Haywood Community College

Regional Center for the Advancement of Children

Parent Handbook

2025-2026



**Physical Address:**

**235 Freedlander Drive**

**Clyde, NC 28721**

**Mailing Address:**

**185 Freedlander Drive Clyde, NC 28721**

**828.565.4187**

**Greetings to you and your child! We welcome you to our program and hope you will find a warm and friendly home away from home for your family here. We serve children starting at age 6 weeks. Our hours of operation are 7:30 am- 5:30 pm. We will do our absolute best to meet your expectations in providing quality care for your child. In turn, we ask for your cooperation in meeting various state and college guidelines for our program**. **These include:**

# Safe Arrival and Departure

As a Healthy and Safety precaution parents and guests are not permitted to enter the classroom space for any reason if the room is occupied. All drop offs and pickups must be done at the classroom door with the teacher. We do not allow children to walk to their classroom without a parent or guardian, even if they are being watched and supervised from a distance.

All children will be required to be at the center no later than 9:00am; NC Pre-K children should be in their classroom no later than 8:15am unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the parent, director, and classroom due to an appointment or if the child will be absent. If your child has a Dr.’s appointment, let us know in advance that you will be late arriving to the center. The cut off time for children that have morning appointments is 11:00am. We understand that things happen from time to time so if you were to be running late one morning you must call the front desk at 565-4050 before 9:00 so that a lunch can be ordered. We cannot accept a child that we are not prepared to feed. If the call is not answered you may leave a message to let us know that you will be bringing your child and we will order a lunch. Please make every effort to have your child to the center on time. It is important for children to have structure and we appreciate your efforts on helping us provide that for your child.

Please sign your child into the center each day and leave a phone number where you can be reached. These sheets are located at the front desk. It is very important that you leave a good working number to be reached at that day. This is the number we will use to contact you if we were to have an emergency involving your child. Each child must be accompanied/and picked up by an adult age 18 or older unless they are the biological parent or guardian of the child. Children will not be released to anyone that is not listed on the form filled out on the application. If you need to make changes or update any information you may request to do so at any time. Without legal paperwork/court orders a biological parent/guardian cannot be refused to pick up or visit with the child so please make sure that the center has the most recent custody/visitation paperwork on file. If you have an emergency, you can email the center and give permission for a new person to pick up this documentation will be added to your child’s folder. Individuals picking up children will be asked to show photo ID if the staff working the front desk is not familiar with them.

**For your child’s protection, there will be no exceptions made to this policy.**

Please greet and notify the staff in the classroom that your child is present. Many times, staff are busy with children and activities and may not be aware that you have arrived if you do not directly speak with the staff.

## On Time Pick up

Our staff is hired to provide childcare services for a specific number of hours each day. It is important that you share with the Center Director at enrollment what times you will need your child to be in the Center each day so that schedules can be worked out to provide your child with the best possible experience. Any changes to your schedule should be brought to our attention as soon as possible. Please try to maintain a regular schedule as much as possible so that your child can establish a routine and develop a sense of stability during their time with our staff. If, on occasion, you find you will be late or need to change your times for care, please let us know so we can share with your child**. A fee will be assessed for late pickup in the amount of $1.00 per minute per child.** If your child is left after hours and the center has not been notified, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will be notified. Children that are consistently picked up late may be dismissed from care.

## Application and Registration

1. Parents must meet with the Center Director or Education Coordinator for a pre-enrollment conference prior to attendance in the program.
2. Parents will be expected to complete:
   * Application Form
   * Children’s Medical Report
   * Immunization History
   * Discipline & Behavior Management Policy
   * Child Release & Emergency Information Form
   * Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules
   * Business Office Payment Form
   * Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) food forms
   * Volunteer Policy
   * Center fire and evacuation form
   * Operational Policy Receipt
   * Safety agreement
   * Parental Permission for Observations
   * Audio/Visual Surveillance

**Parents of infants will have additional forms such as:**

* + Infant Feeding Schedule
  + Child Food Program Provision of Breast milk or Infant Formula and Provision of Baby Food and Safe Sleep Policy

All forms must be completed and turned in to the Kathy Stovall, RCAC Receptionist, **prior** to enrollment in the program.

You will be required to update immunization and medical information throughout your child’s enrollment at the Center.

