established by civil authorities. Written menus of all snacks and meals provided by the Program are also posted in such a way that they are easily seen by parents/guardians. At least two food groups are included for each snack (Programs are encouraged to ensure one of these items is a protein source), and four food groups are included for each meal.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.2.1 Include two months of snack/meal menus, which are provided to parents/guardians.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Parents/guardians are given information regarding children's menus that are offered by the Program, including at least two food groups for each snack and four food groups for each meal.
- Standard partially met: Snacks and/or meals include the appropriate number of food groups, but parents/guardians are not provided with a menu.
- Standard not met: Snacks and/or meals do not include the appropriate number of food groups.

On-Site Observation Verify that Meals and Snacks are posted, and that posted offerings meet what is served.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Posted menus match what is served to children.
- Standard partially met: With the exception of equal substitutes the menus match postings.
- Standard not met: Meals and/or Snacks do not match postings.

4.3 Social Interaction

4.3.1 Standards for Mealtime: Mealtime is to be cultivated as a pleasant social time. Staff members sit with children and encourage healthy social interaction, appropriate table manners, and good eating habits. Children are either individually fed or supervised and are offered age-appropriate food.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation Inspector will observe meal and snack time.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children engage in pleasant social interaction while eating. Staff sits with the children, role modeling appropriate table manners and good eating habits.
- Standard partially met: Children engage in pleasant social interaction while eating. Staff encourages appropriate table manners and good eating habits, but do not sit with the children.
- Standard not met: Staff does not interact with the children during snack/mealtimes.

4.3.2 Size of Furniture: There is a sufficient number of tables and chairs used for snack/mealtimes that are appropriate for the sizes of the children.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Observations are made that children are provided size-appropriate furniture during snack/mealtimes that allow their feet to touch the floor.
- Standard not met: Tables and chairs are not appropriate for the sizes of the children using them for snack/meal times.

4.3.3 Children's Responsibilities: The children are encouraged to wash their own hands and serve themselves and assist with cleanup, within age-appropriate levels of ability.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff are observed providing opportunities for children to set the table, serve themselves, and assist with cleanup at an age-appropriate level.
- Standard partially met: Staff provides one or two of the following opportunities for children: setting the table, serving themselves, or assisting with cleanup at an age-appropriate level.
- Standard not met: Staff does not allow children to set the table, serve themselves, or assist with cleanup.

4.4 Food for Infants and Toddlers

4.4.1 Feeding Infants: Infants are held when bottle-fed and not placed with bottles into cribs at any time.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.4.1 Provide Staff Handbook section on procedures for feeding infants.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Infants are held when bottle-fed and are not placed with bottles into cribs at any time.
- Standard not met: Staff allows infants to be placed with bottles into cribs.
- Standard not applicable: Infants are not enrolled in the program.

On-Site Observation Inspector will observe infants during feeding time to confirm procedures are followed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Infants are held when bottle-fed and are not placed with bottles into cribs at any time.
- Standard not met: Staff allows infants to be placed with bottles into cribs.
- Standard not applicable: Infants are not enrolled in the program.

4.4.2 Recording of Food Intake and Times: Feeding times and amount of food consumed are recorded and made available to parents/guardians of infants and toddlers on a daily basis.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.4.2 Include a copy of the Program's form for documentation of feeding information. Discuss how parents/guardians are provided with this information.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff record amounts of food/formula consumed by infants and toddlers and make the information available to parents/guardians daily.
- Standard not met: Staff does not record feeding times for infants and toddlers.

On-Site Observation Inspector will view a minimum of three weeks Food Intake and Time logs.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff records amounts of food/formula consumed by infants and toddlers and make the information available to parents/guardians daily.
- Standard not met: Staff does not record feeding times for infants and toddlers.

4.5 Catering services for feeding children

4.5.1 Catering services: The Early Childhood Program may choose to use a catering service for feeding the children. The county or health department must license all caterers which then is provided to the program. Provide copy of license and the contract of the licensed caterer.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #4.4.1 Provide Staff Handbook section on procedures for catering services.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program meets the standards of catering services.
- Standard partially met: The Program does not meet all the standards of catering services.
- Standard not met: The Program does not meet the standards of catering services.

On-Site Observation Inspector will observe the requirements for using catering services.

- The county or health department must license all caterers and provide a copy of the valid license approved by the health dept.
- Food delivered to the Program by the registered caterer must be maintained at safe temperatures, 40°F for cold food, promptly refrigerated, and 135°F for hot foods delivered in warming trays.
- Program must maintain a food acceptance log documenting receipt of food from the caterer and take the necessary steps to ensure the food is free from spoilage.
- The log should document the following:
 - Date and time received
 - Quantity of food received
 - Condition of food
 - Type of food
 - Testing of adequate of temperature of food
 - Name of staff testing the food and signature of receipt
- If food is not received at the correct temperature, or does not appear to be in good condition, the delivery should not be accepted.

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Program meets the observational standards of indicator 4.4.1.
- Standard not met: The Program does not meet the observational standards of indicator 4.4.1

5.0 Curriculum and Child Development

Founding Principles

Each child has unique qualities, intrinsic value, and great potential. Understanding this statement is the foundation from which the early learning program is developed. Children are designed to learn and given a safe environment, quality materials, and thoughtful guidance, they will progress through the stages of learning and development as each new level builds on previous successes. The provider should strategically organize the environment, plan the activities, and provide teaching materials based on Biblical principles to work with the child's natural inclination to learn and grow.

Not only should the atmosphere be warm, kind, and positive, but also the teaching materials must complement the Biblical principle that each child is special, and that learning is a pleasant experience. Play should be a part of every child's daily experience as it creates the framework for which a child practices and develops skills, learns to work with others, and safely explores the world around them.

Quality curriculum and materials based on Biblical principles provide a continuum of learning and opportunity for creative development that moves at a natural pace and with the child's ability to learn. Along this path, over time, young children explore, learn, and grow in the development of their bodies (physical activity), their minds (cognitive and language skills) and their awareness of themselves and others (social and self-development).

In these early years it is important to prepare young children to be ready for school by implementing programs supported by relative research that provide opportunities in literacy, pre-reading, pre-math, science as exploration, and early social studies. The provider should have academic and skill development goals for each individual child as well as goals for the group as a whole.

5.1 Curriculum Overview and Implementation

Curriculum is defined as the structural program and teaching materials that provide the framework for meeting the goals in each area of development (physical, academic, and social), being appropriate to the age and development of each child.

General Guidelines

- Curriculum may be purchased or specifically designed by the administration as long as it meets the academic and developmental benchmarks provided in relevant early education and/or The Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence.
- Curriculum must lend itself to and not be in opposition to the Foundational Principle that each child is unique with both value and potential.
- A schedule of activities or goals alone is not a curriculum.
- Curriculum and its implementation over time, must include exposure to various experiences (physical, academic, rehearsal through play, repetition and a variety of activities that lead to fluency in a child's learning and experience.
- Each provider will require Administrators, Primary Teachers, and Associate Teachers to be familiar with The Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence and the scope and sequence for the curriculum they are currently teaching/overseeing.
- Those Programs seeking state/federal funding must choose a curriculum approved by the Early Learning Coalition found in the Appendix on this Manual.

5.1.1 Curriculum Guidelines: Each provider will maintain a curriculum, scope and sequence, and goal sheet for each child and each group. Curriculum will include but is not limited to:

- Literacy and language (reinforced with natural age-appropriate integration in every day interaction and not by rote or drill), reading, phonetic awareness, telling stories, dramatic plays, language/phonetic-based play, and writing readiness skills.
- Pre-math, sorting, counting, shapes, part to whole and whole to part relationships and math readiness skills.
- Science in exploration of the child’s environment.
- Health, safety, and manner
- Music and movement
- Creative expression and dramatic presentation

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit #5.1.1 Include an overview of the Program’s scope and sequence with supporting research citations for each age group.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers from each age group of children are familiar with the research and development of the scope and sequence. All teachers/staff are trained in the implementation of the guidelines with an accompanying document showing the training received.
- Standard met: The self-study contains a complete scope and sequence guide with credible research citations.
- Standard partially met: A scope and sequence is provided. However, each age group is not addressed, or research citations have not been included.
- Standard not met: A scope and sequence as described in the standard has not been developed or is not available for review.

Observation 5.1.1 Visual inspection of Children Goal Sheets

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Each child has an up-to-date goal sheet, updated progress, and pertinent information in a neat and well-organized format.
- Standard met: Each child has an up-to-date goal sheet, with updated progress.
- Standard partially met: Each child may have a goal sheet that may or may not be kept updated.
- Standard not met: Children do not have goal sheets.

5.1.2 Lesson Plans: Lesson Plans are the step-by-step teacher instructions outlining the objectives, the daily activities designed to meet those objectives, and curriculum implementation in the classroom. Lesson Plans are designed to meet the age appropriate needs of each child and the group.

Lesson planning is three-fold and is primarily functional for 2, 3, 4, and 5 year olds.

- Long-Range Planning—Yearly Overview with goals highlighted
- Medium-Range Planning—Semester, Quarter, or Week with specific activities and benchmarks highlighted
- Daily Plans—specific lessons designed to meet the objectives, goals, and benchmarks appropriate to each child and age group.
 - Primary and Associate teachers are responsible for lesson plans and seeing that the planning process is thorough and reflects the Foundation Principles, objectives of academic and developmental growth, and/or The Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence in both short term and long-term planning.
 - Plans require the teachers’ understanding of the curriculum, goals, and objectives for each child and age group.
 - Teachers have regularly scheduled planning sessions where they develop lesson plans and share ideas, experience, and resources.
 - Plans are to be written in an organized format, dated, and include specific concepts (literacy, pre-math, science, health, corresponding activities (large group/small group), daily play time (inside and/or outside), and resources required.

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit #5.1.2A Overview Plans for Long-Range and Medium-Range Planning for each age grouping.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Yearly Overview is well planned, neat and well organized, with goals highlighted by semester and quarter.
- Standard met: Yearly Overview is well planned with goals highlighted, by semester or quarter of both.
- Standard partially met: Yearly Overview was provided, but lacks specific goals and/or details.
- Standard not met: Yearly Overview was not provided or lacked required details.

Exhibit #5.1.2B Specific Daily Lesson Plans with schedule of corresponding activities designed to work with the curriculum for each age grouping.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Daily Lesson Plans are neat, well organized, dated, and include specific topics and objectives with corresponding activities and resources required.
- Standard met: Daily Lesson Plans are well planned, dated with schedule of corresponding activities and resources.
- Standard partially met: Daily Lesson Plans were provided, but lacks corresponding activities and pertinent details or are unorganized or not planned well.
- Standard not met: Daily Lesson Plans were not provided or lacked significant details.

On-Site Observations Foundational Principles and the use of plans, organization and teaching presentations

Observation 5.1.2C Visual Inspection of teachers demonstrating an understanding of the Foundation Principles by speaking and interacting with children positively, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for learning.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers demonstrate a deep understanding of the Foundation Principles in the way they speak and interact with each other and with the children. They create a warm and inviting atmosphere that encourages exploration and learning.
- Standard met: Teachers demonstrate an excellent working knowledge of the Foundation Principles in their interaction with children, creating a warm atmosphere and positive environment for learning.
- Standard partially met: Teachers demonstrate an average working knowledge and implementation of Foundation Principles in their interaction with children, providing a stable environment for learning.
- Standard not met: Teachers have little working knowledge of the Foundation Principles in their interaction with children and the environment is insecure.

Observation 5.1.2D Visual Inspection of teachers demonstrating they understand the plans, objectives and goals by following the Lesson Plan.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers demonstrate a fluent understanding of the plans, a genuine love of teaching the subject, an organized approach to the lessons, and have a natural ability to present the objectives and goals outlined.
- Standard met: Teachers demonstrate an understanding of the plans, are organized and can teach effectively the objectives and goals outlined.
- Standard partially met: Teachers demonstrate a basic understanding of the plans, objectives and goals, are somewhat organized, accomplishing some of the objectives of the class.
- Standard not met: Teachers are not necessarily familiar with or guided by an understanding of the plans, objectives or goals and show weak organization in their presentation.

Observation 5.1.2E Visual Inspection of teachers demonstrating that they are organized and can use the curriculum, materials, and activities fluently engaging the children.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers demonstrate an organized and thorough understanding of the curriculum and use it to enhance and reinforce the objectives they are teaching. They use the curriculum as a tool in such a natural way the children are fully engaged in the learning process. They use a variety of age-appropriate resources for hands-on activities allowing the children to learn through participation and exploration.
- Standard met: Teachers demonstrate a solid understanding of the curriculum and are well organized in its implementation. They are able to engage the children while meeting the objectives of the curriculum in an effective way.
- Standard partially met: Teachers demonstrate a basic understanding of the curriculum and how it is to be used. They sometimes engage the children in the learning process and meet some of the objectives of the curriculum.
- Standard not met: Teachers are not necessarily familiar with or guided by an understanding of the curriculum and are unable to engage the children in the learning process.

Observation 5.1.2F Visual Inspection of teachers demonstrating flexibility, and having the ability to adapt and utilize the ‘teachable moments’.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers demonstrate a natural flow, flexibility, and the ability to adapt and relate to each child during the teaching process. They are attentive listeners and are able to respond in the moment capitalizing on ‘teachable moments’ with their children.
- Standard met: Teachers demonstrate a good relationship with their children and are easily flexible and adaptable to the classroom environment. They are good listeners and are able to recognize ‘teachable moments’ and utilize them in the classroom.
- Standard partially met: Teachers demonstrate a fair relationship with most of the children, are sometimes flexible and adaptable to daily situations. They are fair listeners and sometimes recognize a ‘teachable moment’.
- Standard not met: Teachers demonstrate a distance between them and their children and are often inflexible or are not able to adapt to daily situations. They are poor listeners and rarely recognize ‘teachable moments’.

Observation 5.1.2G Visual Inspection of teachers demonstrating they are able to use the proper modalities emphasizing tactile learning for young children, but incorporating visual and auditory presentations as well.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers demonstrate an exemplary working knowledge of teaching in different modalities and provide an organized and natural classroom environment. They understand the importance of tactile learning, exploration, participation, and learning by doing. They understand and incorporate visual and auditory presentations and make use of them regularly.
- Standard met: Teachers demonstrate a thorough understanding of teaching in a variety of modalities especially using tactile activities for young learners. They teach with a balance of tactile, auditory and visual presentations that are engaging.
- Standard partially met: Teachers have some experience with teaching in a variety of modalities but may lack balance in their implementation. They may be inconsistent or ineffective in providing a variety of activities.
- Standard not met: Teachers lack understanding of modalities and do not provide a variety of teaching activities in their presentations.

5.1.3 Schedules and Routines An orderly, peaceful, and predictable daily routine gives stability and confidence to young children. Schedules of the daily activities and routines must be posted publicly and followed. The teachers provide a consistent schedule of daily events but remain attentive to individuals and can adapt smoothly to changes when necessary.

- Children and parents should be greeted warmly every day.
- Children should be gently instructed in the drop-off and pick-up routines until they are comfortable. They should be directed to participate in opening activities such as play, social interaction, or quiet activity
- Teachers should calmly reassure children who demonstrate anxiety upon separation and redirect them to an appropriate activity. Teachers should assist parents in coping with this transitional time.
- Children should know what is expected of them, and consistent, clear, calm instruction will help them establish the ‘habits’ necessary for a positive daily experience
- Teachers will establish the routines and schedules of the day in such a way that encourages children to become independent and to accept personal responsibility with initiative. For example, routines are clearly established so that children know when to clean and organize the room, when to put on clothing for outside activities, and/or when to transition to different activities.
- Transitions between activities are announced, giving the children time to finish and prepare for the next learning experience. Transitions should be unhurried and flow smoothly.
- Daily schedule will include indoor and outdoor activities, weather permitting.
- Daily schedule will include nap and/or rest time.
 - The environment for rest will be quiet and provide quiet activities for older children.
 - The schedule of activities leading up to nap time will be calming and preparing children for rest.
 - School-age children will have a time of relaxation after the school day.
 - Babies may be rocked, patted, or have music playing as aids to falling asleep. Babies should be allowed to sleep on their own schedule when they are sleepy.
- Children will be expected to clean up after themselves as part of the daily routine.
 - Children will be instructed on how to clean up and positive reinforcement will encourage them to participate daily.
- Children will have access to water and rest periods, especially after rigorous play and physical activity as part of the daily routine.
- Children who use the toilet should be instructed on how to notify the teacher throughout the day and not be prohibited from using the restroom when needed.
 - If children wear diapers, the teacher should check every two hours and change children who are wet or soiled.
 - Parents and teachers will agree when a child is ready for toilet training and which approach to take. The process will be positive and not incorporate punishment.

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit 5.1.3A Daily Schedule Posted for each age group.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A clear, thorough and effective Daily Schedule is provided and posted for each age group.
- Standard partially met: A Generalized Schedule is posted, OR the Daily Schedule is posted for some but not all of the age groups. The schedules may be ineffectively organized or presented.
- Standard not met: Daily Schedules are not posted.

Exhibit 5.1.3B Other Schedules posted as necessary (*examples of other schedules would be Weekly Calendar of Events, nap times, etc.*)

Evaluation

- Standard met: All pertinent schedules for each age group are effectively written and posted.
- Standard partially met: Some schedules are posted or are somewhat effectively written.
- Standard not met: No schedules are posted or are ineffectively written.

Observation 5.1.3C Drop-Off and Pick-Up noting transition from parent/guardian to teacher which should be orderly and calm

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Drop-Off and Pick-Up are smooth, calm, orderly, and provide a safe transition from parent to teacher and again teacher back to parent. Everyone involved in the transitions during the regular school day are attentive and well trained in the transition process.
- Standard met: Drop-Off and Pick-Up are orderly and safe. Everyone involved in the transitions during the regular school day are well trained in the transition process.
- Standard partially met: Drop-Off and Pick-Up are inconsistently orderly and safe. Most involved in the transitions during the regular school day are trained in the transition process.
- Standard not met: Drop-Off and Pick-Up are not orderly or safe. Most involved in the transitions during the regular school day are inconsistent and in need of training in the transition process.

