

Early Explorers Learning Center

Policy Handbook



Mission: To provide a safe, affordable, and educational child care and for all children attending to receive the highest quality care possible.

Goal: To enhance social, cognitive, physical, and emotional development in all children.

Vision: To build a foundation for all children's present and future education.

Philosophy: We believe every child deserves a loving and enriched environment during their early years of life.

7 Victory Drive
Liberty, Mo 64068

(816) 781-2211

Curriculum

The curriculum provides for all areas of a child's development including physical, social, emotional, and cognitive. Each classroom environment is designed for the children to learn through exploration with safe and age appropriate activities that meet all learning needs.

Licensing

Early Explorers is licensed from the State of Missouri through ages 6 weeks to 10 years of age to provide services for 80 children. The rules were established for the health and safety of all the children at Early Explorers.

Enrollment Requirements

- Children must be between the ages 6 weeks through 10 years of age.
- All admission forms must be completed and delivered to Early Explorers before any children will be allowed to stay.
 - Enrollment Form/Application
 - Copy of Immunization Records
 - Information Card
 - Signature stating you read and accepted all terms in parent policy
 - Medicine Administration form if needed.
 - Photograph Permission Slip
 - Security Key
 - Physical 30 days after enrollment

All children are required to have current up-to-date shot records before they can enroll, or an appointment within 14 days from the first day of attendance.

Each child is to have a complete medical physical by a licensed physician with the first 30 days of enrollment. If the child has had a physical within one year before enrollment, it may be accepted with the health form completed by the child's physician. If form is not turned in before the 30th day after the day of enrollment, your child will not be able to return to Early Explorers until the physical form is completed.

There is a one-time enrollment fee of \$55, per child.

All records will be kept on file. **If any information changes throughout the time your child is attending Early Explorers, please inform us immediately so we can keep our files up to date.**

Infants and Toddlers 6 weeks-24 months

Infants begin to develop their skills and understanding of their world around them through their senses and physical actions. To enhance these skills, our infant program includes sensorimotor, language development, cognitive development, motor skills, and social development. Parents will receive a daily report to inform them on their child's day. All infants are on individual schedules which caregivers will follow: feeding, napping, and diapering.

Parents are responsible for providing the following items:

- Diapers/ Wipes
- Formula
- Bottles/Liners
- Infant Food
- Ointment
- Bibs
- Extra Change of Clothes
- Pacifiers

All items such as diapers and wipes are to be disposable. **Please mark your child's name on everything.** If any items brought in does not have the child's name on it, Early Explorers has the right to mark it.

Please keep in mind all bottles must be washed thoroughly before entering the center. Caregivers will rinse contents out of bottles that may look clean, but they are unable to give them proper sterilization.

Early Explorers will be providing the following items:

- Bed and bed clothes. Each child will be assigned to one bed and will not be shared among others.
- Toys, books, and all other items to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children.
- Each child will be read to frequently throughout each day.
- All meals will be provided for children able to eat table foods.

Activities such as tummy time, sing songs, finger plays, reading, or art will be done daily. Music will be played all throughout the day. Toddlers will also be doing activities that pertain to science, math, problem solving, music, and dramatic play. There is a weekly lesson plan that meets the needs of development for children.

Two Year Old Classroom

Two-year-olds are full of energy, enthusiasm, exploration and growing independence. Two year olds are learning new skills rapidly and cannot wait to use them. This classroom offer opportunities for children to grow through play, literacy, music, creative art, large and small motor activities, and sensory experiences. These activities will encourage your child to experiment and accomplish new things. Classroom routines allow children to easily transition between toddler ages to the preschool age. There will be daily reports sent home on how your child's day went.

Preschool Ages 3-5 Years of Age

Our preschool program offers a well-balanced preschool education that enhances social, emotional, cognitive, fine motor, large motor, and physical skills needed for development. Each child will be encouraged to work in different learning centers: art, science, computers, math, language, literacy, dramatic play, writing, and imagination block building. The children will have the opportunity to “explore” and learn about their environment. There will be a report sent home daily stating how your child's day went. Each activity is designed to develop self-esteem and positive feelings towards learning.

Our Pre-Kindergarten program offers a well-balanced curriculum that is slightly more structured and has more group activities. All activities are designed to meet all skills needed to be prepared to enter into kindergarten. Each child will be assessed throughout the year to see how they are developing socially and academically. These assessments are available to the parents at any time.

School Age Children

Early Explorers offers a safe place for parents that need childcare for before and after school. We also offer services on days that the local school district will not be in session. We do **not** offer transportation except for children who attend Manor Hill Elementary. If you have a transportation issue while attending another school, please contact Liberty School District to see what options are offered.