## Registration fees

A $50.00 registration fee per child will be charged at the time of enrollment. If a child withdraws for any reason and then wishes to re-enroll a subsequent $50.00 registration fee will be charged. An annual registration fee of $50.00 will also be charged for every child in September, up to two children per family ($100)

## Fees

Fees will be charged on the current schedule approved by the Haywood Community College Board of Trustees. Fees are to be paid by the 8th of the month. Fees are assessed by enrollment not by attendance and or operating days.

A $25.00 late fee will be assessed for fees not paid by the **10th day** of the month.

A two week notice is required for withdrawing children. Refunds are not given for early withdrawal or if the withdrawal is past the 15th of the month. The full month will be charged. All payments will be made at the Cashier’s office in the Student Services building or on line.

**All fees that are more than 10 days past due may result in termination of care.**

## Subsidized Care

Subsidized Child Care assists parents in helping pay for child care and is available for families who meet eligibility requirements. All parents who feel they may qualify for subsidized child care, or are having difficulty paying for their child care should contact their local subsidized child care social worker at (828)586-5561. Parents must verify proof of their family income. The fee is determined by the social worker and a Child Care

Voucher/Action Notice will be completed. The parent fee will be printed on the Voucher/Action notice along with the date the fee begins and the times the child is eligible for care. Any changes should be reported to your social worker. All fees that are more than 10 days past due may result in termination of care request being sent to subsidy and they will issue a termination of services. To avoid loss of child care please pay your fees on time.

## Returned Check Policy

If you pay with a check and it is returned for any reason, a $25.00 returned check fee will be added to the amount owed and must be paid to the HCC Cashier’s office. Cash only is accepted for a returned check. More than one returned check will require that all payments be in cash.

Current Fees -Please ask the Director or the Education Coordinator for a copy of the current fee schedule.

## Food

We employ sound nutritional practices in our program because of the recognized importance of nutrition in the growth and development of young children. We provide children with breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Our menus are based on what children like and meet the guidelines of the US Department of Agriculture food program. Children need to be present at the designated meal times to be served a meal or snack. Special dietary considerations should be discussed in advance with the Center Director. For children that have allergies or dietary restrictions a Meal Modification Form is required and it must be signed by a Physician or a recognized Medical Authority. This is a requirement from the CACFP program. Our breakfast for all classrooms for children age one and over ends at 8:45am. Meals and snacks are included in our regular tuition rate and thus those students on subsidy or in the N.C. Pre-K classroom will not be charged for food.

1. **Feeding policy for infants**

Infants will be held by the caregiver while the child is taking a bottle. Bottle propping by the caregiver is not allowed. Toddlers will not be allowed to carry their cup throughout the classroom. The child will sit at an appropriate chair or table to feed themselves or be assisted. Parents need to inform the staff of any change in eating habits as soon as possible so that the change can be noted on the feeding schedule posted in the classroom.

The Center will provide Parent’s Choice with Iron formula. All children need bottles labeled with their name and the date daily. If your child requires a different formula you will need to provide it in bottles labeled with your child’s name and the date. Bottles of breast milk shall be dated and labeled with the child’s name. All breast milk shall be used only for the intended child.

Bottles that contain formula, milk, or juice shall be refrigerated until the child desires to be fed. All contents remaining after the feeding will be discarded. This is a sanitation regulation for all child care. You may want to bring more bottles with smaller amounts so that it will not be wasted.

Breast Feeding - We promote breastfeeding in our center. Moms you are welcome to come into the center and breastfeed your baby whenever and as often as you like. A private room is available for use should you wish to use it.

## Field Trips

There is a permission form in our application packet for your child to go out of the fenced areas of the playground. Our field trips consist of moving around the campus on nice or special days. Parents are always welcome to join us on these outings when they are planned in advance!

## Clothing

Please send a complete set of extra clothes with your child’s name on them for emergencies that will be kept at the center. Please keep in mind seasonal changes and send a sweater or jacket along for outdoor play. Please send your child in sneakers or other lace up shoes. Flip flops and open toed sandals create a hazard on the playground and should not be worn to school. If your child does not have a change of clothing when needed you will be called to bring one or to pick up your child within 30 minutes.

When children do not make it to the restroom and have an accident in their clothing we are not allowed to wash or rinse out the clothing. We can only place the clothing in a bag and tie up to send home.

Remember… active children playing indoors and outdoors will get their clothes wet, muddy and dirty. Be sure your child is dressed in comfortable, casual clothes so they can freely participate in fun, creative, and sometimes messy activities that promote valuable learning experiences.