Observation 5.1.3D Child-teacher interaction during transition times on a school day

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Children are warmly greeted and welcomed at the beginning of each day, class, or new activity creating an environment where a child feels wanted, special, and free to participate. Eye contact and voice quality used are positive and teachers interact with each individual child. Teachers demonstrate an ability to bring loving calm and order to children who are under duress during transitions.
- Standard met: Children are greeted warmly at the beginning of each day, class, or new activity creating an environment where a child feels free to participate. Eye contact is made regularly and children are spoken to appropriately. Teachers are able to bring calm to children who are under duress during transitions.
- Standard partially met: Most children are greeted warmly at the beginning of each day and at most classes or new activities. The environment may be inconsistently warm or ineffective in inviting children to participate freely. Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively bring calm to children who are under duress during transitions.
- Standard not met: Children are not greeted warmly nor is eye contact made on a regular basis. Appropriate vocal quality is sometimes used and the environment for learning can be unsure. Teachers demonstrate little ability to bring calm and order to a child who is under duress during transitions and may actually respond inappropriately.

5.2 Physical Development

5.2.1 Physical Development—Core Knowledge The curriculum and activities are designed to meet the physical needs and the developmental abilities of each child as they grow. Children should be given opportunities daily to play indoors and outdoors developing gross motor skills, balance, and coordination. Although certain physical abilities are expected at certain ages, all children are individuals and develop at their own pace. Since many of the physical development activities take place in groups and in play, the atmosphere will be kept positive, fair, and safe.

The goals and standards of Physical Development will be in accordance with the Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence for Movement and Coordination. This sequence describes motor and coordination skills, and related movement activities that extend and refine notions of body image and the body's capabilities. It also provides opportunities for enhancing time, space and language concepts, as well as social development (when activities are carried out with others).

- Refine physical attention and relaxation by asking the child to stop and start movement according to a signal.
- Learn relaxing muscles or the whole body as the child learns to go from a high activity level to a relaxed focused state.

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit # 5.2.1 List of physical activity goals per age group

Evaluation

- Standard met: All pertinent physical activity goals and standards for each age group are provided.
- Standard partially met: Some goals and standards for physical activity are provided but may be lacking important details/information.
- Standard not met: No goals and standards for physical activity are provided or are sub-par.

Observation 5.2.1 Goals and Standards of Physical Development: Visual Inspection of a copy of the Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence of Movement and Coordination or comparable standard as approved by FCCPSA

Evaluation

- Standard met: Copy of The Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence of Movement and Coordination (or comparable standard as approved by FCCPSA) is provided for inspection and present in appropriate location for use by faculty and staff.
- Standard partially met: Incomplete copy of The Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence of Movement and Coordination and/or provided a Sequence not approved by FCCPSA and/or provided for inspection but not kept in an appropriate location for use by faculty and staff.
- Standard not met: Copy of The Core Knowledge Pre-School Sequence of Movement and Coordination (or comparable standard as approved by FCCPSA) not provided for inspection.

5.2.2 Motor Skills At every stage of development, babies and young children are given opportunities to develop motor skills and teachers watch to see that they are progressing at a rate that is appropriate for the child. These goals are reached through a variety of tasks, and traditional childhood games.

- Infants and toddlers will move through the appropriate stages of motor development including: kicking, rolling, swinging, walking, climbing, jumping, sliding, reaching, grasping, dropping, retrieving, carrying, and stacking according to their individual developmental time table.
 - Infants and toddlers do not spend long periods of time confined in swings, bouncers, high chairs or other confining furniture.
- Children will move through the appropriate stages of motor development including: balancing; moving through space, with or without obstacles, in a variety of ways; throwing and kicking objects and moving cooperatively with others.
- Gross-motor activities are provided in the preschool classroom which may include such activities as jumping, running, climbing, ascending and descending stairs swinging, sliding, balancing, riding, stacking, squeezing, lacing, tracing, sorting, pounding, connecting, and snapping.
- Fine motor skills will be developed by offering activities that utilize the skills of: grasping, scribbling, cutting with scissors, buttoning, tying shoes, using art materials, or playing with manipulatives.
- Sensory experiences are provided for children, especially babies and toddlers to use their senses- seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching through a variety of materials and activities.
- Non-crawling babies spend short periods (three to five minutes) of supervised time on their tummies each half day when they are awake. Time may be increased as the baby shows that the activity is enjoyed.
- Children’s progress and development are monitored through the use of observations, trends, checklists, anecdotal notes or other forms of documentation, such as portfolios or commercial instruments.

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit 5.2.2 List of opportunities children have to participate in physical development activities in a positive, safe environment with corresponding list of fine and gross motor skills covered in the activities

Evaluation

- Standard met: List provided for inspection and clearly utilized by faculty and staff outlining the activities available on campus for children for the development of motor skills. Safety and safe environment practices are noted as well as the fine and gross motor skills strengthened in each activity.
- Standard partially met: Incomplete list provided for inspection. May be lacking specific details in the areas of safety or specific motor skills. List is not posted or is not consistently or effectively utilized by faculty and staff.
- Standard not met: List does not exist or is not available to faculty and staff.

5.2.2 Motor Skills (Continued)

Observation 5.2.2A Inspection of supervised play (indoor and outdoor) and classroom activities that support the physical development of fine and gross motor skills as part of the daily schedule.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Program allows for safe, supervised, organized and free play, and indoor and outdoor activities that are vital to the development of fine and gross motor skills, and are a part of the daily routine and positive atmosphere of the center. Teachers are fully aware of the physical development objectives of the activities and make sure that everyone has the opportunity to participate.
- Standard met: Program allows for safe, supervised, indoor and outdoor activities that lend themselves to the development of fine and gross motor skills and are a part of the daily routine and positive atmosphere of the center. Teachers make sure that everyone has the opportunity to participate.
- Standard partially met: Program has inconsistent supervision and/or safety practices concerning activities for children in the development of fine and gross motor skills. Activities may be inconsistently or ineffectively a part of the daily routine and/or may not provide a positive atmosphere for children.
- Standard not met: Program lacks consistent supervision and safety practices concerning activities for children in the development of fine and gross motor skills. Activities appear to be randomly scheduled and faculty/staff are not sufficiently able to direct each child to participate in a positive environment.

Observation 5.2.2B Inspection of individual child physical development skills goals and progress documentation (lists, checklists, notes etc.)

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children Physical Development Goals and Progress sheets are regularly reviewed, and kept up to date, marking child's achievements.
- Standard partially met: Children may or may not all have a Physical Development Goals and Progress sheet. The sheet may be inconsistently or ineffectively maintained or kept-up-to-date.
- Standard not met: No Physical Development Goals and Progress sheets were available.

5.3 Social and Emotional Development

5.3.1 Social Development Teachers set the tone for the classroom experience, making it a positive, warm, safe, and inviting atmosphere. Teachers plan and organize the environment to support this tone, implement the curriculum, and allow for play, exploration learning, and creative expression. A positive teacher-child relationship is key to the successful social and emotional development of each child. Teachers will be trained in the specific skills that build a strong connection between themselves and their children. Teachers and all staff working with children will:

- Speak clearly and kindly, making eye contact when addressing children, modeling appropriate communication and manners.
- Use affirming language to reinforce positive behaviors and give the children a sense of acceptance and approval.
- Be respectful to children and will honor their families. Disagreements with parents will never be discussed or mentioned to the children. Families will not be stereotyped, or demeaned.
- Remain pleasant and relaxed using the techniques of classroom management (stop, re-direct, and reinforce) to encourage proper behavior, social interactions, and children participation.
- Let the children know that they are important to them and to the group by listening, responding to their needs, and calling them by name.
- Use tools and activities such as music, singing, physical activity, team building games, etc. to give each child opportunity to be a successful participant in the group.
- Foster a positive social environment by teaching and modeling the skills of sharing, cooperating, helping, taking turns, problem solving, working together, learning to transition from home to school, developing self-discipline, gaining confidence in performing age-appropriate tasks, and relating appropriately to adults and peers.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.3.1A Inspection of documentation showing the training in specific skills the teaching staff has received in the area of making connections with their children and building a safe and positive environment for learning.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Documentation outlining each specific training session/workshop/certification, including dates and primary topics covered is present for each faculty/staff member that works with children in a classroom setting. File includes previous training attained and list of goals for future training including due dates and dates for re-certifications where applicable.
- Standard met: Documentation outlining each specific training session/workshop/certification, including dates and primary topics covered is present for each faculty/staff member that works with children in a classroom setting. Due dates for required re-certifications where applicable are documented.
- Standard partially met: Documentation is not specific concerning the training, or is lacking dates and primary topics covered or is present for some faculty/staff members that work with children in a classroom setting.
- Standard not met: No documentation is present, or documentation is not adequate.

Observation 5.3.1B Visual Inspection of teachers in the classroom: utilizing the curriculum, materials and activities, providing an environment that fosters the healthy social development of each child, and performing specific tasks such as: affirming language, opportunities for everyone to participate positively in the group, eye contact, reinforcement of positive behavior with affirmations, use of children's names, use of music and games, and instruction in appropriate behavior and good manners.

Evaluation

- ❑ Exemplary compliance: Teachers are observed flowing naturally with the curriculum, materials, activities and children in a warm and positive atmosphere. Teachers use affirming language, engage the whole group, make eye contact, use children's names. Teachers are well prepared and use music, games, and instruction encouraging appropriate behavior and good manners. Teachers make this classroom a place where children want to be and the learning enjoyable and affirming.
- ❑ Standard met: Teachers are observed to be well organized, prepared and professional, using the curriculum, materials and activities to provide a warm and positive atmosphere. Teachers use affirming language, make eye contact, and are personable. Teachers use music, games, and instruction encouraging appropriate behavior and good manners. Teachers make the classroom a pleasant experience.
- ❑ Standard partially met: Teachers may lack some organization in orchestrating the curriculum, materials, activities and children's participation. Teachers may be inconsistent or ineffective in their use of affirming language, in making eye contact, or in engaging individual children. Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively use music, games, and instruction. The atmosphere of the classroom may be inconsistent or lacking warmth.
- ❑ Standard not met: Teachers are not able to effectively use curriculum, materials, and activities to engage the children. The overall atmosphere of the classroom is not warm and pleasant and teachers are not organized, professional or consistently personable.

5.3.2 Emotional Development, Self-Awareness, and Self Esteem True self-esteem comes from the Biblical understanding that all children are precious and have value and purpose. The idea that children have great worth apart from their behavior must be cultivated. The classroom should not be a place where children are ‘good’ when they behave and ‘bad’ when they misbehave. Rather, children should feel loved and be taught the benefits of making right choices as a way of being a successful part of the group and honoring those around them. Teachers and all staff working with children will:

- Help children to gain awareness of other people’s feelings and to understand how their own actions affect others.
- Guide children in resolving conflicts and disagreements by finding peaceful resolutions including the use of asking for and giving forgiveness.
- Provide Age appropriate program that assists children in preventing physical and mental abuse
- Teach children the preciousness of others and to be respectful of the belongings of others.
- Help children understand and respect people who are different from themselves and will look for effective ways to respond to teasing, bullying, and other forms of discrimination.
- Support children as they grow in the areas of self-awareness and self-acceptance.
- Acknowledge child’s individual achievements, accomplishments, and efforts especially in areas where they have made great improvement.
- Understand children’s emotional needs as they maneuver through the changing aspects of dependent and independent behavior.
- Correct children in a positive manner and will never tease, put-down, or use humiliation.

Indicators of Compliance (5.3.2)

Observation 5.3.2 Visual Inspection of teachers as they utilize the curriculum, materials, and activities to provide an environment that fosters the healthy emotional development of each child by reminding them of how special and wonderful they are, using positive reinforcements, helping them deal with their feelings and respond appropriately to others.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers verbally affirm children in a consistent manner not merely based on performance. They cause children to ‘blossom’ by being aware of who they are and making appropriate verbal and physical reinforcements. Teachers are able to positively guide children when disagreements or frustrations surface, and keep the class moving forward. Basic rules of expected behavior may be posted in a visual format (illustrations etc.) that remind children of respectful behavior to one another.
- Standard met: Teachers verbally affirm children in a consistent manner making appropriate verbal and physical reinforcements. Teachers are able to positively guide children when disagreements or frustrations surface, and keep the class moving forward. Teachers are able to guide children in appropriate and respectful behavior toward one another.
- Standard partially met: Teachers are inconsistent in their verbal affirmations, and reinforcements. Teachers are not able to positively guide children through disagreements or frustrations or may not be able to maintain an atmosphere where children have respectful and appropriate behavior toward one another.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not verbally affirm or positively reinforce children effectively. Teachers cannot consistently or positively guide children through disagreements or frustrations. The atmosphere is not pleasant and/or positive.

5.4 Teaching Strategies

5.4.1 Variety and Balance of Activities Young children need to physically move throughout the instructional day and have opportunities for a variety of activities to meet their need for hands-on experiences. The daily schedule/routine should provide a variety and balance of activities including large group (teacher directed), small group (teacher-child interactive), individual (child initiated), and indoor and outdoor play. Times for each activity should be appropriate to the age and development of the children.

- Plans will include regularly scheduled times for activities indoors.
 - Each child will have sufficient space in a large group setting at appropriately sized tables, desks, play areas and/or seating areas
 - Teacher will consider the developmental stage(s) of the children and design the activity appropriately in terms of length of activity and transition from one activity to another.
- Plans will include regularly scheduled times for activities outdoors.
 - Each child will have sufficient, safe space to participate in outdoor group games and play (group and/or individual activity).
 - Teachers will clearly explain the activities assuring that each child understands how to safely participate.
- Plans will include regularly scheduled times for quiet activities, rest time, and naps where appropriate.

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit 5.4.1 Sample of lesson plans or activity schedule reflecting a balance and variety in activities planned throughout the school day and week.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Lesson plans and/or activity schedule is orderly, with a natural flow from activity to activity, provides a balance of both indoor and outdoor games and activities provide for group and individual play and participation, and quiet activities.
- Standard met: Lesson plans and/or activity schedules are planned and well prepared and adequately work within the overall school day and curriculum. Teachers provide a balance of indoor and outdoor games and activities for group and individual play and participation as well as quiet activities.
- Standard partially met: Plans and/or activity schedule may not be consistently planned or ineffectively organized for the day. Activities are not balanced with enough variety of indoor/outdoor or group/individual opportunities for play or quiet activities.
- Standard not met: Lesson plans and/or activity schedules show a lack of order and planning. A balance between the types of activities is not observable.

Observation 5.4.1A Visual Inspection of activities reflects appropriate balance of active and quiet activities, and transitions as described in the standard.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers provide a good balance between active and quiet activities as outlined in the lesson plan or activity schedule. Teachers are clear and gentle in their instructions for supervised activities particularly in the area of safety and respect for others. Children are expected to have proper manners and participation in the cleaning up after each activity where appropriate. Transitions between activities are well planned and flow naturally. In general, children have a sense of well-being, and are excited and happy to participate and learn.
- Standard met: Teachers provide a good balance between active and quiet activities as outline in the lesson plan or activity schedule. Children are aware of appropriate behavior and teachers are careful to guide them to safe participation. Children are expected to assist in the clean up after activities where appropriate. Transitions between activities are planned and orderly. Children clearly enjoy participating in these activities.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may not provide a good balance between active and quiet activities or may not adequately follow the lesson plans and/or activity schedule. Teachers may not be adequate in their instruction or in maintaining a safe environment. Children may be unsure, or hesitant about participation in this environment.
- Standard not met: Little or no attempt is made to provide a balance of activities for children. If activities are outlined in the lesson plans, they are not followed. Safety and appropriate behavior is not adequately explained or enforced.

Observation 5.4.1B Visual Inspection of activities reflects appropriate space and seating for activities

Evaluation

- Standard met: Classrooms/spaces observed provided appropriate space, seating, and an overall favorable environment for the activities taking place there.
- Standard partially met: Classrooms/spaces observed somewhat provide appropriate space, and seating for the activities taking place there. The environment is somewhat favorable.
- Standard not met: Classrooms/spaces do not provide appropriate space or seating for the activities taking place there. The environment is not favorable.

Observation 5.4.1C Visual Inspection of activities reflects appropriate times of activities per age group

Evaluation

- Standard met: Time of day and length of activity are completely age appropriate and organized wisely into the overall schedule for the day.
- Standard partially met: Time of day and/or length of activity may not be age appropriate consistently or may not be organized well into the overall schedule for the day.
- Standard not met: Time of day and/or length of activity is not age appropriate and/or is not organized well into the overall schedule for the day.

5.4.2 Transitions: Transitions between activities should be planned, smooth, and flow naturally giving children time to finish what they are currently engaged in, prepare for the next activity, and make the transition.

- Teachers should utilize transition tools such as visual aids, songs, poems, or other signals that children recognize as a sign to transition into the next activity.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.2 Visual Inspection of teachers reflects the use of transitional tools as described in the standard.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Use of transition tools such as visual aids, songs, poems, or other signals have been used consistently resulting in children knowing them fluently and responding appropriately at the transition between activities. Teachers have a consistent and effective way of communicating the upcoming transition and are able to facilitate transitions smoothly.
- Standard met: Teachers clearly use transition tools such as visual aids, songs, poems, or other signals before and during the transitions between activities. Children respond appropriately and transitions are smooth.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively use transition tools such as visual aids, songs, poems, or other signals before and during the transitions between activities. Transitions are not smooth.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not use transition tools. Transitions between activities are not smooth.