Supplies Needed for 2 Year Olds and Up

Parents are responsible for supplying the following items:

- Diapers/Pull Ups/ Wipes if needed
- Weather appropriate change of clothes that may stay at the center. This includes pants, shirt, socks, and underwear. If child is potty training, please bring several changes of underwear, socks, and pants.
- **One blanket and small pillow for naptime.** These are to be taken home on Fridays for laundering.
- If child would like to bring in a stuff animal or some sort of comforting item to sleep with, they may do so.
- Sports water bottle, clearly labeled with your child's name. These will be washed at the center.
- Toys are discouraged from bringing into the daycare. However, classes for 3 years of age and up will have show-n-tell, every Wednesday where they may bring anything in to share. Take into consideration there is a good chance this item may be broken or lost, so please bring in something inexpensive or has little meaning to it. Please avoid bringing in glass items.

There are several children throughout the center, so please mark your child's name on everything to avoid mix-ups.

Field Trips

Early Explorers does not remove children from the premises unless there will be an emergency evacuation. All field trips will be brought to the school for the children's entertainment such as puppet shows, magic shows, ice cream man, etc. There may be an extra fee for these activities which will be announced a few days before the event.

Inclement Weather Conditions

In case of inclement weather (icy roads and snow), Early Explorers strives to stay open if possible. In the event of closing, parents will be notified through our Facebook page or Learning Genie app.

Hours of Operation

Early Explorers will be open year around Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. We will be closed for the following holidays:

News Year's Day	Memorial Day	4 th Of July	Labor Day
Thanksgiving	Christmas	2:00 pm on Christmas Eve	

Note: If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the daycare will be closed the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the daycare will be closed the following Monday. Tuition will not be altered due to holidays.

If there is a low attendance, we will be closed the day after Thanksgiving. We will notify you a few weeks ahead of time if we will be closed.

Arrival and Departures

Please send your child clean, dressed, and all your necessary supplies needed for the day. This includes: diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, medication, and an extra set of clothes if they are needed to be replaced. Breakfast will be provided for all children able to eat table foods. Please do not send in food or drinks from home half consumed such as breakfast bars, donuts, juice, etc. Have your child complete their eating and/or drinking in the car before entering the building.

Please make your goodbyes brief (no more than a couple of minutes): when the departure is prolonged, it makes the transition for children more difficult. Never leave without telling your child goodbye, and if you are having a difficult time please keep your emotions hidden from your child. As a mother, I understand how difficult the separation can be, so you can call me 100 times that day to see how they are doing and I will not judge. ☺

Late Pick Up Policy

If your child is picked up after closing, there will be a \$5 charge for every 10 minutes after closing time. Please be courteous to our staff and pick your child up before closing time. If there is an emergency and your child will be picked up late, please call the daycare to inform us.

Child's Absences and/or Vacations

If your child is absent, there will not be a discount on the weekly's tuition. However, each family is given a one week vacation each calendar year. This week must be taken from the first day of enrollment to the anniversary of enrollment and must be in one consecutive week. Vacation weeks are not to be accumulated and will expire after one year. If you choose to use a vacation week, please inform Cathy or Sara to adjust your account.

If your child will not be attending daycare or will be later than the usual drop off time, **please inform us as soon as possible so we can plan the day's activities and meals accordingly.**

Pick Up Authorization

Anyone picking up a child must have authorization from the parents to be able to leave or visit a child. This person must have a valid ID before seeing any child in Early Explorers. In case of an emergency and no one on the authorization list will be able to pick up your child, you may call Early Explorers to authorize permission. Parents will provide us with a code word during enrollment that will be held in the child's file. When a call is made for authorization, the parent must provide us with the code word to verify who they are. If there is a court order on file to prevent the non-custodial parent from seeing their child, we must have a copy of the court order on file to prevent the non-custodial parent from picking up the child.

Parent Communication

We use the app, "Learning Genie" for our daily reporting. It will allow you to get updates on your child's day at school. It includes daily routines, feedings/meals, diapers/toileting, and naps. Also, activities, books, songs, your child's mood, pictures, school reminders, and any other information we feel you need to know. You will receive information to create your parent account and access codes.

There will be a monthly newsletter sent home informing parents about assessments, curriculum, and upcoming events at Early Explorers.

Parent conferences are not mandatory and are only scheduled upon a parent's request.

Parking Lot Safety

While in the parking lot of Early Explorers, hold your child's hand for their safety until they are inside the building. Children are to enter through the front door and not dropped off at the playground. All children are to be escorted into the building and must be signed in by an adult. Please do not allow siblings or anyone under the age of 18 to pick up or drop off your child. Our first priority is the safety of the children, so please do not allow your child to enter into the building without an adult.