## Toys/Jewelry

We are adequately equipped with age appropriate toys and materials. We do not allow children to bring toys from home unless requested by the classroom due to very strict guidelines from licensing about the type of toys we can make available to the children (Show and Tell). Toys that depict violence are not allowed at any time. (Guns, knives, etc.)

If your child has an item for rest time it will be stored in the cubbies or sent home each day in a backpack. Rest time items should be small and soft. Please label these items with your child’s name for easy identification.

If a child breaks or otherwise destroys furniture or other classroom items in a willful or purposeful way parents will be responsible for the cost of replacing the item.

As a safety precaution, children are not allowed to wear any type of necklaces including teething necklaces.

## Staff/Child Ratios

Please review our STAR Rated license located on the bulletin board in the lobby above the water fountain. Staff/Child ratios for each classroom are posted in the classroom and shows how many children can be cared for by the number of staff. At the beginning and end of the day classrooms may be combined and the staff/child ratio is always for the youngest child in the room. Staff is aware of the ratios and the procedure to follow if additional help is required.

In the untimely event that we are unable to meet the required child to staff ratios, we will be forced to make classroom closure decisions. This can happen during flu season, other outbreaks of illnesses and weather related conditions. Closures may affect specific classrooms, multiple classrooms, or the center as a whole including full day room closures, late openings or early closures. We will make every possible effort to avoid closures and every attempt to create minimal impacts on our parents and families. The Early Childhood industry in NC is in a state of crisis due to educational requirements vs. hiring and availability of individuals that meet those guidelines. Many no longer enter the field of early Childhood due to minimal pay and benefits failing to line up with required educational levels. If the industry paid teachers what they are worth, parents would not be able to afford the tuition. It is a very broken system. We have an extensive wait list and work diligently to serve every child possible while meeting the parameters of our staffing numbers. We appreciate your patience and cooperation in these moments of closures.

## Staff Professional Development

All staff members have or are completing Early Childhood Credentials if they are working in a classroom. All Lead Teachers have or are completing an AA Degree in Early Childhood Education. All staff members are required to have CPR and First Aid that must be kept current. To allow for staff to attend workshops or have training mandated by the Division of Child Development the Center will be closed from time to time for our staff to attend training sessions. Parents will be notified in advance of center closings so that they may arrange for other child care. Parent fees are not refundable for those days.

RCAC will close up to 5-7 days per year for necessary and required Staff Development.

## Creative Curriculum

As a center we have chosen to use the Creative Curriculum in all of our classrooms. It includes goals and objectives for children’s learning in all areas of development: social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The Creative Curriculum is a developmentally appropriate program and takes each child from where they are and allows them to progress at their own rate.

Children in the NC Pre-K classroom are screened using the Dial 3 and the results will be discussed with parents.

We do make referrals to Children’s Developmental Services Agency for children under age three if we feel services are needed and also to Haywood County Schools for children age three and over. These referrals would be discussed with the parent and they would give permission.

## Vacation and Holidays

A schedule of holidays observed by the center will be provided at enrollment and are posted in the lobby. The Centers budget expenses do not change depending upon missed days. Therefore, monthly tuition will remain the same during personal vacations and the scheduled holidays when the Center is closed. This also includes personal illnesses, emergency closings, teacher workdays, and inclement weather days.

Please note that RCAC is closed along with the college during the Christmas and New Year Holidays.

Our NC Pre-K classroom will also have 5-7 required Teacher Workdays that the classroom will be closed for **all** children in that class. These days will be posted and shared at the beginning of the school year. **There will not be any care provided for any child on these teacher workdays.** Please be prepared to make other arrangements for your Pre-K child. No refunds will be given for the scheduled holidays or workdays.

1. **Inclement Weather**

Announcements regarding closures or delayed schedules, will be posted on the College’s website, WLOS and a notification will go out on the Class Dojo App. Parents will also receive alert messages through the HCC Emergency Notification.

If **Haywood Community College** is closed, then the Center is closed. If Haywood Community College is on a two hour delay, then the Center will open at 9:30 to accept children. In the event of a delayed opening, all children must be signed in no later than 10:00am.

The Centers budget expenses do not change depending upon program closures. Therefore, monthly tuition will remain the same during program closures. This includes personal illnesses, emergency closings, teacher workdays, and inclement weather days.

In the untimely event that we are ever unable to meet required child to staff ratios, we will be forced to make further classroom closure decisions. This can happen during flu season and other outbreaks of illnesses or when travel conditions prevent our staff from getting to work safely. Haywood county is a very mountainous region and road conditions vary greatly from area to area. We also have multiple staff that live outside of Haywood County.