5.4.3 Activity Resources and Learning Centers:

Curriculum is incomplete without the age appropriate materials, equipment, learning centers, and supplies necessary to meet the objectives of the scope and sequence. Young children are primarily tactile learners and they must have access to a variety of hands-on materials to reinforce learning and allow for the rehearsal of ideas and creative expression. Very young children need exposure to a variety of colors, sounds, and textures. Children are given opportunities every day to play, using their imaginations and self-expression. Materials and supplies must be sturdy and safe. Educational materials may include but are not limited to:

- Manipulatives
- Puzzles,
- Dress-up clothing and materials for children to make their own costume pieces and props
- Building materials such as blocks or Duplos
- Dolls and stuffed animals
- Child-sized replicas of real-world appliances such as cooking centers or workshop benches, including dishes, pots/pans, and hand tools
- Musical instruments
- Art supplies
- Books will be:
 - purchased, made by the teachers and/or in class
 - in good repair, rotated and replaced as necessary
 - stored and displayed in an appropriate way giving children access

Appropriate materials are organized into learning centers where similar items are grouped and space is provided for small group and individual play. Learning Center materials will be:

- maintained and kept in good repair
- rotated to stir imagination and keep the children's interest

Indicators of Compliance

Exhibit 5.4.3 Written policies and procedures for the maintenance and rotation of materials.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All policies and procedures for the maintenance and rotation of materials used by children to meet educational and developmental goals are provided. These policies and procedures are kept up-to-date and are utilized by the faculty and staff on a regular schedule.
- Standard partially met: Some policies and procedures for the maintenance and rotation of materials used by children to meet educational and developmental goals are provided. These policies and procedures may not be utilized by the faculty and staff on a regular schedule.
- Standard not met: Policies and procedures for the maintenance and rotation of materials used by children are not provided or are inadequate or are not kept up to date or followed by the faculty and staff on a suitable schedule.

Observation 5.4.3A Visual Inspection of materials and supplies used to reach the goals of the curriculum and organized/displayed for use by children in both teacher-directed activities and individual play time.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Materials and supplies are in excellent shape, are well chosen, organized, displayed beautifully and are easily accessible to the teacher and children during the course of the day. Materials show a variety of textures, colors, and provide opportunities for play and learning. Children are instructed in proper use, setting up and cleaning up where appropriate.
- Standard met: Materials and supplies are in good shape, well chosen, organized, displayed appropriately and are easily accessible to the teacher and children during the course of the day. Materials provide a variety of learning opportunities. Children are instructed in proper use, setting up and cleaning up where appropriate.
- Standard partially met: Most materials are in fair/good shape, are somewhat organized, displayed, and can be accessed by teacher and children during the day. Materials may lack enough variety or interest for children. Children may not be fully instructed to proper use, or asked to assist in set up and clean up where appropriate.
- Standard not met: Materials are not in adequate shape, are not organized or displayed well and/or are not easily accessible to teachers or children. Materials do not have enough variety or interest for children. Children are not instructed as to proper use and/or they do not participate in setting up or cleaning up where appropriate.

Observation 5.4.3B Visual Inspection of books including the condition, storage, display, and access

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Books are in great condition and are organized into libraries and/or literary/reading centers. A wide variety of quality books are available to teachers and children and are displayed beautifully.
- Standard met: Books are in good shape and are organized as to be accessible to teachers and children.
- Standard partially met: Books are in fair to good shape and are somewhat organized. The books may be somewhat accessible to teachers and children.
- Standard not met: Books are in disrepair and/or are not organized. Books are not easily accessible to teachers and children.

5.4.4 Group Instruction and Classroom Interaction Educational, social and physical goals for young children will be met in a variety of group and individual settings. Teachers must carefully plan each day, orchestrating the varying elements of learning objectives, cognitive development of the children, large and small group instruction, activities, and individual play/exploration time. Teachers will be proactive and diffuse contention that rises between children before negative behaviors erupt whenever possible, keeping the children focused on the positive activity they are engaged in.

Large Group: Teachers will organize and regularly provide large group activities and projects that:

- involve all of the children working toward a common purpose.
- encourage children to work on projects and play games together.
- include assisting children in the proper way of participating in a group such as waiting their turn, raising their hand, or standing in line.

Small Group: Teachers should look for opportunities to work with smaller groups inviting children to work at stations, in teams or small groups allowing children the opportunity to be involved in work, discussion, and accomplishing tasks together. Teachers will organize and regularly provide small group activities and projects that:

- provide opportunities and encouragement for children to share, work together, and take turns in a smaller setting within the classroom.

Individual: Children are individuals and must receive individual attention throughout the day apart from group activities. Teachers will:

- use each child's name and make eye contact when speaking.
- take the time to remember a child's interests and/or talents and make mention of them regularly, using these as a basis of play and goal setting.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.4A Visual Inspection of large group activities

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers have consistently instructed their children in the proper ways of participating in a group which has resulted in children knowing how to wait their turns, raise their hands, and stand in line. Teachers are skilled at involving all children to work toward a common purpose. Teachers are gifted in their ability to encourage children to work and play together and provide a peaceful, fun, cooperative environment.
- Standard met: Teachers actively instruct their children in appropriate group behaviors such as waiting their turn, raising their hand, and standing in line. Children respond appropriately. Teachers are able to get children to work and play together in a positive atmosphere.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively instruct their children in appropriate group behavior such as waiting their turn, raising their hand and standing in line. Children respond somewhat appropriately. Teachers may not be effective in getting children to work and play together consistently.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not instruct their children in appropriate group behavior. Children responses are inconsistent and not orderly. Teachers are not able to get children to work and play together effectively or consistently.

Observation 5.4.4B Visual Inspection of small group activities

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers purposefully provide opportunities for children to participate with each other in planned small group activities. Teachers are able to facilitate small groups by encouraging conversation and cooperation in tasks and play. Teachers respond to individual children gently and personably using eye contact and calling the children by name. Teachers are able to reinforce participation and behavior with praise and are able to assist child participation with gentle suggestions and verbal reinforcements.
- Standard met: Teachers have planned opportunities for children to participate in small group activities and are able to maintain an environment where children can participate comfortably. Teachers are friendly and involved using eye contact, consistent positive reinforcements, and each child's name. Teachers are able to direct and reinforce behavior to maintain a pleasant and cooperative environment.
- Standard partially met: Teachers have sometimes planned for opportunities for children to participate in small group activities. Teachers may not be able to maintain an environment where children feel comfortable. Teachers may be inconsistent with positive reinforcements. Environment may be unpleasant or uncertain.
- Standard not met: Teachers have not adequately planned for small group activities and are not able to maintain a friendly and/or comfortable environment for children. Teachers do not use positive reinforcements, make eye contact or use the children's names.

Observation 5.4.4C Visual Inspection of teachers interacting with individual children

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are warm, lowering their faces to speak with children on eye level, use individual's names, remember important factors about children and engage them in dialogue, listen and respond appropriately, and genuinely enjoy the company of their children.
- Standard met: Teachers are warm and friendly and engage their children in thoughtful, meaningful conversations. They listen and respond appropriately and have created a classroom environment that is pleasant.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may be inconsistently warm or friendly, and may not directly engage their children in conversation that is thoughtful or meaningful. They may not be careful listeners and children may not feel they have a special place in this classroom.
- Standard not met: Teachers are not warm or friendly and do not engage their children in thoughtful or meaningful conversation. The classroom is not a special or pleasant place.

5.4.5 Involving the Children in the Classroom Environment There are times when children have difficulty in being a part of the classroom environment. Whether they are shy, frightened, or unsure how to join in, children often need time and careful reassurance as they develop the confidence they need to participate fully.

- The teaching staff will respond to children who are not engaging in classroom activities in order to encourage the involvement of these children.
- Teachers will use gentle tones and reassuring words when a child is frightened or withdrawn from classroom activities.
- Children will not be forced, coerced, or ridiculed into participating in any activity.
- Positive reinforcement will be given when a child begins to open up to participation.
- Teachers will offer opportunities for children to practice and explore new skills in a range of developmental areas.
- Children will be given the help they need to succeed in a range of activities and to feel comfortable trying new activities.
- Teachers help children engage in activities by breaking complex tasks into simple ones – or increasing the difficulty of activities by combining familiar materials in new ways and contexts.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.5 Including children and encouraging participation

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers have a natural approach and tender rapport with children. Teachers are aware of children who are not engaging in classroom activities or are frightened. Teachers are able to break down complex or new tasks for children, encourage them to participate and provide space and time for them to explore new experiences. Children are not ridiculed or coerced into new activities, but are encouraged with gentle and soft words. Children are given opportunities for new experiences and are praised when they have attempted something new.
- Standard met: Teachers are aware of children who are not engaging in classroom activities or are frightened. Teachers are able to break down complex or new tasks for children, encourage them to participate and provide space and time for them to explore new experiences. Children are not ridiculed or coerced into new activities, but are encouraged with gentle and soft words. Children are encouraged with positive reinforcements.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may be inconsistent or ineffective in their awareness of children who are not engage in in classroom activities or are frightened. Teachers are somewhat able to break down complex or new tasks for children and may encourage them to participate. Children may feel pressure to participate, and teachers may not choose their words wisely. Positive reinforcements are inconsistent.
- Standard not met: Teachers are unaware of the individual children’s needs or emotional state. Teachers cannot or will not break down complex or new tasks for children and do not use positive reinforcements.

5.4.6 Child-Directed Activities Children must have daily opportunities to make their own choices, organize their own environment, and explore their own interests.

- The daily schedule will include child-directed free playtime (indoors or outdoors).
- Learning Centers should contain items that extend and support a child's self-directed play, building on their individual interests and skills.
- Children's learning can be extended even during individual playtime when teachers engage in describing what the children are doing and asking them open-ended questions.
- Teachers support children's play, by observing and not dominating, offering materials, joining in, or making gentle suggestions as needed.
- Teachers may play interactive games, especially with babies and toddlers. (Interactive games include imitating babies' sounds, peek-a-boo, call and response rhymes, Simon Says, and card or board games).

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.6 Child directed activities

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers follow a schedule that includes regular individual free playtime for children. Teachers are observant without being intrusive, involve themselves in interactive age appropriate play, make gentle suggestions and provide materials that enhance the activity. Teachers show a genuine interest in their children and what they do for play.
- Standard met: Teachers provide for individual free playtime for children. Teachers are observant without being intrusive, become involved in play, make suggestions and provide materials. Teachers demonstrate a love for learning and participation.
- Standard partially met: Teachers occasionally provide individual free playtime for children. Teachers may be uninvolved or over managing children's individual playtime.
- Standard not met: Teachers provide little or no time for individual free playtime. Teachers are unaware and uninvolved in their individual children's need for playtime.

5.4.7 Healthy Nutrition in Curriculum Good nutrition and healthy habits should be part of the curriculum and teachers should take every opportunity to encourage young children to make healthy choices in eating. Teachers will include but not be limited to the following:

- providing samples of simple nutritious foods and snacks
- utilizing books and other learning materials that highlight healthy choices in eating

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.7 Health and Nutrition in the Curriculum

Evaluation

- Standard met: The curriculum contains elements important to the teaching of healthy nutrition. Teachers take opportunities to encourage young children to make healthy choices in eating. Teachers provide samples of simple, nutritious foods and snacks and utilize learning materials that highlight healthy choices in eating.
- Standard partially met: The curriculum may contain some elements of the importance of healthy nutrition. Teachers may somewhat encourage young children to make healthy choices in eating. Teachers provide inadequate samples of simple, nutritious foods and snacks and do not fully utilize learning materials that highlight healthy choices in eating.
- Standard not met: The curriculum contains inadequate or no elements of healthy nutrition. Teachers inconsistently and ineffectively address the issue of healthy choices in eating. Teachers do not provide samples of simple, nutritious foods and snacks and/or do not use learning materials that highlight healthy choices in eating.

5.4.8 Good Health Practices Young children need to be made aware of good health practices, habits, and routines and these practices should be part of the curriculum. Teaching about healthy habits and making them part of the daily schedule will help children feel familiar with them. Hand washing will be a part of the daily routine as needed and will always come before eating and after using the restroom or playing outside. Teachers will instruct and assist children in proper hand washing techniques. Methods of incorporating good health practices in the classroom may include but are not limited to:

- reading books, singing songs, making posters/charts about health topics
- showing when and how to do basic healthy routines such as brushing teeth,
- inviting members of the healthcare profession to speak to children (dentists, doctors etc.)
- taking field trips to local health care providers

Indicators of Compliance—

Observation 5.4.8 Good Health Practices

Evaluation

- Standard met: Faculty and staff make health and hygiene a part of the daily routine and as part of the curriculum. They model good practices, teach and train children in healthy habits, and provide a variety of resources including guest speakers, songs, books, and/or field trips to reinforce the importance of good health.
- Standard partially met: Faculty and staff may inconsistently or ineffectively make health and hygiene a part of the daily routine and may or may not include it in the curriculum. Teachers sometimes model good practices but may lack a consistent plan to teach and train children in healthy habits. The variety of resources may be lacking or inconsistently used.
- Standard not met: Faculty and staff do not make health and hygiene a part of the daily routine or as part of the curriculum. They do not model good practices or teach/train children consistently or effectively in good health practices. Resources are not appropriate or are not utilized.

5.4.9 Positive Discipline Children need clear directions, specific instruction and modeling as to proper behavior, time to repeat and learn the skills until fluent, and positive discipline for when they make poor choices or exhibit a lack of self-control. Positive guidance, appropriate for the developmental abilities of each child, is used to help children gain self-control and take responsibility for their own behavior.

Children also need to know that they are loved and valued apart from their behavior. In other words, children should not be made to feel that they are loved more and when behave and loved less or devalued when they misbehave. Teachers will use effective techniques such as redirection, reflective listening, and reinforcing with affirmations. Such techniques include but are not limited to:

- clearly explaining to children in a calm, patient, and positive way what is expected of them
- being aware of children’s frustration and diffusing situations before they erupt
- frequently letting children experience the consequences of their own misbehavior, (if this is safe), rather than punishing them.

Teachers will:

- avoiding arguing or participating in a power struggle with children.
- look for ways to allow independent, choleric children to assert their leadership skills by making them helpers, line leaders etc.
- use redirection and positive reinforcement
- “time outs” as a cooling-off time and not as a punishment. They are to be no more than one minute in length for each year of the child’s age.

Teachers will not:

- use corporal punishment.
- engage in using humiliation or demeaning practices with children.
- criticize, shame or tease.
- threaten or yell at children.
- be physically rough with a child.

The administration will publish the disciplinary policies and procedures making sure that all child care workers and parents understand the philosophies and practices of positive discipline.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.9 Positive Discipline

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers have set a standard of consistent positive discipline that results in a classroom environment that is affirming and pleasant. Children are aware of what is required of them and when misbehavior happens, the consequences are calm, natural and appropriate. Teachers see ahead of an event and are able to diffuse and/or redirect before a situation erupts. Teachers make good use of appropriate discipline including ‘time outs’, redirection and positive affirmation, and have an understanding of the basic temperament and needs of a child.
- Standard met: Teachers have effectively made children aware of what is required of them and when misbehavior happens, the consequences are calm, natural and appropriate. Teachers see ahead of an event and are able to diffuse and/or redirect before a situation erupts. Teachers make good use of appropriate discipline including ‘time outs’, redirection and positive affirmation, and have an understanding of the basic temperament and needs of a child.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may have inconsistently or ineffectively made children aware of what is required of them. Consequences to behavior may be somewhat calm and appropriate but may be lacking consistency. Teachers may lack the ability to effectively see ahead of an event or are unable to diffuse and/or redirect a situation. Teachers may not consistently or effectively use positive discipline techniques.
- Standard not met: Teachers have not adequately trained children to know what is expected of them and there is uncertainty in the classroom. Consequences to misbehavior may be inappropriate or erratic. Teachers cannot see ahead to direct the atmosphere of the classroom and can only respond to poor behavior. Teachers do not use positive discipline techniques consistently or effectively.

5.4.10 Technology and Media Technology, when used, should be a tool to reinforce topics taught should be used sparingly with young children.

- If screen media is used, be certain the content is appropriate for the ages of the children. Screen media is free from violent, sexually explicit, stereotyped content (including cartoons) and advertising.
- If screen media is used, the number of hours per week is limited to 2. Additional time may be permitted for educational purposes or for physical activity.
- Screen media is not recommended for children under the age of 2.
- Use of the computer should promote children’s active involvement, group participation, learning, creativity, or fun.
- If a computer is used by children, each child's computer time is limited to no more than fifteen minutes at a time for a total of no more than the 2 hour per week screen media limit. When school-agers are engaged in an educational project or when children require the use of assistive technology, time using the computer may be extended.
- Any internet usage should be closely monitored with the appropriate safe-guards in place.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.4.10 Technology and Media

Evaluation

- Standard met: Faculty clearly meets the technology and screen limit times outlined in the standard. Screen media is found to be appropriate and free of violent, sexually explicit or stereotyped content and advertising. Internet access is closely monitored.
- Standard partially met: Faculty somewhat meets the technology and screen limit times outlined in the standard. Screen media may not be satisfactorily vetted to be sure that it is appropriate and free of violent, sexually explicit or stereotyped content and advertising. Internet access may be ineffectively monitored.
- Standard not met: Faculty does not meet the technology and screen limit times outlined in the standard. Screen media is not satisfactorily vetted to be sure that it is safe. Internet access is not effectively monitored.

Core Subject Areas

Regardless of primary publisher used, curriculum content for the subject areas of Language and Literacy (Oral Language, Rhymes, Storybooks, Reading, Writing), Math (Reasoning and Number Sense), Science (Physical World, Sensory Exploration), Social Studies (Family, Cultural Awareness, Community), and Enrichment (Fine Arts, Music, Movement, Creative Art) will meet the basic goals as outlined in the *Core Knowledge Sequence, Content and Skill Guidelines for Pre-School*.