Lock It Up

Unfortunately, we live in a society where theft happens. Please do not leave your car unlocked or running while inside Early Explorers. Also, do not leave other children in the car while entering Early Explorers. This is neglect and the proper authorities will be called if a staff member witnesses anyone doing this.

Dress Code

When your child is at daycare, they will be doing several messy activities that may stain clothing. We will do our best to protect their clothing during art or other messy projects, but please dress your child in play clothes that can get ruined. Early Explorers is not responsible for any clothing that may get damaged while children are learning and exploring.

We recommend your child to wear tennis shoes for the safety reasons. Sandals, flip flops, and boots have higher risk for children to fall. Also, if something is accidentally dropped on a child's foot, a tennis shoe protects them better.

Children will be going outside during the winter, so please dress them appropriately; coats, long pants, hats, and gloves.

Staff

All teachers are specifically screened to meet high standards of professionalism and competence. Each staff member will have continuous professional development classes while employed at Early Explorers. Our staff meets Missouri State requirements and is trained in CPR, first aid, and child abuse/neglect identification and prevention.

All staff members are required to have child abuse/neglect and criminal background screenings from the Division of Family Services.

Emergency Procedures

The State of Missouri requires emergency drills to be conducted as the following:

Fire Drill – Once a month

Tornado Drill – Once every 3 months

Lock Down Drill- Once every 3 months

In case of fire, the children will be escorted to the edge of the playground behind the building.

In case of a tornado, children will be escorted into the nearest restroom or kitchen.

In case of an evacuation emergency, all children will be escorted to the Liberty High School located at 200 Blue Jay Drive, Liberty Mo 64068. All parents will be notified immediately if this action is to take place.

Health and Safety

Our center is kept clean and sanitized on a daily basis to control germs and bacteria. Our staff practices and teaches children good hygiene habits. Hand washing will be done on staff and children before eating and handling food, after toileting, after using a tissue, and messy projects. Please help enforce these habits with your child by having them practice at home.

All toys, cots, shelves, tables, and chairs will be sanitized frequently on a daily basis. If an item is placed in a child's mouth, it will be put into a container immediately to be sterilized once the child is finished with it.

Accident/Injury Policies

Parents will be notified by telephone or text if an injury occurs. Staff will inform parents of other minor injuries through written incident reports that will be signed from the staff member, director, and parent. Copies of these reports will be given to parents upon request.

Immunization Records

All children enrolled must have an up to date immunization record on file at the center. Early Explorer's Learning Center restricts any child from enrolling in a license daycare without current immunizations shots.

Medicine

If a child is in need to have medication administered to them while attending Early Explorer's, a medicine release form must be filled out prior to administration. All medication must be in original bottle and have the child's name on it. If it is in a nonprescription bottle, clearly write your child's name on it. We must follow the proper dosage stated on the bottle unless we receive a written authorization by a medical physician. All medications and ointments will be stored in a locked cabinet located in the kitchen. If you need to pick up your child's medicine, please ask a staff member to retrieve it for you. Do not enter the kitchen to locate the medication yourself. When medication is no longer needed, it will be returned in the original bottle to the parents. All dosages will be documented when administered at the center. If child needs topical

ointment while attending EELC, a written consent from the parent will be allowed for that day only.

Illnesses

Children who have the following illnesses will not be allowed to attend Early Explores:

- Fever over 100 Degrees – Must be gone for 24 hours before returning.
- Strep Throat – Must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning.
- Chicken Pox – Must be completely scabbed before returning
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pinworms
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Unexplained rash
- Mouth Sores along with drooling
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Headache and stiff neck
- Persistent cough and discolored nasal discharge
- Severe scratching of the scalp

Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease

Please respect the health and safety of the big and little people at Early Explorer's Learning Center. If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms or is having unusual behavior (drowsiness, loss of appetite, crankiness), please do not allow them to attend that day. Your child will have a quicker recovery if they are home resting. **Have a back-up plan in case your child is not to attend and you are unable to miss work.** If your child has any contagious illnesses, please notify the center immediately.

If your child becomes ill during the time they are at Early Explorer's Learning Center, you will be contacted immediately. You will need to pick up your child or arrange for another person for pick up within one hour of our phone call.

Child Abuse and Neglect

By the State of Missouri, we are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse to the proper authorities. Parents will not be informed if there is a hotline call that is to be made. Our job is to keep all children safe from harm.