Closures may affect specific classrooms, multiple classrooms, or the center as a whole including full day room closures, late openings or early closures. We will make every possible effort to avoid closures and every attempt to create minimal impacts on our parents and families. The Early Childhood industry as a whole in NC is in a state of crisis due to educational requirements vs. hiring and availability of individuals that meet those guidelines. Many no longer enter the field of early Childhood due to minimal pay and benefits failing to line up with required educational levels. If the industry paid teachers what they are worth, parents wouldn’t be able to afford the tuition. It is a very broken system. We have an extensive wait list and work diligently to serve every child possible while meeting the parameters of our staffing numbers. We appreciate your patience and cooperation in these moments of closures.

## Tobacco Free Policy

HCC is a tobacco free campus as of January 1, 2008. The use of tobacco products is prohibited on HCC property. This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Campus security will issue citations for violations.

1. **Campus Security**

HCC Security & HCC SRO patrols the campus at all times. If you need assistance please call 828-734-5410 or 828-593-8477.

## Employment Policy

HCC is an affirmative action, equal employment opportunity employer that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, political affiliation, or national/ethnic origin.

## Discipline Policy

The goal of effective discipline is to teach the child self-control. This is, to teach each child how to live usefully and happily with himself/herself and others. Good discipline results in a child who conducts themselves in an appropriate manner even when adults are not present. The benefits of respect, consistency, and positive reinforcement are more effective than corporal punishment.

The policy of the North Carolina Division of Child Development states that no corporal punishment may be used. Our full policy will be part of your enrollment information. At no time is corporal punishment allowed by staff and parents are not allowed to use corporal punishment while at the Center.

You will be given a Discipline and Behavior Management Policy form in your parent packet that covers our complete discipline policy.

1. **Behavior Action Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to guide Center staff in managing children’s behavior and to inform parents/guardians of the behavior management goals and techniques of the Center. The goal of all behavior management techniques used by staff is to promote the safety, well-being, comfort, and happiness of all children in the Center, and to create an environment that encourages the development of physical, emotional, cognitive, and social skills. Our behavior management techniques will be used to teach children acceptable behavior which is behavior that is safe and that shows respect for the rights, feelings, and property of self and others.

When a child is having a problem in the classroom we will do everything possible to work with the child and family in order to prevent the child from being removed from the program. We understand that children all respond in different ways and are not all alike, however when a child’s behavior reaches the point where they are a danger to themselves or others (children and staff) or creates a disruption to the point that others in the classroom are unable to function then action must be taken. **Physical abuse of other children or staff will not be tolerated.**

**The Behavior Action policies and procedures are as follows:**

1. Children will be presented with positive models of acceptable behavior.
2. Behavior guidance will be based on the developmental needs of the children in attendance.
3. Redirection and constructive techniques will be used by staff.
4. Staff will assist the children with identifying their emotions and feelings in effort to help them understand their feelings and appropriately process them.
5. Emphasis will always be on positive behaviors.
6. Children will be taught to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior in an effort to reduce conflict.
7. All children and staff members will be protected and provided a safe and secure environment.

## Behavior Action Plan

* Staff will redirect the child from the negative behavior.
* Staff will reassess classroom environment and make necessary changes.
* Staff will use positive methods and language when dealing with child.
* Staff will praise positive behaviors.
* Children will be reminded of the class rules and the consequences frequently
* Staff will consistently apply consequences for when rules are not followed within the developmental understanding of the child’s age range.
* Child will be given verbal warnings and reminders.
* Child will be given time to regain control – for children three and older this may include separation from the other children in the classroom in a quiet and comforting space but still in view and under the supervision of the classroom staff.
* If a child has to be removed from the classroom and taken to an administrative area, parents will be called to pick their child up for the remainder of the day. – Children cannot be in areas not approved for child care and we are not staffed to provide one on one care for children.
* A child’s disruptive behavior will be documented and Parents will receive a verbal communication from the classroom staff to identify the problem and to discuss ways that home and school can reinforce the wanted behavior.
* A written note will be sent home detailing the behavior with a request for a parent conference that will involve the teacher, parent, and the Director and or Education Coordinator.
* A referral will be made to the appropriate agency for support for parents and staff with parent consent.

At any time parents may be asked to pick up their child for the remainder of the day and may also be asked to keep the child at home for a period of time (to be determined by the Director and or Education Coordinator) until a parent conference can be held to discuss a plan of action.