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5.5 Language & Literacy - Core Knowledge

The development of language skills and literacy in young children is of utmost importance and will have an impact virtually on every aspect of future development. Although young children, in general, will under typical circumstances acquire basic skills on their own through interaction, such as learning to speak, this does not automatically evolve into sophisticated language skills. Building a vocabulary, understanding and using complex grammatical structures, and using language symbolically, depend heavily upon the opportunities provided to engage in language experiences. These experiences begin with infants through oral language, eye contact, print media, music and play. As children progress through pre-school they continue to develop in the areas of reading, writing, receptive (comprehension), and expressive (production of language) skills.

5.5.1 Oral Language Experience Literacy skills begin with spoken language. Children benefit from the tone and sound of language before they have understanding of the structure of language. Research shows that the manner in which adults respond to children's speaking along with the opportunities offered for conversation clearly influence children's language development.

Infants/Toddlers: Teachers will:

- speak gently and appropriately to children often giving them an opportunity to respond.
- give opportunities throughout each day for receptive (comprehension) and expressive (production of language) experiences throughout each day
- encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings and listen with interest and respect, making eye contact and expanding on what was said to invite further conversation
- take time every day for meaningful conversations with each child.
- take an interest in and respond positively to babies' vocalizations and imitate their sounds, smiling and speaking in soothing tones such as cooing and singing.
- encourage children to listen to and respond to each other.
- Move from open-ended questions (Where is the puppy going?) to questions that offer a structured choice (Is the puppy going into the playhouse or is he going into the yard?) in order to invite a child to respond verbally.
- will provide experiences and opportunities for children to talk and listen in a variety of circumstances, moving from using language in contextualized situations (referring to objects and present events) to decontextualized language (moving beyond the here and now). Opportunities can be provided for children by asking them questions such as "What did you do at Grandma's house?" and making meaningful responses to the children's answers.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.5.1 Oral Language Experiences

Evaluation

- ❑ Exemplary compliance: Teachers have a gift for engaging children in oral language experiences. Teachers are trained and aware of the research concerning oral communication with young children and the important role it plays in language development. Teachers speak gently and give opportunities for children to respond in both receptive and expressive ways. Those working with babies respond positively with gentle and affirming sounds and smiles. Teachers encourage children to communicate with each other and are able to provide experiences for verbal responses through interaction and questions. Teachers listen carefully and respond meaningfully to children in conversation.
- ❑ Standard met: Teachers are trained and aware of the research concerning oral communication with young children and the important role it plays in language development. Teachers speak gently and give opportunities for children to respond in both receptive and expressive ways. Those working with babies respond positively with gentle and affirming sounds and smiles. Teachers encourage children to communicate with each other and are able to provide experiences for verbal responses through interaction and questions. Teachers listen carefully and respond meaningfully to children in conversation.
- ❑ Standard partially met: Teachers may be aware of the research concerning oral communication with young children and the important role it plays in language development. Teachers sometimes speak gently and give opportunities for children to respond in both receptive and expressive ways but lack consistent effort. Those working with babies may sometimes respond positively with gentle and affirming sounds and smiles. Teachers may dominate the speaking opportunities in a classroom and lack the ability to include children in conversation. Teachers may not be adequate listeners or may be unable to respond to children in a meaningful way.
- ❑ Standard not met: Teachers are not aware of research concerning oral communication with young children or the role it plays in language development. Teachers do not speak gently or give children opportunities to respond in conversation. Those working with babies do not respond positively or smile. Teachers are unable to provide experiences for verbal responses in the classroom and do not listen or respond in a meaningful way consistently.

5.5.2 Nursery Rhymes, Poems, and Songs While still part of the oral language experience, nursery rhymes, poems, fingerplays, and songs engage children while introducing them to more formal structured language. By listening to and reciting these poems and songs, children have an opportunity to model and practice various oral language skills, including pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax. They can then build upon their familiarity with certain well-known rhymes by experimenting with rhyming words. This competency, in turn, focuses attention on the sounds of language, a skill that will enhance later efforts in initial reading. Plans will include regular introduction and repetition of positive nursery rhymes, poems, and songs.

In addition to the sheer enjoyment of listening to and repeating the rhythmic and musical combination of words, learning these selections provides skill and discipline in developing the ability to memorize and further extends children’s understanding and use of both the form and function of language.

- Children will be encouraged to participate in reciting and doing accompanying motions
- Teachers will provide the repetition necessary over time for children to be able to learn the nursery rhymes, poems, fingerplays, and songs.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.5.2 Nursery Rhymes, Poems, and Songs

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children are encouraged to participate in learning, reciting and doing motions to nursery rhymes, poems and songs. Teachers provide repetition over time and allow children to learn the nursery rhymes, poems, fingerplays, and songs. These activities are presented to allow children to enjoy the rhythm and pattern of language and motor skills that accompany the motions in a fun setting.
- Standard partially met: Children are not adequately exposed to nursery rhymes, poems or songs and the accompanying motions. Teachers may not provide enough repetition over time for the children to get comfortable with the activities. The setting may not be fun or allow the children to enjoy the rhythm or pattern of language or too difficult for them to participate in the motor skill activities.
- Standard not met: Children are not exposed to nursery rhymes, poems, or songs and the accompanying motions. Teachers do not provide opportunities for the children to learn the patterns or motions. Teachers do not provide a fun environment for these activities and learning experiences.

5.5.3 Storybook Reading and Story Telling Books play an important role in the development of literacy skills in young children. Children should have access to books, a print-rich environment, be read to, and participate in the telling of stories. In listening to and talking about stories that are read aloud, children build both listening and speaking skills. They are introduced to new vocabulary and formal written syntax, ways of linking and relating ideas. They also refine skills in:

- Narrating: understanding and describing illustrations, setting, characters, and events of stories.
- Predicting: telling what will happen next in a story or suggesting a possible alternative ending.
- Imagining: telling their own stories, either based on illustrations or creating a story using their imagination.
 - Children have access to books every day and they are encouraged to look at or read books on their own.
 - Children are read to or participate in storytelling every day. Teachers will read with expression and interest.
 - Teachers will expand upon books by providing activities such as accompanying art projects, plays, puppets, having the children re-tell the story, opening discussion about the story etc.
 - Children are taught to take care of books as needed.
 - Teachers provide a print-rich environment by providing access to and use of books, labels, pictures, posters, signs, etc.
 - Teachers use a variety of rich language with children, reinforcing what was read by using new vocabulary words in daily speech.
 - Teachers share a genuine love of reading for enjoyment as well as for information.
 - Teachers share suggestions for activities the parents can do at home with the child to support early literacy.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.5.3 Storybook Reading and Story Telling

Evaluation

- ❑ Exemplary compliance: Teachers make books into ‘magical’ adventures’, and have arranged their classrooms to promote a desire to read. They allow the children to participate in activities with stories such as narrations, predictions, and/or telling their own stories. Children are read to daily with enthusiasm and expressions and have access to wonderful books. Teachers expand upon the stories with accompanying activities such as dress-up, play, puppets, and arts and crafts. The classroom is a print-rich environment and children are taught to care for books and materials. Teachers create an environment where reading is enjoyable and provide parents with suggested activities to continue the support of literacy at home.
- ❑ Standard met: Teachers give opportunities for children to participate in activities with stories such as narrations, predictions, and/or telling their own stories. Children are read to daily with enthusiasm and expressions and have access to a variety of books. Teachers expand upon the stories with accompanying activities such as dress-up, play, puppets, and arts and crafts. The classroom is a print-rich environment and children are taught to care for books and materials. Teachers create an environment where reading is enjoyable and provide parents with suggested activities to continue the support of literacy at home.

- ❑ Standard partially met: Teachers may be inconsistent or ineffective in providing opportunities for children to participate in activities with stories. Children are read to throughout the week but perhaps not daily or with little enthusiasm. Children have access to some books. Teachers may not utilize accompanying activities such as dress-up, play, puppets, and arts and crafts effectively. The classroom may display some print material. Teachers may create an environment where reading takes place but may lack giving literacy a place of importance. Reading may not be a fun activity and teachers may not provide parents with suggested activities to continue the support of literacy at home.
- ❑ Standard not met: Teachers have not made reading a priority in the classroom and have not provided an environment that encourages children to participate in reading, or accompanying activities. The classroom does not display appropriate print materials and/or no suggestions are given to parents to continue the support of literacy at home.

5.5.4 Emerging Literacy Skills in Reading A crucial part of learning to read is developing phonemic awareness, the understanding that individual sounds are associated with individual letters and combinations of letters. Children are asked to take apart and put together smaller and smaller units of sound, from individual words in a sentence, to syllables in words, to the beginning sounds in individual words. Lesson plans include activities that encourage phonemic awareness such as:

- listening to sounds in words, particularly in rhymes and songs.
- isolating the syllables in a word using clapping, tapping or rhythmic recitation
- learning to differentiate between sounds that are alike and sounds that are different
- learning to identify when words share sounds (big, bottle, butter)
- displaying the Alphabet and introducing (when appropriate) that letters have sounds

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.5.4 Listening, Isolating, Learning and Displaying Emerging Literacy Skills in Reading

Evaluation

- ❑ Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in their ability to surround children with materials and activities that encourage phonemic awareness. Teachers use listening to sounds, isolating syllables in words, sound differentiation, and sound awareness with the accompanying activities as outlined in the lesson plans as crucial elements in the learning-to-read process. Activities and lessons provide the opportunity for children to take apart sentences, words, and sounds as literacy skills that lead to reading.
- ❑ Standard met: Teachers are organized and effective in encouraging phonemic awareness. Teachers use listening to sounds, isolating syllables in words, sound differentiation, and sound awareness with the accompanying activities as outlined in the lesson plans as crucial elements in the learning-to-read process. Activities and lessons provide the opportunity for children to take apart sentences, words, and sounds as literacy skills that lead to reading.
- ❑ Standard partially met: Teachers provide some classroom experiences and resources that encourage phonemic awareness. Teachers may inadequately or ineffectively use the tools as outlined in the standard as crucial elements in the learning-to-read process. Activities and lessons may not provide enough opportunities for children to take apart sentences, words, and sounds as literacy skills that lead to reading.
- ❑ Standard not met: Teachers are not organized and/or are not effective in teaching the literacy skills that lead to reading. Teachers do not utilize the tools as outlined in the standard as crucial elements in the learning-to-read process.

5.5.5 Emerging Literacy Skills in Writing In order to write, children must learn both the connection of oral language to print and develop the hand/eye coordination and small motor skills to produce the print. Children first learn to associate specific familiar spoken words, such as their own names or names of familiar objects, with specific written words. Children then go on to recognize that the distinct marks that make up each word are letters in our alphabet. Children learn that these letters have names through such means as singing the alphabet song. They learn to identify and name the specific letters in their own names.

- Children will be exposed to the form and function of the alphabet through tracing shapes, copying and writing letters, and practicing writing their names.
- Opportunities will be provided to help with small motor skill development such as coloring, drawing, ‘pretend’ writing, using chalk etc.
- Teachers build on children's emerging interest in print and writing in the context of meaningful activities. Depending on their developmental levels, they are encouraged to scribble; to recognize signs, alphabet letters and their sounds, to write their names, notes, and stories; to label their drawings; make books; or keep journals.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.5.5 Emerging Literacy Skills in Writing

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in their ability to make the connection from oral language to written print, to the development of the fine motor skills it takes to participate in the writing process. Teachers provide rich and ample opportunities for children to associate spoken words with written words. Teachers encourage tracing, scribbling, coloring and copying. Teachers consistently and effectively build upon a child’s interest in print and writing with fun and meaningful activities.
- Standard met: Teachers are organized and effective in making the connection from oral language to print to the development of the fine motor skills it takes to participate in the writing process. Teachers provide rich and ample opportunities for children to associate spoken words with written words. Teachers encourage tracing, scribbling, coloring and copying. Teachers consistently and effectively build upon a child’s interest in print and writing with fun and meaningful activities.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may not be effective in making the connection from oral language to print to the development of the fine motor skills it takes to participate in the writing process. Teachers may provide some opportunities for children to associate spoken words with written words but may not be consistent or effective. Children may not be given enough opportunities to learn through tracing, scribbling, coloring, and copying.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not make a connection from oral language to print to motor skills as outlined in the standard. Few or inadequate opportunities are provided for children to associate spoken words with written words. Children are not given enough opportunities to learn through tracing, scribbling, coloring, and copying.

5.6 Mathematical Awareness - Core Knowledge

A child's first experience with math concepts comes from their natural inclination to explore the world around them. Teachers will build on this curiosity by guiding their discoveries and providing opportunities for children to: count, build, organize, and classify objects.

5.6.1 Mathematical Reasoning Children will be given daily opportunities to use manipulatives and specific objects in the concrete learning stage: to observe and recognize similarities and differences, classify objects and shapes, recognize/create patterns in sequences of objects and make comparisons among objects, using simple measurement skills.

- Teachers will highlight math as it occurs naturally as well as in the curriculum, by allowing children to learn math and science concepts in the context of everyday activities, such as setting the table, preparing food, sorting the mail, cooking, gardening, and playing games.
- Children will (as they are able), they match, sort, arrange things in sequence, count things, measure, and recognize and create patterns.
- Children will be exposed to identifying written numbers (1,2,3...) without necessarily having a concept of what they represent at first.
- Teachers will provide ample opportunities to rehearse numbers with counting games, songs, and writing activities.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.6.1 Mathematical Awareness

Evaluation

- ❑ Exemplary compliance: Classroom is rich with varied manipulatives and teachers utilize these objects in concrete learning. Teachers are gifted in highlighting math concepts as they occur naturally throughout the day as well as in the curriculum. Teachers guide children as they learn to sort, measure, match, arrange things in sequence, count, and recognize and create patterns. Children are taught to identify and write numbers and are given ample opportunities to rehearse numbers with counting games songs and writing activities.
- ❑ Standard met: Classroom contains manipulatives and teachers utilize these objects in concrete learning. Teachers highlight math concepts as they occur naturally throughout the day as well as in the curriculum. Teachers guide children as they learn to sort, measure, match, arrange things in sequence, count, and recognize and create patterns. Children are taught to identify and write numbers and are given ample opportunities to rehearse numbers with counting games songs and writing activities.
- ❑ Standard partially met: Classroom may not contain adequate manipulatives and teachers may not effectively utilize these objects in concrete learning. Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively highlight math concepts as they occur naturally throughout the day as well as in the curriculum. Teachers inadequately or ineffectively guide children as they learn to sort, measure, match, arrange things in sequence, count, and recognize and create patterns. Children may be taught to identify and write numbers and may be given some opportunities to rehearse numbers with counting games songs and writing activities, but they lack consistency and effectiveness.
- ❑ Standard not met: Classroom does not contain satisfactory manipulatives. Teachers do not utilize manipulatives in concrete learning activities. Teachers do not effectively or consistently highlight math concepts as they occur naturally throughout the day and/or they are not present in the curriculum. Teachers are not providing opportunities for children to sort, measure, match, arrange, count, and/or recognize and create patterns. Teachers do not provide opportunities for children to rehearse numbers with appropriate activities.

5.6.2 Mathematical Number Sense: Children will be directed to quantify small groups of objects, to count and to demonstrate a basic understanding of addition and subtraction as “putting together” and “taking away.” In each instance, the child is asked to move from the concrete experience to representing knowledge symbolically using mathematical language.

- Children will move from the concrete (counting) stage to the abstract (using math symbols to represent items) as they are developmentally able.
- Teachers will incorporate concepts such as ‘more than, less than, and same’ in the natural course of the curriculum and daily activities.
- Teachers will incorporate concepts such as ‘longer, shorter, heavier, lighter’, and other measurements in the natural course of the curriculum and daily activities.
- Teachers will use ordinal numbers (first, second, third...) and help children to organize and sequence items.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.6.2 Mathematical Number Sense

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in incorporating a natural environment for math concepts throughout the day and in accordance with the curriculum. Resources are available to count, sort and sequence, add and subtract. Teachers provide ample opportunity to work with objects allowing children to move from the concrete stage of learning to a more abstract understanding of math and symbols.
- Standard met: Teachers incorporate the math concepts throughout the day and in accordance with the curriculum. Resources are available to count, sort and sequence, add and subtract. Teachers provide ample opportunity to work with objects allowing children to move from the concrete stage of learning to a more abstract understanding of math and symbols.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may consistently or ineffectively incorporate the math concepts throughout the day and in accordance with the curriculum. Limited resources are available to count, sort and sequence, add and subtract. Teachers provide less than enough opportunities to work with objects allowing children to move from the concrete stage of learning to a more abstract understanding of math and symbols.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not incorporate the math concepts throughout the day and in accordance with the curriculum. Resources are unacceptable or unavailable to count, sort and sequence, add and subtract. Teachers provide little to no opportunity to work with objects allowing children to move from the concrete stage of learning to a more abstract understanding of math and symbols.

5.7 Science - Core Knowledge

Science introduces children to a systematic way of looking at, describing and explaining the world around them. Children should be given many opportunities for systematic observation and hands-on investigation of both the living and material world. Building on these experiences, children can progress from describing and explaining what is observed to making predictions based on these observations.