Holiday Parties

There will be sign up sheets for parents to volunteer at the parties and to donate different party items. An announcement will be stated in a newsletter when these holiday parties are scheduled. EELC celebrates different holidays throughout the year. Some holidays relate to certain religions. EELC recognizes all religious holidays, but does not enforce the celebrations on any child. If you have strong feelings towards any celebrations that are being conducted at EELC, please discuss this with Cathy.

Meals/Snacks

Early Explorer's will be providing nutritious breakfast for all children at 8:00 am daily. If your child has not arrived by 8:15, please feed them before arriving. Lunches will also be provided between 11-12:00 daily; depending on what class your child is in. There will also be a daily afternoon snack that will be served approximately 3:00 pm.

Children ages 2 years and up will eat together at the same time with their teacher at the table. Children will be encouraged to eat their foods, but will not be forced to consume all of it. Children who choose not to eat will not be served additional food until the next meal or snack. The meals and snacks for each week constantly vary in order to ensure the children receive a well-balanced diet. It is our goal to offer nutritious meals and snacks to the children in our care, as nutrition is a vital part of a child's health.

Parents must furnish bottles, formula or breast milk, and/or infant food. No solid food will be introduced to the infant without consent of the parent. Feeding schedules and instructions will be followed as directed by parents. Nursing mothers are welcome to leave breast milk with the staff.

Whole milk is provided for children 12-24 months of age, in compliance with the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines. Two percent milk is served to children two years and older. Children with milk allergies will be offered juice, soy milk, or water to consume with their meals.

The State of Missouri does not allow families to bring in meals or snack for their child. All meals and snacks are to be provided by EELC. Please do not send food, snacks, gum, and drinks to the center unless your child is unable to consume the food provided because of medical conditions.

Birthday parties may be celebrated at EELC by children bringing in treats to share with their class. All treats must be **STORE BOUGHT and PEANUT FREE**. If you would like your child to bring in treats, please talk to either Cathy or your child's teacher to let them know when you will be doing it.

Behavior Management and Discipline

All teachers at EELC manage classrooms in an age appropriate and non-punitive manner. All teachers are trained in areas of discipline and behavior management which will instruct children towards a positive behavior that will teach children on what they should do rather than telling them what not to do. For an example, instead of saying “Don’t throw the pea gravel” they will be told “Keep the pea gravel on the ground so one gets hurt”.

If discipline needs to take place in the classroom, teachers will quickly intervene to redirect the child to a more appropriate activity. Teachers will intervene in a non-harsh manner and give suggestions to the children to guide appropriate behavior. This is a teacher language with the children to begin identifying their feelings and learn to deal with them in a socially acceptable manner. On occasion, a child may be asked to sit away from the group in a safe place to gain control before returning. This usually takes one minute for each year of the child’s age. There may be times when a child is removed from the classroom into another room to keep himself/herself safe along with the rest of the children. Parents will be informed when this action occurs. There will be a meeting discussed among the teachers and parents to create a plan to assist the child towards a more of a positive behavior to allow him/her to be successful with their early learning. Children can have behavior issues due to illnesses, tiredness, and hungriness. If we feel your child is tired, we may have them lie down and rest. If they are hungry, we may give them a snack. If they are coming down with an illness, we will call parents to inform them on what we are observing.

Disenrollment

If a child has an ongoing behavior of physical abuse towards other children and/or teachers, there will be documentation stating this behavior which will be presented to and signed from the parents. If there are three documentations written, the family of that child will be given one week’s notice to terminate their enrollment at EELC.

EELC has the right to terminate care of any child for the following reasons:

- If a parent or adult of a child becomes physically or verbally abusive to any child or staff member.

- Unusual or unreasonable demands of time or attention from staff, which impacts the education of the remaining children.
- The child's needs cannot be met by EELC due to unique requirements or behaviors.
- Continuous violations of policies as set forth in the Parent Handbook.
- Non-payment of tuition.
- EELC has the right to refuse service to anyone at any time.

Registration and Enrollment Fee

There is a \$55 one-time enrollment fee that must be paid before your child would be enrolled in EELC. This fee is NOT renewed every year unless you choose to terminate your enrollment and re-enroll them in the future. There is also a family discount of \$10 for each extra child.

Tuition is due on Monday of each week. This can be paid by check, cash, debit, or ACH (automatic clearing house) transaction through Clay County Savings Bank. If paying by check, there is a slot on the sign in table to place it. If by cash, please see Cathy or Sara to handle the transaction (do not place it in the check slot). If paying by debit or credit, there will be an extra 5% fee added to each transaction.

If a check or ACH transaction is returned because of insufficient funds, this matter is to be taken care of before your child is allowed to return to EELC. If this matter isn't taken care of within 10 days of the deposit, the party responsible will be turned over to the prosecuting attorney.