If after the remedial actions above have been exhausted and have not been successful and the behavior continues to be a danger to themselves or others in the classroom or a disruption to the learning process and safe routine of the classroom the parents will be given in writing a date that the child will no longer be able to attend the program.

The Behavior Action Plan is intended to address concerns about a child’s behavior that make the classroom unsafe or an environment where learning cannot take place. It is our goal to help every child to learn the tools that they need to be successful in their future learning environments and in life. It is not the intent of this plan to label a child or not provide care for the child.

**NC Pre-K behavior action plan (Per NC DHHS Guidelines):**

The NC Pre-K classroom follows special guidelines in regards to children with behavioral challenges. When a child presents challenges that affect their learning and/or safety in the classroom, the following steps will occur:

* The director will notify the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator and Haywood County Schools Preschool Exceptional Children Program for assistance and assessments.
* The NC Pre-K Contract Administrator, Director, Education Coordinator, teacher, family members, and other qualified professionals (therapist, Healthy Social Behavior specialists, child care health consultant, or school system special education department, for examples), will develop a support plan to support the child’s placement and participation in the program.
* The Division of Child Development and Early Education will be notified when the support plan developed and implemented requires an alternative placement for the child.
* The director shall not suspend or expel any child from the NC Pre-K classroom until the preceding steps have been followed.
* The director will not shorten the 6.5 hours of the child’s Pre-K day unless the child poses a risk to themselves or others including: physical aggression like hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, throwing objects, pinching, pushing, and biting; destroying property; tantrum behaviors that might include physical aggression listed above; verbal aggression including yelling, threats, and screaming; persistent and prolonged crying that is disruptive or interferes with the child’s activities; or touching other children’s private areas and/or removing clothing.

1. **Biting**

Whenever a child is bitten by another child, both parents are notified in writing with an Incident Report that a bite occurred. Children’s and family names and/or identifying information is never disclosed. If the bite breaks the skin the parent of the injured child will be called immediately. Incident reports are always provided to parents of the child that was bitten and to the parents of the child that bit. A child that bites three times in one day will be sent home for the day and a if a bite breaks the skin, the child that bit will be sent home for the remainder of the day.

* Staff will immediately give their attention to the bitten child to comfort them and wash the injured area thoroughly with warm soapy water. An ice pack will be provided to assist with bruising, swelling and/or pain. Meeting the immediate needs of the injured child takes the attention off of the biter by consoling the child that was injured.
* The child who bit will be redirected to another area and the teacher will speak with the child about biting on the child’s developmental level. Books and other children’s literature will be made available for staff to read to both children involved to heighten understanding and awareness of social cues, feelings and emotions.
* Staff will watch to see if there is a pattern to the time of day, the activity, or a specific child to try and identify triggers. If a trigger is identified staff will immediately take steps to avoid another incident. The biter will be given consistent positive attention following observed positive behaviors.
* If the biting behavior becomes continuous and consistently inflicts injury on another child or staff, parents of the child that is biting, the Director, Education Coordinator, and teacher will have a conference(s) to discuss the next steps.
  + These steps could include, but are not limited to: providing teething toys/objects to mitigate biting, the use of teething gel with the parents written consent, moving the child to a different classroom, etc.
  + Parents will be asked to provide suggestions. If biting is a behavior that occurs at home, teachers and parents can work together so that biting can be addressed consistently the same way at school as at home. Teacher identified triggers for the behavior will be addressed with the parent as well along with some possible solutions or recommendations.
* At the parents request, a referral to CDSA (Children’s Developmental Service Agency) can be summited for evaluation to potentially identify and address any causes or factors relating to the biting behavior. We will follow CDSA’s suggestions in the classroom to the fullest extent possible.
* With parental agreement, we will partner with Southwestern Child Development by allowing a trained professional to conduct observations in the classroom to offer ideas, suggestions and strategies in the classroom to assist teachers in controlling and curbing the biting behavior.

We recognize and fully understand that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior, especially in the first two years, however, we also must consider the health and safety of all the children in our care. It is important to note that consistent and overly aggressive biting can at times be indicators of other underlying markers and may not necessarily be considered a developmentally appropriate behavior in some children.

## If the biting behavior is consistent and deemed to be a health and safety concern, there is a potential for dismissal after multiple prevention strategies have been attempted and implemented as stated above. In the unfortunate event that a child must be dismissed from the program, the parent will be given up to two weeks to find alternate childcare which would be determined by the Director and Education Coordinator by taking into consideration the level of the health and safety concern for all children involved.