5.7.1 Physical World Children need opportunities to explore the natural and physical environment around them such as watching insects, planting seeds and caring for plants, playing with water and sand, and playing with balls and ramps. Through hands-on exploration and real-world activities, children, at the appropriate age, should be directed to:

- observe, participate, and ask questions.
- plan an activity and predict what will happen.
- carry out the activity and observe what happens.
- report the findings through drawings, discussions, displays, photos, etc.
- ask related questions

Suggested Science Materials for the Classroom:

- magnets
- magnifying glass
- outdoor thermometer
- a balance scale
- sand or similar substance
- blocks, toy cars, and ramps
- water

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.7.1 Exploration of Physical World

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers have provided an outstanding environment for exploration and discovery. Teachers are gifted in leading children through the discovery process in a natural and fun way. Children are given opportunities to ask questions, plan activities, observe/predict, record findings through drawings, discussions, photos etc. in an age appropriate setting.
- Standard met: Classroom/Area is well stocked, and organized providing children a great environment for exploration and discovery. Teachers lead children through the discovery process in a natural and fun way. Children are given opportunities to ask questions, plan activities, observe/predict, record findings through drawings, discussions, photos etc. in an age appropriate setting.
- Standard partially met: Classroom/Area is partially or ineffectively stocked, but may lack organization providing children a sub-par environment for exploration and discovery. Teachers inconsistently or ineffectively lead children through the discovery process. Children are inconsistently or ineffectively given opportunities to ask questions, plan activities, observe/predict, record findings through drawings, discussions, photos etc. or not age appropriate.
- Standard not met: Classroom/Area is not stocked, or organized resulting in a poor environment for exploration and discovery. Teachers do not lead children through the discovery process in a natural and fun way. Children are not given opportunities to ask questions, plan activities, observe/predict, record findings through drawings, discussions, photos etc.

5.7.2 Sensory Exploration Children learn about the world around them primarily through their senses and the preschool classroom must be a sensory-rich environment. It should include numerous objects and organisms with which the children can touch and interact. Opportunities are provided throughout the day for children to use their senses for observing and learning about objects, events, and organisms.

- Babies/infants should be presented with a variety of colors, objects, shapes, and textures to explore as they are developmentally able.
- Children should have a variety of shapes, objects, and textures that they can interact with on a daily basis.
- Children are given opportunities throughout the day to use their senses for observing and learning about objects, events, and organisms.
- Children age 3 and older should have opportunities to observe and make predictions about things in the environment through activities and language. Teachers should ask them "what if" questions.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.7.2 Sensory Exploration

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: The environment is extremely sensory rich and contains numerous objects, organisms, textures, and shapes that children can interact with and explore as they are developmentally able. Teachers are gifted in providing opportunities for children to use their senses, make observations and predictions, and respond verbally to meaningful ‘What if’ questions (for children ages 3 and up).
- Standard met: The environment contains numerous and varied objects, organisms, textures, and shapes that children can interact with and explore as they are developmentally able. Teachers are providing opportunities for children to use their senses, make observations and predictions, and respond verbally to meaningful ‘What if’ questions (for children ages 3 and up).
- Standard partially met: The environment contains some sensory items and some objects, organisms, textures, objects, and shapes that children can interact with and explore as they are developmentally able. Teachers may be lacking in providing opportunities for children to use their senses, make observations and predictions, and respond verbally to meaningful ‘What if’ questions (for children ages 3 and up).
- Standard not met: The environment is not sensory rich and contains few objects, organisms, textures, and shapes that children can interact with and explore as they are developmentally able. Teachers are providing little to no opportunities for children to use their senses, make observations and predictions, and respond verbally to meaningful ‘What if’ questions (for children ages 3 and up).

5.8 Social Studies - Core Knowledge

A child's view of the world is very small and is limited to what they have experienced. Social Studies for young children begin with this familiar territory of family, and develop the concept of self, the interaction with others, awareness of other cultures and traditions, and community.

5.8.1 Social Skills Children should be given ample opportunities to learn about themselves, others, and how to interact appropriately through participation in group games and activities, and daily routines.

- Teachers may help children understand that everyone plays an important role by assigning different children 'jobs' during the week such as 'line leader, class helper, weatherman(girl)', etc. giving them a sense of purpose in the class.
- Teacher can model positive interactions by showing what it means to take turns.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.8.1 Social Studies

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in providing opportunities for children to learn about themselves and interaction with others through the use of group games, activities, and daily routines. Teachers provide meaningful roles to all children in the class and model positive interactions.
- Standard met: Teachers are organized and thorough in providing opportunities for children to learn about themselves and interaction with others through the use of group games, activities, and daily routines. Teachers provide meaningful roles to all children in the class and models' positive interactions.
- Standard partially met: Teachers are inconsistently and/or ineffectively able to provide opportunities for children to learn about themselves and have interaction with others through the use of group games, activities, and daily routines. Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively provide roles to children in the class and positive interactions.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not provide opportunities for children to learn about themselves and have interaction with others through the use of group games, activities, and daily routines. Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively provide roles to children in the class and positive interactions.

5.8.2 Cultural Awareness Children can learn about the world and have an appreciation for those who are from a different culture than their own. Without using stereotypes, teachers can provide experiences in cultural diversity. Some suggested activities:

- learn about children around the world including what they wear, foods they eat, and holidays they celebrate
- help children understand and celebrate others in their own class who are culturally different from themselves pointing out the beautiful diversity in creation.
- learn words, phrases, and songs from different languages.
- include books, posters, toys/dolls that positively illustrate people from other cultures
- listen to music or look at art from different cultures

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.8.2 Cultural Awareness

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in providing opportunities for children to learn about, appreciate and experience other cultures. Without using stereotypes, teachers provide access to other cultures through a variety of experiences, food, music, holidays, and languages. Teachers lead the class in celebrating the beauty of God’s creation in all its diversity.
- Standard met: Teachers provide ample opportunities for children to learn about, appreciate and experience other cultures. Without using stereotypes, teachers provide access to other cultures through a variety of experiences, food, music, holidays, and languages. Teachers lead the class in celebrating the beauty of God’s creation in all its diversity.
- Standard partially met: Teachers inconsistently or ineffectively provide opportunities for children to learn about, appreciate and experience other cultures. Teachers provide limited access to other cultures through a variety of experiences, food, music, holidays, and language. Teachers do not take opportunities to teach about the beauty of God’s creation in all its diversity.
- Standard not met: Teachers inconsistently or ineffectively provide opportunities for children to learn about, appreciate and experience other cultures. Teachers provide limited access to other cultures through a variety of experiences, food, music, holidays, and language. Teachers do not take opportunities to teach about the beauty of God’s creation in all its diversity.

5.8.3 Community

Young children are able to identify important members of their community based on what they wear (such as uniforms) or where they work (grocery store clerk, or waiter.) Children can begin to understand that people have jobs and functions in the community. Some suggested activities to nurture this exploration of people in the community are:

- inviting guests to come (parents, grandparents, friends) and present what they do
- taking field trips to experience work places like the fire station, grocery store, or library.
- allowing children to play make believe with different roles such as policeman, teacher, or nurse. Children should have access to costume pieces or props.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.8.3 Community

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in their ability to provide opportunities for children to observe, meet, and imitate members of the community.
- Standard met: Teachers provide opportunities for children to observe, meet, and imitate members of the community.
- Standard partially met: Teachers inconsistently or ineffectively provide opportunities for children to observe, meet, and imitate members of the community.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not provide opportunities for children to observe, meet, and imitate members of the community.

5.9 Fine Arts - Core Knowledge

Music and Arts are key components of early childhood education. They lend themselves to the participation and experiential needs of children and they can be great fun. Music and Visual Arts should be used throughout the curriculum to allow for expression, reinforce concepts and lessons, and facilitate memorization skills.

5.9.1 Musical Experiences Experiences in listening to music, singing songs and learning fingerplays provide opportunities to practice oral language skills. Music affords the opportunity to expand and clarify various concepts, such as “loud, soft,” “fast, slow,” etc. In addition, efforts that focus attention on discriminating differences in discrete environmental or musical sounds facilitate subsequent attention to phonemic awareness, awareness of the discrete sounds of language. Group musical experiences, performing or singing together, also offer the opportunity to practice social skills. The basic goals of this section ask the child to listen to and identify sounds, indicate whether certain sound pairs are the same or different, imitate sounds and rhythm sequences, sing songs individually and with others and move interpretatively to music.

- Provide music experiences that allow children to listen to, enjoy and produce music.
- Present music in a variety of ways such as singing, finger plays, clapping games, playing instruments, and playing a variety of recorded music.
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in making music with their voices or instruments (purchased or home-made).
- Encourage children to dance and to use movement to recreate meaningful experiences, tell stories, or act out concepts.
- Classical or Sacred music can be used to bring a peaceful atmosphere and calm children, especially infants.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.9.1 Musical Experience

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in providing musical experiences for their children. Teachers have particular expertise in the area of music. Music is a natural part of the school day and curriculum and provides opportunities for participation, interaction, and fun.
- Standard met: Teachers provide a good variety of musical experiences for their children. Teachers are able to facilitate activities in the area of music. Music is a natural part of the school day and curriculum and provides opportunities for participation, interaction, and fun.
- Standard partially met: Teachers are inconsistent or ineffective in their ability to provide a good variety of musical experiences for their children. Teachers are not able to satisfactorily facilitate activities in the area of music. Music does not feel like a natural part of the school day and curriculum and opportunities are not consistently or effectively provided for participation, interaction, and fun.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not provide a good variety of musical experiences for their children. Teachers are not able to facilitate activities in the area of music. Music does not feel like a natural part of the school day and curriculum and opportunities are not provided for participation, interaction, and fun.

5.9.2 Visual Arts The use of various media and techniques provides rich opportunities for sensory exploration and manipulation, as well as the development of fine motor skills. In addition, through painting and drawing, children make their first attempts at graphic representation, a precursor to writing. The guided examination of works of art provides practice in focusing attention on visual detail, important for developing skill in discriminating visual differences in objects, images, print and letters, as well as appreciating basic elements of art. The further examination and discussion of works of art also afford rich opportunities for language development.

Children should be given opportunities daily to experience creative expression through visual arts and dramatic play. Art activities are used throughout the curriculum and at the appropriate age-level would include, but not be limited to:

- drawing and painting (including finger-painting)
- cutting with scissors for design purposes
- gluing items together to create art
- combining mediums
- molding with clay
- creating books, posters, pictures

Children's art expressions should be respected for what they are and not judged as 'good' or 'bad'. Their efforts should be appreciated and displayed whenever possible. Suggestions for display are:

- specific areas for art such as walls, doors, or bulletin boards
- photo albums or scrap books
- portfolios or wall hangings
- hand-made books

Children should have a variety of teacher directed art projects and child-directed free expression projects. Suggested Art Materials:

For children under the age of 3:

- crayons, markers, or pencils
- paint brushes
- large pieces of paper
- non-toxic paint
- play dough

For children age 3 and older:

- tools for drawing and painting
- scissors (child-safe, including left-handed scissors for left-handed children)
- papers of various sized and colors
- glue or paste
- play dough and/or clay
- miscellaneous materials such as scraps of construction paper, fabric, yarn, or wood
- household recycled materials
- second hand materials

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.9.2 Visual Arts

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Teachers are gifted in their ability to provide experiences in art expression, both formal and informal. There is a natural flow to the use of art in the daily schedule and in the curriculum. Children are exposed to a variety of mediums, skills, and activities that allow for expression and development of motor skills, attention to detail and visual differences. Activities are age and skill appropriate and are displayed throughout the classroom/school.
- Standard met: Teachers provide a variety of experiences in art expression, both formal and informal. Art is part of the daily schedule and is used throughout the curriculum. Children are exposed to a variety of mediums, skills, and activities that allow for expression and development of motor skills, attention to detail and visual differences. Activities are age and skill appropriate and are displayed throughout the classroom/school.
- Standard partially met: Teachers inconsistently or ineffectively provide a variety of experiences in art expression, both formal and informal. Art may be part of the daily schedule and may be inadequately used throughout the curriculum. Children are somewhat exposed to a variety of mediums, skills, and activities that allow for expression and development of motor skills, attention to detail and visual differences. Activities may not be age and skill appropriate and may not be adequately displayed throughout the classroom/school.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not provide a variety of experiences in art expression, both formal and informal. Art is not consistently a part of the daily schedule and may not be adequately used throughout the curriculum. Children are not exposed to a variety of mediums, skills, and activities that allow for expression and development of motor skills, attention to detail and visual differences. Activities are not age and skill appropriate and/or are not adequately displayed throughout the classroom/school.

5.10 Assessment

Children are individuals and develop at their own pace. Assessment with young children must be an ongoing process and part of the daily observation of children. Using the model of “Assess—Plan/Modify—Teach” cycle of assessment and focusing assessment on specific skills ensures that what is being assessed is developmentally and educationally significant.

5.10.1 Curriculum Involvement and Training Teachers must have a working knowledge of the curriculum and materials that they use in the classroom especially the objectives and intended outcomes that have been set as goals before assessment can be effective.

- Train teachers annually to review the curriculum, standards and objectives, and renew perspective.
- Allow for ongoing opportunities for teachers to discuss and offer suggestions and ideas for curriculum implementation, presentation, and assessments.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.10.1 Curriculum Involvement and Training

Evaluation

- Standard met:
- Standard partially met:
- Standard not met:

5.10.2 Continuous Child Assessment: Assessment is an ongoing and purposeful activity used to inform the planning and modification of classroom lessons and activities. Assessment for the purpose of program evaluation and accountability is used to ensure that desirable outcomes are being achieved by children who participate in a particular program.

- Effective teachers use ongoing assessment (assess, plan, teach) to inform and guide the planning of lessons and activities.
- Effective assessments are objective, specific, and systematic. Effective assessment takes place over time.
- Children are variable in their development—one day they may seem to know something and the next day they may not. Repeated assessment ensures a better understanding of children’s progress and mastery of skills.
- Assessment can take place throughout all parts of the daily routine.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.10.2 Continuous Child Assessment

Evaluation

- Standard met: Teachers consistently and effectively use ongoing assessments in lesson planning and activities. These assessments are objective, specific, and systematic and occur over the process of time. Teachers take into account that children are variable in their development and repeat assessments to document a child’s progress and mastery of skills. Assessments are a natural part of the daily routine.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may inconsistently and ineffectively use ongoing assessments in lesson planning and activities. These assessments may not be objective, specific, or systematic and may not adequately occur over the process of time. Teachers may only be partially aware that children are variable in their development and they may fail to repeat assessments to document a child’s progress and mastery of skills. Assessments can be a source of stress in the daily routine.
- Standard not met: Teachers do not use ongoing assessments in lesson planning and activities. These assessments are not objective, specific, or systematic and do not adequately occur over the process of time. Teachers are not aware that children are variable in their development and they may fail to repeat assessments to document a child’s progress and mastery of skills. Assessments can be haphazard and a source of stress in the daily routine.

5.10.3 Training for Assessment Teachers must be qualified to observe children and record these observations for assessment or have aid from personnel trained in methods of observing children and recording these observations for assessment. Results of observations are used for curriculum planning after identification of each child's stage of development, and parent/guardian conferences.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.10.3 Training for Assessment

Evaluation

- Standard met: Teachers are qualified to observe children or work with qualified observers to record and assess children's progress. This information assists in the planning of curriculum, activities, and/or parent/guardian conferences.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may not be qualified to observe children or may not be working with qualified observers to record and assess children's progress. This information may be inconsistently or ineffectively used in the planning of curriculum, activities, and/or parent/guardian conferences.
- Standard not met: No qualified observations or assessments are being made.

5.10.4 Characteristics of Effective Assessments

- Effective assessments are accurate. Assessments are conducted and documented in real time and don't rely on one's memory of what happened or how a child performed.
- Effective assessments are objective. Assessments capture objective information free from biases such as feelings and opinions. When documenting observations, effective teachers write about what they observe and omit feelings and opinions about those observations.
- Objective assessments capture observable words and actions (e.g., Mary said, "The yellow block was beside the red block") and specific skill levels (e.g. "Johnny caught the beanbag four out of five times").
- Objective assessments do not describe attitudes, general skills (e.g., "Johnny has good fine motor skills"), or feelings and opinions (e.g., "I don't think Mary likes working with the blocks").
- Effective assessments are specific and explicit. Assessments capture observable behaviors and characteristics and are free from non-tangible characteristics.
- Effective assessments are repeated. Young children are variable in their development—one day they may seem to know something and the next day they may not. Therefore, it is important that assessment take place over time. Sometimes, a child will overhear another child and will simply repeat what has been heard—not a sign of real understanding.
- Effective assessments are systematic. Effective teachers plan for assessment in the same way they plan for instruction. Effective teachers note assessment opportunities in their lesson plan and conduct ongoing assessment as part of each lesson or activity.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.10.4 Characteristics of Effective Assessments

Evaluation

- Standard met: Policies and procedures are in place with the appropriate documentation format (forms/software etc.) to properly assess children on a regular basis. Assessments are conducted and recorded in real time, and documented in a way that makes them accessible and relevant to the child's development and growth. Assessments are specific, explicit, repeated, and systematic.
- Standard partially met: Policies and procedures may not be in place or have the appropriate documentation format (forms/software etc.) to properly assess children on a regular basis. Assessments may not consistently or effectively be conducted and recorded in real time, and/or documented in a way that makes them accessible and relevant to the child's development and growth. Assessments may lack the qualities needed to be effective as outlined in the standard. They may not be specific, explicit, repeated, and systematic.
- Standard not met: Policies and procedures are not in place and/or do not have the appropriate documentation format (forms/software etc.) to properly assess children on a regular basis. Assessments are not conducted and/or recorded in real time, and/or documented in a way that makes them accessible and relevant to the child's development and growth. Assessments are not adequately specific, explicit, repeated, and/or systematic.

5.10.5 Methods and Tools of Assessment A variety of methods and the use of multiple tools are necessary for the ongoing, effective assessment of children’s progress. Observations are recorded with objective language and may include the following:

- Observation during everyday classroom activities
- Samples of children’s expressions and explorations (writing and art projects)
- Written observations such as time and event samplings of children’s interactions, individual and group activities, and language while alone and in groups
- A checklist of developmental levels and behaviors on which to mark children’s progress and increasing capacities over time
- Observations that address all areas of children’s development (*visual/ spatial, body/kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal/others, intrapersonal/self, linguistic, logical/mathematical*) not just cognitive development
- Individual portfolios containing a variety of records and documentation
- Specific curriculum related, or other assessment tool based on age-appropriate, relevant research used to identify the developmental levels and growth of children

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.10.5 Methods and Tools of Assessment

Evaluation

- Standard met: A variety of methods and use of multiple tools for assessment are evident in the classroom. Observations are recorded with objective language and contain most if not all of the tools suggested in the standard.
- Standard partially met: Assessments are being made, but the methods and tools for assessment are inconsistently or ineffectively used in the classroom. Observations are recorded with objective language and contain some of the tools suggested in the standard.
- Standard not met: Assessments are not adequately being made. Methods and tools for assessment are inconsistently or ineffectively used in the classroom. Observations are not written with objective language and/or contain few if any of the tools suggested in the standard.

5.10.6 Observations of Child Development Teachers will observe all areas of children’s development, including but not limited to:

- multiple intelligences,
- learning styles,
- learning preferences and
- character development.

Teachers will use these observations to incorporate classroom activities that address the individual needs, strengths, and preferences of the children in their care.

Indicators of Compliance

Observation 5.10.6 Observations of Child Development

Evaluation

- Standard met: Teachers are aware of and make observations concerning all areas of a child’s development including multiple intelligences, learning styles and preferences and character development. Teachers incorporate this information into the planning of their lessons and activities to make the most of the learning opportunities for the children in their care.
- Standard partially met: Teachers may be aware of and may be able to make observations concerning many areas of a child’s development including multiple intelligences, learning styles and preferences and character development. Teachers may inconsistently or ineffectively incorporate this information into the planning of their lessons and activities.
- Standard not met: Teachers are, for the most part, unaware of and make few in any observations concerning the areas of a child’s development. They may be unable to identify multiple intelligences, learning styles and preferences can character development. Teachers do not incorporate this information into the planning of their lessons and activities.

6.0 Personnel

Founding Principles

Parents and or guardians are responsible for their children's spiritual, mental, and physical development. They are the first caregivers, and have a lifelong commitment to their children, not just the early years. They instill and promote certain values, reward or reinforce specific behaviors, and shape choices that form life-long habits.

When a parent or guardian seeks out an early childhood program, they are enlisting the help of an organization that will partner with them in the highest calling of their lives. Early childhood program centers have the opportunity to present the highest standards of child. The guiding principles and methodology of the program must be completely and accurately presented so parents/guardians can make informed and appropriate choices that meet their needs and requirements.

Each member of the team must be in agreement with the fundamental vision, mission and philosophy of education that the center is founded and operates on, because a house divided brings confusion. Up to date, and thorough background screening of all personnel that may come into contact with the child is, of course, required, as safety must be foremost of importance in the mind of the administration and staff. While philosophy, vision and screening are important foundations, training is the ingredient that separates a true early childhood program from simple baby-sitting. Training in the past to develop skills, combined with current and ongoing training that never ends, meets the needs and challenges of an ever-growing and diverse population.

6.1 Staff Hiring Practices and Benefits

6.1.1 Employee Handbook: All staff receives a copy of the Employee Handbook. The staff is instructed at least annually on the program's employee policies.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.1.1 Staff or Employee Handbook

Evaluation

- Standard met: All staff receives a copy of an Employee Handbook and has indicated receipt of same, and the administration reviews these policies with the staff on an annual basis.
- Standard partially met: All staff receives a copy of an Employee Handbook. However, there is insufficient documentation that the administration reviews the policies with the staff on an annual basis.
- Standard not met: There is insufficient documentation that all staff receives a copy of an Employee Handbook, and that the administration reviews policies with the staff on an annual basis.

6.1.2 Nondiscrimination Policy: The Program has a published Nondiscrimination Policy relating to its hiring practices, stating that it does not discriminate against any person or group of persons on the basis of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, physical disability or age. (Age has the exception of minimum age requirements).

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.1.2 Nondiscrimination Policy

Evaluation

- Standard met: A copy of the program's Nondiscrimination Policy and of an actual position advertised in any form, the wording of which includes nondiscriminatory language, is included in the self-study.

- Standard not met: The program shows insufficient evidence of a Nondiscrimination Policy.

6.1.3 Background Screening: Employees that serve children in a child care facility or a School Age Program for after schoolers must comply with the Level 2 background screening requirements pursuant to Florida Statute 402.301. This includes all owners, directors, and chief financial officers of service providers. Therefor all service providers personnel who have direct contact with children receiving services must submit background screening fingerprints to “The Clearinghouse”. The purpose of the Clearinghouse is to provide a single data source for background screening results for persons screened for employment or licensure that provide services to children. The Clearinghouse allows the results of criminal history checks to be shared among specific agencies when a person has applied to volunteer, be employed, be licensed (or Religious Exempt from Licensure), or enter into a contract that requires a state and national fingerprint-based criminal history check. The Clearinghouse allows the results of criminal history checks to be shared among specified state agencies, thereby reducing duplicative screening for individual requiring screening across multiple state agencies. A sexual predator check is always included when conducting the background screening.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.1.3 Indicate section of Staff/Employee Handbook that details background-screening requirements.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Detailed policy is included in the Handbook.
- Standard not met: Background Screening is not covered in the Handbook.

On-Site Observation Personnel files will be reviewed by the visiting team chair or his/her designee in order to confirm the AHCA background screening and fingerprinting.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All staff has submitted to the AHCA Clearinghouse Level 2 background screening and is deemed eligible to work with children.
- Standard partially met: All staff has been submitted to the AHCA Clearinghouse Level 2 background screening and the DCF eligibility clearance is ‘pending’. Because of the pending status, that staff cannot work alone with the children; must be accompanied with an ‘eligible’ staff in the classroom.
- Standard not met: Insufficient evidence of staff screening and fingerprinting is available, or staff is deemed ‘ineligible’. *(This is automatic denial of Accreditation Status if employee is working with children before clearance by DCF!)*

6.2 Director

6.2.1 Qualifications of VPK Program Director: Program Administrators must be at least 21 years of age and have a minimum of:

- Successfully obtain the Florida Director Credential Program*
- Bachelor's degree*
- Complete the Standards for Four-Year-Olds, or Florida Standards for Four-Year Olds Online (DOE course completed on or after 2011) *3 Hour Online or Instructor-Led Course*
- Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*
- VPK Director Credential (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*
- Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*
- Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (DOE course) *5 Hour Online Course*

* Individuals who were issued a Florida Director Credential before December 31, 2006 are considered "Exempt" from the VPK Endorsement retirements and are still eligible to be a director of a private prekindergarten program. However, these 'exempt' directors are encouraged to acquire the VPK endorsement.

** An undergraduate degree in one of the following: Early childhood Education, Child Development, Social Work , Early childhood Special Education, Nursing, Childcare Management or other child-related field, OR a combination of coursework and experience that includes a minimum of four college level courses in Early Childhood Education and Child Development, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Childcare management and two years of experience as a lead teacher or director serving the children of the age groups in care.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.1 Completed FCCPSA Director's Credential Form detailing an appropriate combination of formal education, work experience, and relevant training and credentials, as listed above.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The director meets all the requirements of the Director's Credentials as outlined in standard 6.2.1.
- Standard partially met: The director partially meets the requirement of the Director's Credentials as outlined in standard 6.2.1, and has a short time frame to meet all of the requirements.
- Standard not met: The director does not meet the requirement of the Director's Credentials as outlined in standard 6.2.1.

6.2.2 General Responsibilities of Program Director: The director is charged with assuming responsibility of the day-to-day operations of the program, maintaining program policies, and monitoring the program's compliance with applicable requirements of civil authorities. The director's leadership addresses the Program's goal of fostering the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, spiritual and character development of children. The Director must be on site for a minimum of 51% of the time. The director is responsible for health and safety issues.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.2 Copy of the director's job description. (Indicate page number from Staff Manual)

Evaluation

- Standard met: A current job description for the director delineates the above-mentioned responsibilities of the director.
- Standard not met: The Staff Manual does not contain a current job description for the director, delineating the above-mentioned responsibilities of the director.

On-Site Observation Observe whether director has appropriate staff to fulfill duties, as described in job description or is tasked with filling in classrooms to meet ratios or other duties.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Adequate staffing is in place, to allow director to complete job requirements.
- Standard not met: Adequate staffing is not in place; director does not have the freedom to complete his/her duties.

6.2.3 Program Director Credentials: Pursuant to Section 402.305(3)(f), F.S., every child care facility must have a director with Director Credentials.

The Director obtain a Director's Credential must take the following steps:

Core Requirements:

1. Have Active Staff Credentials
2. Accredited high School Diploma or G.E.D.
3. 30 Hour Part I DCF Introductory Child Care Training
4. 8 hours of in-service training regarding children with Disabilities (DCF's Special Needs Appropriate Practices course will meet this requirement.

Level I Director Credential (based on education and work experience)

1. Above Core Requirements
2. Completions of an approved "Overview of Child Care Management" course OR a Director Credential issued by another state

Level II Director Credential

1. Above Core Requirements
2. Completions of an approved "Overview of Child Care Management" course OR a Director Credential issued by another state
3. Minimum of one-year experience as on-site child care director in a licensed child care facility or a child care facility that is legally exempt from licensure. Documentation includes a letter from the owner of the facility or a copy of the facility license.

Advanced Level

1. Above Core Requirements
2. Minimum of two-year experience as on-site child care director in a licensed child care facility or a child care facility that is legally exempt from licensure. Documentation includes a letter from the owner of the facility or a copy of the facility license.

AND

Complete one of the following:

- Associates Degree or higher, or
- At least two three college credit courses in one of the following curriculum areas"
 - Child Care and Education Organizational Leadership
 - Child Care Educational Financial and Legal Issues
 - Child care Education Programming

Note: If the director of a private prekindergarten provider delivering the VPK program, the director must have a VPK Director Endorsement.

In addition: The Director Credentials must be renewed every five years.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.3 Include verification of the director's continuing education hours.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The director meets all the requirements of the Director's continuing education hours as outlined in standard 6.2.3.
- Standard partially met: The director partially meets (80%) the requirement of the Director's continuing education hours as outlined in standard 6.2.3, and has a short time frame to meet all of the requirements.
- Standard not met: The director does not meet the requirement of the Director's continuing education hours as outlined in standard 6.2.3, as does not have a time frame to meet all of the requirements.

On-Site Observation Review employee file for documentation that training is ongoing.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All training is current and on-going.
- Standard not met: Training has not reached the minimum requirements.

6.2.4 Continued Professional Development: Continuing professional development is required for all workers to stay current with the latest developments, skills, and new technologies required for in the child care industry. One of the benefits of taking continuing education courses is that the Director and all staff are able to research the latest research in the child care industry. It is important to stay abreast of the newest research and professional knowledge available. Continuing professional development plays an important part for the director and staff education. It helps the director and staff to keep their professional knowledge and skills updated.

Continuing professional development helps the director and staff to learn new techniques in teaching children. It ensures the director and staff to be competent in the child care industry. Continuing education has been shown to improve director-staff relationships and staff to children relationship and teaching. By staying up to date on the latest in child care and educational development of the child, the staff can be better equipped to help the children.

Continuing Professional Development is important because it:

- a. Ensures your capabilities to keep pace with the current standards in the child care industry
- b. Ensures that you maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills you need to deliver a professional service to children and parents
- c. Ensures that you and your knowledge stay relevant and up to date.

The importance of continuing professional development should not be underestimated, it is a career long obligation for practicing professionals. It is the personal responsibility of the director to keep their knowledge and skill current so they can deliver the high quality of staff proficiency and child care knowledge that meets the expectations of the parents and the requirements of their profession. The director is charged with the responsibility to ensure that the Director and all staff pursue the required professional development.

6.2.4(a) All teaching staff, including Lead Teachers, assistants, and volunteers, must complete at least 24 (twenty-four) hours of job-related professional development annually, following the first year of employment (from July 1st to June 30th). Training must be specific to the age(s) or the special circumstances/specific needs of the children that the staff teaches. Specifically, a minimum of twenty four documented clock hours of continuing education or professional development of which twelve hours are provided by an outside source relating to: child growth and development in the areas of cognitive learning and social, emotional, and physical development; safety and health issues for young children; family and community relations; classroom and program management; and professional development which may include special needs. Training may also include related language development, discipline, and technology. Whenever possible, continuing education should be validated by college credit and provided as a benefit of employment, part of tuition reimbursement program or financial assistance.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation #6.2.4(a) Review employee files for documentation that Continuing Education Development is ongoing.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Director has ensured that all staff (including the director) meets all the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4(a).
- Standard partially met: The Director and/or 80% of staff partially meets the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4(a); however does have a time frame to meet all of the qualifications.
- Standard not met: The Director and/or staff did not meet the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4,(a) and does not have a time frame or plan to meet all of the qualifications.

6.2.4(b) All teaching staff, that supervise, or mentor other staff must document completion of specialized college-level course work or professional development training and preparation in adult supervision, mentoring, and leadership development.

On-Site Observation #6.2.4(b) Review employee files for documentation of specialized college level course work or professional development training is ongoing.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Director has ensured that all staff (including the director) meets all the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4(b).
- Standard partially met: The Director and/or all staff partially (80%) meets the requirement as outlined in standard 6.2.4(b); however does have a time frame to meet all of the qualifications.
- Standard not met: The Director and/or staff did not meet the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4,(b) and does not have a time frame or plan to meet all of the qualifications.

6.2.4(c) All teaching staff is encouraged to join and participate in local, state and national or international early education professional organizations.

On-Site Observation #6.2.4(c) Review employee files for documentation of teaching staff joining and participating in local, state and national or international early education professional organizations.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Director has ensured that all staff (including the director) meets all the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4(c).
- Standard partially met: The Director and/or all staff partially (80%) meets the requirement of the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4(c), however does have a time frame to meet all of the qualifications.
- Standard not met: The Director and/or staff did not meet the requirements as outlined in standard 6.2.4(c) and does not have a time frame or plan to meet all of the qualifications.

6.2.5 Hiring Staff: The director/administrator is responsible for hiring staff that supports the philosophy and mission of the program in accordance with applicable governance procedures and are a minimum of 18 years old. If staff will be driving a vehicle to transport children, the staff member must be minimum of 21 years old.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.4 Include the hiring and interview process from the Administrator Manual and the acknowledgement that staff signs to indicate their support of the program's vision, mission and philosophy of education.

- Standard met: Hiring and interview process is covered in the Administrator Manual; staff signs to indicate their support of the program's vision, mission and philosophy of education.
- Standard not met: Hiring and interview process is not covered in the Administrator Manual, and/or staff do not sign to indicate their support of the program's vision, mission and philosophy of education.

On-Site Observation Review employee files to verify that practice is followed and is uniform.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All employee files have a signed acknowledgement of agreement.
- Standard not met: All employee files do not have a signed acknowledgement of agreement.

6.2.5A Staff Orientation: New staff is provided with an orientation and/or a Staff Handbook that includes, but not limited to the following:

- Goals and philosophy of the program
- Planned activities for the program
- Appropriate classroom management techniques
- Routines and transitions in which the children in the program are engaged
- Discipline policies and procedures
- Communication with parents
- Mealtimes and food-handling policies
- Occupational health hazards
- Emergency health and safety procedures
- General health policies and procedures including, but not limited to the following:
 - hand-washing techniques
 - diapering techniques and toileting (including proper diaper disposal and diaper-changing techniques where applicable)
- Child abuse/child neglect detection, prevention, and reporting
- Observing experienced teachers

Recognition of symptoms of illness, documentation of these symptoms, and implementation of ill-child policies that include the following: Applying the program's policies regarding exclusion of ill children and readmission of them after illness; cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting procedures; documenting and administering prescribed medication if given to children during program hours by program employees; notifying parents/guardians regarding a communicable disease occurring in children or staff; assessing the health of children daily.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.5A Include documentation of presentation of orientation procedures, verifying that the above-mentioned items are addressed with the staff.

Evaluation

- Standard met: An orientation as described above is provided to the staff.
- Standard not met: An orientation program is not provided to the staff.

On-Site Observation Review employee file or training logs to verify topics covered and time invested in orientation and in-service training

- Standard met: Training logs verify that an orientation as described above is provided to the staff.
- Standard not met: Training logs do not verify that an orientation program is provided to the staff.

6.2.6 Evaluation of New Employees: The director ensures a formal evaluation of new employees takes place no more than nine months into the orientation period and at pre-determined periods thereafter.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.6 Provide a copy of the Employee Evaluation Process and the form used to document the review. Detail when the review takes place and by whom.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A formal evaluation of new employees takes place no more than six months into the orientation period.
- Standard not met: A formal evaluation of new employees does not take place within six months after the orientation period begins.

On-Site Observation Review employee files to document new employee review is an established practice.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A formal evaluation of new employees is included in all employee files that have been employed for six months or more.
- Standard not met: A formal evaluation of new employees is not in employee files.

6.2.7 Evaluation of All Employees: The director ensures for each staff member an annual written confidential, evaluation is conducted, recognizing strengths as well as areas needing improvement. Areas needing improvement receive follow-up. The evaluation is kept in the staff member's file.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.7 Include a copy of the annual evaluation forms used for staff members. Explain both how the evaluation process contributes to professional development of staff and whether the evaluations are kept in staff members' files.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Annual written staff evaluations are performed that contribute to staff professional development and are kept in staff members' files.
- Standard substantially met: The annual staff evaluations are performed, but documentation is not on file.
- Standard not met: The evaluations are not performed, and the documentation is not on file.

On-Site Observation

Evaluation

- Standard met: A formal evaluation of employees conducted annually is included in all employee files that have been employed for six months or more.
- Standard not met: A formal evaluation of employees conducted annually is not in employee files.

6.2.8 Staff Substitutes: The director has a current list of qualified substitutes who may be called upon to maintain the integrity of the program. The Staff substitutes must have been declared ‘eligible’ to work with children by AHCA DCF background screening.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.8 Describe how the director seeks, interviews and maintains a list of qualified substitutes who may be called upon to maintain the integrity of the program.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Evidence is clear that a system is in place to maintain the integrity of the program during teacher absences.
- Standard partially met: A plan to obtain substitutes is in place, but it does not include qualified substitutes.
- Standard not met: A plan to obtain substitutes is not in place, and a list of qualified substitutes is not available.

On-Site Observation Review with director the list of substitutes and their qualifications.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A current and sufficient list of qualified substitutes is verified, and evidence is clear that the integrity of the program is maintained during teacher absences.
- Standard partially met: A plan to obtain substitutes is in place, but it does not include qualified substitutes.
- Standard not met: A plan to obtain substitutes is not in place, and a list of qualified substitutes is not available.

6.2.9 Acting Director: The director designates a qualified person to assume leadership and responsibility of the early education program in the event of his/her absence.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.9 Explain who assumes the responsibilities of the director in the director's absence, and include this person's qualifications.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A qualified person is the designated leader in the absence of the director.
- Standard not met: There is no specific person designated to assume the responsibilities of the director when the director is absent.

6.2.10 Developing Relationships Among Staff: Staff treats colleagues with equal respect and consideration regardless of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, or physical disability. Respectful relationships between colleagues are encouraged and reflect mutual trust, respect, and support for each other. Staff members seek out and acknowledge the ideas and opinions of others. Staff members give positive recognition to each other's skills and accomplishments and provide appropriate support for each other in dealing with stress to maintain confidence at all time.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.10 Reference the section of the Employee Evaluation that deals with respect of peers. Provide the section of the Staff/Employee Handbook that details acceptable relationships and how they are to be developed and maintained.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The staff handbook and evaluation include evidence that respectful relationships among staff is required and monitored.
- Standard not met: The staff handbook provides no evidence that respectful relationships among staff are a condition of successful employment.

6.2.11 Developing Relationships With Children: Team members treat children with equal respect and consideration regardless of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, or physical disability. Respectful relationships with children are developed by smiling, touching, holding, and speaking to children at their eye level throughout the day, during routines such as arrival and departure and mealtimes, as well as during teacher-planned and child-initiated experiences.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.11 Reference the section of the Employee Evaluation that deals with respect of children. Provide the section of the Staff/Employee Handbook that details acceptable relationships and how they are to be developed and maintained.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The staff handbook and evaluation include evidence that respectful relationships with children is required and monitored.
- Standard not met: The staff handbook provides no evidence that respectful relationships with the children under their care are a condition of successful employment.

6.2.12 Staff Meetings: The director builds strong relationships and communication between the staff and administration and encourages team collaboration and spirit among the staff. Regular staff meetings are held for staff to consult on program planning, to plan for implementing and attaining goals, to plan for individual children and family involvement, and to discuss program and working conditions.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.12 Explain how relationships and communication are encouraged throughout the staff. Provide a schedule of staff meetings for the past twelve months.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff meetings take place a minimum of once a month, and they include relationship building and communication opportunities.
- Standard not met: Staff meetings are not provided a minimum of once per month, and/or the staff meetings do not include relationship building and communication opportunities.

On-Site Observation Review monthly training and staff meeting attendance sheets or log to verify the meeting schedule in the Staff/Employee Manual is followed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Log and attendance sheet confirms that staff meetings take place a minimum of once a month, and they include relationship building and communication opportunities.
- Standard not met: No logs or attendance taken at staff meetings. No evidence of staff meetings is provided.

6.2.13 Program Evaluation with Staff: The director meets with the staff annually to evaluate the early childhood program and to discuss areas of strengths as well as areas needing improvement. The areas needing improvement are addressed after the meetings through a specific Program Improvement Plan.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.2.13 Explain how an annual evaluation is provided and how input from staff regarding areas of strengths as well as areas needing improvement are addressed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: An annual evaluation is provided, and there is evidence that appropriate staff input is incorporated into the program.
- Standard partially met: Staff meets annually to discuss areas of improvement, but there is little evidence that change takes place as a result.
- Standard not met: Annual program evaluations do not take place.

6.2.14 Personnel Files: The director maintains a confidential personnel file on each employee, volunteer and substitute. The file should contain, but not be limited to the following and/or contain information that civil authorities require:

- Resume
- Application
- Copies of college or university transcripts
- AHCA Background Fingerprints/eligibility
- Fingerprints/clearance
- Pediatric First Aid/Child CPR Certification, minimum of 90% certified
- Annual staff evaluations
- Documentation of any grievances
- Evidence of in-service training
- Copy of contract/work agreement
- I-9 form (Not required for volunteers)

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation The visiting team chair or his/her designee will review staff members' files for compliance in documenting the above items.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Staff members' files are complete.
- Standard partially met: Staff members' files are available but incomplete.

6.3 Instructional and Support Staff Qualifications

All staff, regardless of position, must meet the requirements of 6.1.3 AHCA DCF Background Screening and 6.2.5 Staff Orientation before they are permitted to work with children, alone or supervised. A sexual predator check is always included in the background screening. Primary Teachers must be at least 21 years of age, Associate teachers must be at least 18 years of age and all Teachers Aids/Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age.

6.3.1 Primary (Lead) Teacher Qualifications (Staff Credential): The purpose of the staff credential requirement is to ensure individuals in child care programs have advanced their education and experience in order to provide developmentally appropriate care.

Child care personnel must complete the Florida Child Care Staff Credential Verification Application, CF-FSP Form 5211, October 2017, in order to verify they have met the qualifications. Verification will be documented on the Child Care Training Transcript, which is the only documentation used by licensing to determine compliance with the staff credential requirement.

To qualify for a staff credential, a child care professional must have one of the following:

- An active National Early Childhood Credential (NECC)
- Formal Educational Qualifications
- An active Birth through Five Child Care Credential, which can be met by one of the following:
 - Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC)
 - Florida Department of Education Child Care Apprenticeship Certificate (CCAC), OR
 - Early Childhood Professional Certificate (ECPC).
- An active School-Age Child Care Credential, which can be met by one of the following:
 - Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC), OR
 - School-Age Professional Certificate (SPC).
 - Note: A School-Age FCCPC will not be accepted to meet the minimum staff credential requirements for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

National Early Childhood, Birth Through Five, and School-Age Child Care Staff Credentials must be renewed:

- National Early Childhood Credentials:
 - As a Birth Through Five (FCCPC) by submitting the Florida Child Care Staff Credential Verification Application, CF-FSP Form 5211, October 2017, with renewal requirements attached; OR
 - By the organization that issued the original credential.
- Birth Through Five and School-Age Child Care Credentials the Florida Child Care Staff Credential Verification Application, CF-FSP Form 5211, October 2017 outlines the renewal requirement.

Self-study exhibit #6.3.1 Staff Credential Form detailing an appropriate combination of formal education, work experience, and relevant training and credentials, as listed above.

Indicators of Compliance

Evaluation

- Standard met: The primary teacher/Staff Credential meets all the requirements of the qualifications as outlined in standard 6.3.1.
- Standard partially met: The primary teacher/Staff Credential partially meets the requirement of the qualifications as outlined in standard 6.3.1, however does have a time frame to meet all of the qualifications.
- Standard not met: The primary teacher/Staff Credential does not meet the requirement of the qualifications as outlined in standard 6.3.1, and does not have a time frame or plan to meet all of the qualifications.

6.3.2 Associate Teacher Qualifications: *(The associate teacher fulfills the normal duties of a teacher in a classroom under the supervision of the primary teacher.)* Must be at least 18 years of age and meet all of the qualifications listed below:

40 Hour Introductory Training divided into two parts:

Part 1 (30 Hours) All child care personnel must complete the following 30 hours of training:

- Child Care Facility Rules and Regulations (RNRF – 6 hours)
- Health Safety and Nutrition (HSAN – 8 hours)
- Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (CAAN – 4 hours)
- Child Growth and development (CGDR – 6 hours)
- Behavioral Observation and Screening (BOSR – 6 hours)

Part II (10 Hours) All child care personnel must complete 10 hours of training from the following courses:

- Understanding Developmentally Appropriate Practices (UDAP – 5 hours) AND one (1) of the following:
 - Infant and Toddler Appropriate Practices (ITPR – 5 hours)
 - Preschool Appropriate Practices (PSPR – 5 hours)
 - School-Age Appropriate Practices (SAPR – 5 hours)
- OR
- Special Needs Appropriate Practices (SNP – 10 hours)

Additional Required Training:

Early Literacy: All child care personnel must complete a minimum of five clock hours or .5 CEU in one of the following ways:

- One of the Department's web-based courses:
 - Early Literacy Birth to Three, or
 - Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors
- OR
- An approved literacy course
- OR
- One college level early literacy course (for credit or non-credit if taken within the last five years).

Safe Sleep/Shaken Baby Syndrome: All child care personnel who work in a facility that offers care to infants must complete one of the following:

- DCF Health, Safety and Nutrition (HSAN – 8 hours)
OR
- DCF Safe Sleep Practices for Child Care (SAFE – 1 hour)
OR
- Early Learning Florida’s Safe Sleep Practices (SPELFL – 1 hour)

Annual In-service Training: July 1 – June 30

Upon completion of Part I and II introductory training requirements, child care personnel must complete a minimum of 10 or 1.0 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) of in-service training during the state’s fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30. Note: College courses concentrating on children ages birth through twelve will be accepted. Documentation of the in-service training must be recorded on the CF-FSP Form 5268 and included in the child care facilities’ personnel records.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.3.2 Associate Teacher qualifications.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Associate Teacher qualifications meets all the requirements as outlined in standard 6.3.2.
- Standard partially met: The Associate Teacher qualifications partially meets the requirements as outlined in standard 6.3.2, however does have a time frame to meet all of the qualifications.
- Standard not met: The Associate Teacher qualifications does not meet the requirements as outlined in standard 6.3.2, and does not have a time frame or plan to meet all of the qualifications.

On-Site Observation Inspector will review employee files to confirm an accurate accounting of qualifications for each employee has been documented.

Evaluation

- Standard met:
- Standard partially met:
- Standard not met:

6.3.3 Teachers Aid/Volunteers Qualifications: *(May assist in classroom duties or group activities under the supervision of the primary teacher.)* A teacher's aid/volunteer may have no experience. Teacher's aids/volunteers must be at least 16 years of age and work under the direct supervision of an adult at all times. In addition, they must have begun the Florida DCF 40-hour training.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.3.3 Teacher Aid/Volunteer Qualifications that includes each teacher's aide and volunteer.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Teacher Aid/Volunteer Qualifications demonstrates that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.
- Standard not met: The Teacher Aid/Volunteer Qualifications does not demonstrate that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.

On-Site Observation Inspector will review employee files to confirm an accurate accounting of qualifications for each employee has been documented.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Teacher Aid/Volunteer Qualifications demonstrates that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.
- Standard not met: The Teacher Aid/Volunteer Qualifications does not demonstrate that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.

6.3.4 Non-teaching Support Staff Qualifications: Support staff indicates individuals who have any duties on campus and therefore may come into contact with children. They do not assist in class or activities. Support Staff must be at least 16 years of age and work under the direct supervision of an adult at all times. Regardless of position, if they come on campus, the requirements of 6.1.3 Background Screening and 6.1.4 Staff Orientation apply.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.3.4 Non-teaching Support Staff Qualifications that includes each support staff member.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Non-teaching Support Staff Qualifications demonstrates that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.
- Standard not met: The Non-teaching Support Staff Qualifications does not demonstrate that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.

On-Site Observation Inspector will review employee files to confirm an accurate accounting of qualifications for each employee has been documented.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The Non-teaching Support Staff Qualifications Checklist demonstrates that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.
- Standard not met: The Non-teaching Support Staff Qualifications Checklist does not demonstrate that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirement options listed above.

6.4 Instructional and Support Staff Policies

6.4.1 Job Descriptions/Staff Policies: Clear up-to-date written personnel policies have been developed by the program. These policies include but are not limited to job descriptions, wages and benefits, and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. All teaching staff must complete job-related professional development during the first year of employment. Training must be specific to the age(s) or the special circumstances/specific needs of the children that the staff teach. All staff must complete at least 24 hours of job-related professional development annually, following the first year of employment. Courses may be taken through DCF’s training program or the Early Learning Coalition website.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.4.1 Indicate section of the Staff/Employee Handbook that includes the program’s personnel policies and job descriptions.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Clear up-to-date written personnel policies including, but not limited to job descriptions for each position; information pertaining to wages and benefits; and the resignation, termination, and grievance procedures are included in the self-study.
- Standard not met: Clear up-to-date written personnel policies including, but not limited to job descriptions for each position; information pertaining to wages and benefits; and the resignation, termination, and grievance procedures are not included in the self-study.

6.4.2 Communication of Personnel Policies: Written personnel policies have been communicated with the staff, and receipt of them by the staff has been documented.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.4.2 Copy of the Staff/Employee Handbook receipt.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Handbook receipt acknowledges receipt of the handbook and agreement with program's policies.
- Standard not met: No receipt of handbook, or agreement with program's policies.

On-Site Observation Inspector verifies whether the standard has been met by viewing Staff/Employee Handbook receipt.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Documentation that the staff has received written personnel policies is available on site for review by the visiting team chair or his/her designee.
- Standard not met: There is no documentation that written personnel policies have been communicated with the staff.

6.4.3 Pre-Service Orientation: All personnel, including volunteers and substitutes, must have on file the appropriate screening and background checks and be adequately oriented about the program. Orientation includes but is not limited to:

- Knowledge regarding the goals and philosophy of the program
- Emergency, health and safety procedures
- Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures
- Curriculum & planned daily activities
- Guidance and classroom management techniques
- Regulatory requirements
- Individual needs of children
- Expectations for ethical conduct

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.4.3A Indicate the section of the Administrator or Staff/Employee Handbook that details Orientation topics.

Self-study exhibit #6.4.3 Copy of orientation handouts that the employee completes with test questions if required.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Program has both an Orientation Manual (or section of the Staff/Employee Manual) and Orientation Workbook.
- Standard partially met: Program has an Orientation Manual or outline but no documentation that employees complete the orientation.
- Standard not met: No orientation outline provided or documentation of attendance.

6.4.4 In-Service Training: All child care personnel are required to complete the 40 hours of mandated training and must meet the early literacy, First Aid and Pediatric CPR, Safe Sleep/Shaken Baby Syndrome and Fire Extinguisher training requirements.

Important Time Frames:

Introductory Training: Child care personnel must begin training **within the first 90 days** of employment in the child care industry by:

- Starting a Part I or Part II course,
- Taking a child care competency exam, or
- Earning an educational exemption.

All of the 40-hour required training **must be completed one (1) year** from the date the training began. Child care personnel must pass competency exams for the 40 hours of training to demonstrate their competency or receive an educational exemption.

All child care personnel must complete 5 hours of literacy training **within one (1) year** of employment in the child care industry, through approved instructor-led, online course or college course.

Additional Required Training: Within the first 30 days of Employment...

- **Fire Extinguisher Training:** All staff must complete training in the use and operation of a fire extinguisher.
- **Safe Sleep/Shaken Baby Syndrome Training:** Child care personnel, including substitutes and volunteers, *who work in a facility that offers care to infants*, must have training regarding guidance on safe sleep practices and preventing shaken baby syndrome.

For the 40 Hour Introductory Training which is divided into two parts: please see Standard 6.3.2.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.4.4 Submit teacher training log of continuing education for staff, including the above areas, and description of who and how training is maintained and tracked.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Adequate training log and system of verification provided.
- Standard partially met: Training log provided but no adequate system of verification or follow up was detailed.
- Standard not met: No training log, or verification system.

On-Site Observation Inspector will view training log, and/or DCF printout to verify minimum clock hours for each employee.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All staff completed the introductory training and the additional required training.
- Standard partially met: All staff only partially meet the required training in the first year, but have a time frame to complete the required training.
- Standard not met: Not all staff meet the training requirements, and there is not a plan for all the staff to complete the introductory and required training.

6.4.5 School-Age Training Requirements: Child care facilities serving only school-age children have the following training requirements:

All child care personnel are required to complete 40 hours of mandated training.

Important Time Frames:

Introductory Training: Child care personnel must begin training **within the first 90 days** of employment in the child care industry by:

- Starting a training course,
- Taking a child care competency exam, OR
- Earning an educational exemption.

All of the 40-hour required training **must be completed one (1) year** from the date the training began. Child care personnel must pass competency exams for the 40 hours of training to demonstrate their competency or receive an educational exemption.

All child care personnel must complete 5 hours of literacy training **within one (1) year** of employment in the child care industry, through approved instructor-led, online course or college course.

Additional Required Training:

- **Fire Extinguisher Training:** All staff must complete training in the use and operation of a fire extinguisher within the first 30 days of Employment.

Training: The 40-hour training for child care personnel working in facilities serving only school-age children can meet by completing:

- Child Care Facility Rules and Regulations (RFNF – 6 hours)
- Health Safety and Nutrition (HSAN – 8 hours)
- Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (CAAN – 4 hours)
- Understanding Developmentally Appropriate Practice (UDAP – 5 hours)
- School Age-Appropriate Practices (SAPR – 5 hours)

This totals 28 hours. The remaining 12 hours must be met by one of the following options:

Option 1: Completion of the following online course:

- Achieving and Maintaining Quality in Afterschool Programs for Child Care Professionals (AMAP – 12 hours)

Option 2: Completion of specialized school-age training, provided by a national organization or affiliates of a national organization with a demonstration of competency through passage of examinations(s) or completion and assessment of a Professional Recourse File (portfolio of materials that demonstrate competency). Note: This option does not require passage of a DCF Office of Child Care Regulation Competency Exam because the competency demonstration is part of the training program. This option will be verified during a licensing inspection.

Option 3: Completion of the following Department online courses:

- Child Growth and Development (CGDR – 6 hours)
- Behavioral Observation and Screening (BOSR – 6 hours)

Annual In-service Training: July 1 – June 30

Upon completion of introductory training requirements, child care personnel must complete a minimum of 10 hours or 1.0 Continual Education Unit (CEU) of in-service training during the state's fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30. Note: College courses concentrating on children ages birth through twelve will be accepted. Documentation on the in-service training must be recorded on the CF-FSP Form 5268 and included in the child care facilities' personnel records.

On-Site Observation Inspector will view training log, and/or DCF printout to verify minimum clock hours for each employee.

Evaluation

- Standard met: All staff completed the introductory training and the additional required training.
- Standard partially met: All staff only partially meet the required training in the first year, but have a time frame to complete the required training.
- Standard not met: Not all staff meet the training requirements, and there is not a plan for all the staff to complete the introductory and required training.

6.5 Supervision of Children

6.5.1 Primary Teacher/Caregiver In order to help ensure the care, bonding, and nurturing of the individual child, each group of children has one primary teacher/caregiver per class or age group.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.5.1 Provide a list naming the primary teacher/caregiver assigned to each group of children.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A list demonstrates that each group of children in the program has one primary teacher/caregiver.
- Standard not met: A list demonstrates that each group of children does not have one primary teacher/caregiver.

6.5.2 Ratios and Group Size: When mixed age groups of infants and toddlers are in the same room, the child staff ratio is maintained according to the youngest child in the room. If all the children in the mixed age group are two years of age or older, the child-staff ratio is maintained according to the average age of the children. If the children in the mixed age group have children of one year old, but under two years of age, the ratio of staff to children shall not exceed 1 to 6.

Minimum Staff to Child and Group Ratios for each age group are as follows:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Class Size</u>	<u>Adult/Child Ratio</u>
0-12 mos.	8	1:4
1 yr.	10	1:5
2 yrs.	12	1:6
3 yrs.	16	1:8
4 yrs.	20	1:10
5 yrs.	24	1:12
<i>School Age Group Ratios</i>		
5 yrs+	25	1:25

Self-study exhibit #6.5.2 Reference the section or sections of the Staff/Employee Manual that delineates class and group sizes by age and staff ratio.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The program has established and maintains the child-staff ratios and group sizes as described in the above chart.
- Standard not met: Ratios and group sizes are not in compliance with requirements of civil authorities.

6.5.3 Attendance/Monitoring: The staff always maintains direct supervision of children. Direct supervision is defined as within hearing and sight at all times including during nap time, diaper changing, toileting, bathing, changing clothes and when separated from other children due to illness or possible communicable disease. If children are dropped off and picked up directly into a classroom, the Primary or Associate Teacher will be the staff person designated as the individual responsible for maintaining direct supervision will maintain the attendance records. If children are dropped off or picked up at a central location, the supervisor at that location must communicate with the classroom teacher to ensure an accurate total, and individual group or class counts are maintained. Sign in procedures may include manual attendance or electronic attendance. Attendance records are file in the administrative office for a period of no less than one year.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #6.6.3 Describe methods used by staff to ensure children are always accounted for, including such times as during field trips and time on the playground or during transitions outside the classroom, which include trips to the restroom.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A process is in place and is implemented to ensure children are accounted for at all times.
- Standard not met: A process is not in place or is not implemented to ensure children are accounted for at all times.

On-Site Observation Inspector will observe children during drop off and pickup, to verify consistent use of the attendance system based on the guidelines submitted on Exhibit 6.6.3

Evaluation

- Standard met: A process is in place and is implemented to ensure children are accounted for at all times.
- Standard not met: A process is not in place or is not implemented to ensure children are accounted for at all times.

6.5.4 Internal Communication Related to Supervision: Primary and Associate teachers are assigned specific classes or groups of children to always supervise and are present with that class or group. Staff members who are sharing the responsibility of a group of children communicates with one another to ensure smooth operation of the program.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Evaluation

- Exemplary compliance: Outside the classroom, staff has an opportunity daily to discuss events related to the children in their care.
- Standard met: A process is in place to ensure good communication among staff caring for the same group of children.
- Standard not met: A process is not in place to ensure communication among staff caring for the same group of children.

6.6 Internal Relations

6.6.1 Teacher/Caregiver/Staff Survey: All early childhood program and education teachers, caregivers and staff are given the opportunity to complete a survey in which they are asked to evaluate the quality of the early care and education program and work environment yearly. For the initial and renewal accreditation visits, the FCCPSA Teacher/Staff survey form will be used. The survey is to be sent along with a letter that explains the purpose of the survey as an integral part of the program and solicits full participation. The letter also instructs the personnel to return the completed survey sealed in an envelope and given to a designated holder. The inspector processes the sealed surveys the day of the site visit. Responses from the Survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration with a summary included in the final evaluation report. During the non-visit years, surveys are to be conducted internally.

Indicators of Compliance

On-Site Activities Collect FCCPSA Teacher /Staff surveys still sealed from the designated holder.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The number of surveys turned in to the inspector matches the number of employees.
- Standard not met: The program did send out the survey or there were less than 75% response from the personnel.

7.0 Relationships

Founding Principles

Being a child's first teacher, parents have the ultimate responsibility for their care and development. The early childhood program respects the critical role parents play in supporting the growth and development of their child. It is critical that the program and all members of the team invest in building positive relationships with the children they work with every day, fellow team members and administrative staff, but most importantly with the parents/guardians that have chosen them to be their ally the transformation of their child's development.

7.1 Public Relations

7.1.1 Public Relations: All informational sources established by the program accurately describe the early learning program, including its enrollment policy, vision, mission, philosophy of education and statement of nondiscrimination.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.1.1 Provide evidence and/or a description of all informational sources that are used to portray the early learning program, including its enrollment policy, vision, mission, philosophy of education, statement of nondiscrimination.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Informational sources established by the program are available and address the program's enrollment policy, vision, mission, philosophy of education, statement of nondiscrimination.
- Standard substantially met: Informational sources established by the program are available but do not address some portion or portions the program's enrollment policy, vision, mission, Philosophy of Education, statement of nondiscrimination.
- Standard not met: Informational sources established by the program are not available.

7.2 Parent or Guardian Handbook:

7.2.1 Contents and Communication: Parents/guardians of the children in the program receive a parent/guardian handbook that includes but is not limited to:

- 1) The philosophy statement regarding the care and education of young children attending the program, including what discipline techniques will be used; discipline methods are not severe, humiliating or frightening, food is not used as a reward or punishment and corporal or physical punishment is not used.
- 2) Policies regarding holidays, illnesses, hours of operation, fees, refunds, enrollment, and termination procedures;
- 3) An explanation of the program's day-to-day functioning.
- 4) Parents/guardians sign a statement acknowledging that they understand and support the program's policies as outlined in the parent/guardian handbook.
- 5) Discipline and Expulsion policies

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.2.1 Copy of Parent Handbook, including form used for acknowledgement.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The parent/guardian handbook includes and satisfactorily explains the above-mentioned items, and parents/guardians are expected to sign an acknowledgment of support.
- Standard substantially met: The parent/guardian handbook includes the above-mentioned items. However, additional information needs to be included in the handbook regarding these items, and/or parents/guardians are not expected to sign an acknowledgment of support.
- Standard not met: The parent/guardian handbook does not include the above-mentioned items.

7.2.2 Visitation Rights: The program has an open-door policy regarding visits by parents/guardians on the program's premises, including in their child's classroom. Policies concerning parent/guardian involvement (e.g., visiting, observing, and volunteering) are in place to ensure the partnership between home and program is maintained.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.2.2 Provide the section of the Parent Handbook that covers the information given to parents/guardians with regard to parent/guardian involvement policies.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Parents/guardians are welcome on the premises, including in their child's classroom, and a policy regarding parent/guardian involvement is included in the parent/guardian handbook.
- Standard substantially met: Parents/guardians of the children are welcome with hesitation in the classrooms and elsewhere on the premises.
- Standard not met: Parents/guardians of the children are not welcome in the classrooms and/or elsewhere on the premises.

7.3 Communication

7.3.1 Communication Events Activities: Administrators and staff communicate with the parents/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis daily and weekly by verbal communication or posted information and monthly by newsletter and/or classroom calendar of events, or through electronic means (texting).

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.3.1 Include a copy of communications provided to parents/guardians from the administration and from classroom staff for the last thirty days.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Administrators and staff communicate with the parents/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis, daily and weekly by verbal communication or posted information and monthly by newsletter and/or classroom calendar of events.
- Standard partially met: Either administrators or staff, but not both, communicate with the parents/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis—daily and weekly by verbal communication or posted information and monthly by newsletter and/or classroom calendar of events.
- Standard not met: Administrators and staff do not communicate with the parents/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis, daily and weekly by verbal communication or posted information and monthly by newsletter and/or classroom calendar of events.

On-Site Observation Review posting to confirm they are up to date.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Information and monthly by newsletter and/or classroom calendar of events are posted and up to date.
- Standard not met: Posting if any are not all current.

7.3.2 Communication Resources: The provider shares information with parents about common child-rearing issues such as signs of infectious disease or temper tantrums daily. The provider has information about community resources that offer services to parents and children. These resources may include, but are not limited to, health, mental health, nutrition/fitness, child care resource and referral, special needs, care for infants including breast feeding supports, and child care subsidies. Included in this communication is a health/medical consultant to address any recommendations about the program’s practices and written health policies to ensure health promotion and prevention of infection and injury. Communication daily with the parents regarding their child’s day, the child’s daily classroom experiences, is a key to success. The parent handbook is used to be fully explain the commitment the program has for the parent’s child.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.3.1 Include a copy of resources and referrals that are available to parents/guardian and are provided as needed to parents/guardians. Indicate if the listed items are a part of the Parent Handbook or a supplement.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Administrators and staff communicate with the parents/guardians on a variety of issues as indicated above.
- Standard partially met: Some resources are detailed, but the offering are limited.
- Standard not met: No resources are detailed.

7.3.3 General Conferences about their Children: Conferences with each child’s parent(s)/guardian are offered at least twice per year—and at other times as needed—to discuss the child’s developmental progress, personal care, and education. Conference schedules accommodate working parents/guardians.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.3.3 Describe how parent/guardian conferences are held and what staff are expected to discuss at such meetings.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Parent/guardian conferences are held a minimum of twice per year; they address the child’s developmental progress, personal care, and education; and a variety of appointment times are made available to accommodate working parents/guardians.
- Standard not met: Semiannual parent/guardian conferences are not scheduled.

7.3.4 Conferences Regarding the Child's Development Progress: Parents/guardians of the children in the program receive communication regarding their children's developmental progress at least twice per year. During parent/guardian conferences, summaries of the results of child observation forms used during scheduled observations of the child are shared with parents/guardians, and parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the goal-setting process for the child.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.3.4 Describe how, when, and by whom children are observed and how information is recorded and appropriately shared with parents/guardians. Explain the process used for setting parent/guardian-teacher goals for children.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Children are observed by qualified personnel who record the information and appropriately share it with parents/guardians at least twice per year. Observations are used by parents/guardians and teachers to set goals for children.
- Standard not met: Staff do not officially observe and/or record observations, and/or observations are not used for parent/guardian-teacher goal setting.

7.3.5 Reporting of Significant Changes in Behavior: Significant changes in a child's pattern of behavior and or physical condition are reported to the parents(s)/guardians(s), documented, and placed in the child's file.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.3.5 Include information given to the staff not only about documenting significant changes in a child's pattern of behavior and/or physical condition but also about informing parents/guardians of these changes. (Reference location in Staff/Teacher Handbook).

Evaluation

- Standard met: A policy is in place requiring the staff not only to document any significant changes in a child's pattern of behavior and/or physical condition but also to inform parents/guardians regarding these changes.
- Standard not met: Either (1) a policy is not in place requiring the staff to document any significant changes in a child's pattern of behavior and/or physical condition and to inform parents/guardians regarding these changes or (2) a policy is in place but is not adhered to by the staff.

7.3.6 Reporting of Accreditation Status: Early Childhood Programs must appropriately refer to their participation in the accreditation program and report their status correctly and ethically, throughout the process. Any misrepresentation by an institution will result in the removing of the Program from the accreditation process, loss of membership and forfeiture of any funds paid.

7.4 Developing a Nurturing Environment

7.4.1 Sincere Commitment to Children: The Program cares about, respects, and is committed to helping each child develop to his or her full potential. The provider is sincere and comfortable with children. The provider lovingly accepts all children and to enjoy being with them.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.4.1 Describe from the hiring and interview process how quality individuals are identified. Provide details from Staff Handbook, Training Manual or In-service Training how the Commitment to Children is taught, reinforced and monitored.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A policy is in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training how the Commitment to Children is taught, reinforced and monitored by the program.
- Standard not met: A policy is not in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training how the Commitment to Children is taught, reinforced and monitored by the program.

7.4.2 Affection: The provider shows affection to each child in some way. She holds or carries babies frequently, depending on their individual preferences as shown by expressions of discomfort, such as crying or fussing, as well as their expression of well-being, such as smiling and cooing as well as their body language or settling in or pulling away.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.4.2 Provide details from Staff Handbook, Training Manual or In Service Training how the provider assures staff show proper affection and care for children and those behaviors are taught, reinforced and monitored.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A policy is in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training how the affection and care of children is taught, reinforced and monitored by the program.
- Standard not met: A policy is not in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training how the affection and care of children is taught, reinforced and monitored by the program.

7.4.3 Responds To Child Behavior Indicators: The provider observes children's behavior, verbal and body language, and abilities. The provider uses this information to respond to each child. The provider recognizes signs of stress in children's behavior and responds with appropriate stress-reducing activities. For example, the provider responds to a baby's crying as promptly and effectively as possible.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.4.3 Provide details from Staff Handbook, Training Manual or In Service Training how the provider teaches staff to respond to Child Behavior Indicators and how those actions are monitored by the program.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A policy is in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training that teaches staff to respond to Child Behavior Indicators including how those actions are monitored by the program.
- Standard not met: A policy is not in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training that teaches staff to respond to Child Behavior Indicators including how those actions are monitored by the program.

7.4.4 Positive Attitudes: The provider shows positive attitudes toward bottle weaning, diapering, toilet learning, discipline, and special needs of children.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.4.4 Provide details from Staff Handbook, Training Manual or In-service Training how the provider assures staff demonstrates positive attitudes toward bottle weaning, diapering, toilet learning, discipline and special needs of children, and those behaviors are taught, reinforced and monitored.

Evaluation

- Standard met: A policy is in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training how staff demonstrates positive attitudes toward bottle weaning, diapering, toilet learning, discipline and special needs of children, and how those behaviors are taught, reinforced and monitored by the program.
- Standard not met: A policy is not in place from the hiring and interview process to ongoing training how staff demonstrates positive attitudes toward bottle weaning, diapering, toilet learning, discipline and special needs of children, and how those behaviors are taught, reinforced and monitored by the program.

7.5 Parent or Guardian Education

7.5.1 Parent Training Programs: The Program director plans and implements regularly scheduled parent/guardian programs that support parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforce the mission of the program. These programs take place at least quarterly. One aspect is to provide a procedure to helping the children to transition from graduating from this program to elementary school. A review of the child's academic, social and behavioral norms are discussed and a successful plan is developed for the child's next steps in their development. To broaden the opportunity of cultural understandings, recommendations would be made for participating in events for the child. There is a commitment to the parents by the program to assist the child's growth.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.5.1 Include documentation of programs provided during the past twelve months.

Evaluation

- Standard met: Programs supporting parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforcing the mission of the Program are offered quarterly to the parents/guardians of children attending the program.
- Standard partially met: Programs supporting parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforcing the mission of the Program are offered less than quarterly to the parents/guardians of children attending the program.
- Standard not met: Programs that support parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforce the mission of the Program are not offered to the parents/guardians of children attending the program.

7.5.2 Referral to Community Resources: The director is familiar with and establishes community services and resources regarding children with specific needs and provides this information to parents/guardians. The director and staff work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed including but not limited to: consultants, professional agencies to meet the needs and support of the families they serve; to aid children in their developmental stages; behavior challenges of the child(ren); connecting with the community's councils, service agencies, suburban, rural cultural resources.

The program engages with other community organizations to participate in local cultural events as well as state and educational organizations. The program also encourages their staff to participate in community and/or statewide service integration efforts.

The program leadership encourages families to work with staff to participate together involving community improvement. This may build relationships in the community, neighbors, and friends to become familiar with the program.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.5.2 Include a list of community resources available to the director. Describe how this information is provided to parents/guardians and how the director and staff work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed.

Evaluation

- Standard met: The director is familiar with community services and resources regarding children with specific needs and provides this information to parents/guardians. In addition, the director and staff work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed.
- Standard not met: Either the director is not familiar with community services and resources regarding children with specific needs, or the director and staff do not work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed.

7.5.3 Parent Survey: All parents/legal guardians of children enrolled in the early childhood program are given the opportunity to complete a survey in which they are asked to evaluate the quality of the program. A survey form is sent along with a letter that explains the purpose of the survey as an integral part of the program and solicits full participation. The letter also instructs the parents/guardian to return the completed survey sealed in an enclosed, pre-stamped and addressed envelope. The sealed surveys are opened and processed by a designated validator the day of the site visit and responses of the Survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration and staff with a summary included in the final evaluation report.

Indicators of Compliance

Self-study exhibit #7.5.3 Parent Assessment Survey and response plans.

Evaluation

- Exceptional compliance: A letter and survey are sent to all parents/guardians on a yearly basis and the results processed by the board chair or designee on the years between the scheduled on-site evaluation. Board Chair met with the director and staff to examine survey results and draft a response plan. A copy of each is included with this self-study document.
- Standard met: The letter and survey were sent to all parents/ guardians as part of this evaluation for accreditation process as described in the standard 7.5.3. The sealed surveys will be opened and processed by a designated validator the day of the site visit and responses of the survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration and staff with a summary included in the final evaluation report.
- Standard not met: The program did send out the survey or there were less than 25% response from the parent/guardian population.