## Health and Safety Policies

We hope to meet your expectations for quality, consistent child care. We cannot however, care for sick children in our facility. Please have a back-up plan in place if your child becomes ill.

## RCAC Infectious Disease Policy

Child Care centers are, unfortunately, places where children are frequently exposed to illnesses. In order to reduce the risk of spreading infection throughout the center, the following policy will apply:

**Children may NOT attend when:**

* Child does not feel well enough to participate in daily activities of the center.

If your child is not well enough to go outside or to take part in all the activities of the classroom they should not attend. If your child becomes ill once at the center you will be called to pick up your child and the child must be picked up within the hour or sooner. Children that are not picked up in a timely manner, may not be able to return to care at RCAC. We consider it of utmost importance to protect the health and wellness of all our little ones and teachers; we must also follow strict State and Health requirements and guidelines around providing sick care for children. We cannot provide care for sick children.

* Child has any of the following symptoms:

* 1. Fever of 100.4 degrees F. or greater
  2. Signs or symptoms of severe illness such as persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing , wheezing, lethargy
  3. Diarrhea: change from child’s usual stool pattern. Such as increased frequency of stools. Three or more loose or watery stools.
  4. Vomiting
  5. Mouth sores
  6. Unexplained Rash/blisters

If your child has been sent home due to illness, they can return **24 hours after they no longer have symptoms**.

Any and all open or “wet” skin lesions, including injuries, rashes or blisters, etc., must be covered with an absorbent bandage. If bandaging is not possible, the child must remain out of care until lesions are dry. Parents are responsible for covering lesions and changing bandages when necessary; childcare staff are not permitted to do so.

* If your child has been diagnosed from a health care provider for any of the following, they cannot return until 24 hours after treatment and /or no longer contagious. (Remember, however, that if a child is sent home at 9:00am on a Tuesday, he/she still cannot return until Thursday)
  + 1. COVID – (Subject to change) 24 hours after child is free of fever, has improving symptoms without medication such as Tylenol or Advil and feels well enough to participate in all activities
    2. Infectious conjunctivitis/Pink eye – 24 hours after first treatment and eyes no longer showing signs of discharge.
    3. Scabies, head lice, other infestations – 24 hours after treatment and FREE OF ALL NITS
    4. Impetigo – until 24 hours after treatment started and all sores have dried over
    5. Strep Throat, scarlet fever, or other strep infection – 24 hours after treatment and child is free of fever without medication such as Tylenol or Advil and feels well enough to participate in activities
    6. Pertussis – until 5 days after treatment started
    7. Tuberculosis (TB) – until a health care provider determines, that the disease is not contagious
    8. Chicken Pox – until 6 days after start of rash or all sores have dried over
    9. Mumps – until 9 days after start of symptoms
    10. Hepatitis A – until 7 days after start of symptoms
    11. Measles – until 6 days after start of rash
    12. Rubella (German measles) – until 6 days after start of rash
    13. Oral Herpes– until lesions are dry and no new lesions are visible or present
    14. Shingles (if lesions cannot be covered) – until lesions have healed
    15. Flu –24 hours after child is free of fever without medication such as Tylenol or Advil and feels well enough to participate in activities.
    16. Hand Foot and Mouth Disease – until all lesions are dry and no new lesions are appearing or present.

This is a long but incomplete list of illnesses to which your child could possibly be exposed to while in group care. Please understand when the center staff asks you to keep your child at home; it is for the safety and well-being of the other children and staff, as well as your child.

If asked to bring a doctor’s note for your child to return to the center the note **must say your child is not contagious and when the child was seen in doctor’s office**. The note cannot just say the child was seen today. We do not need the doctor to name what the child may have (this would be a violation of HIPPA) but we ask that parents please share with us if it is contagious.

If a child has a rash or skin condition and has Doctor’s note to return to care, but still has open, increasing or additional skin lesions the child must remain home until all lesions are dry and no new lesions are present or forming.

If a child has a Doctors note to return to care and still exhibiting symptoms of illness and or is unable to participate in classroom activities the child must remain home until able to do so.

The center staff will inform you if your child may have been exposed to a contagious or infectious disease while at the center if we have been informed. In return we would appreciate to be informed by the parents if your child has been exposed to a contagious or infectious disease while at home or away from the center.

In the event that a direct family member, residing in the same home as the child, becomes sick with either Flu, COVID or RSV, the child(ren) must be kept home from care until the family member is fever free, with improving symptoms. The child should be monitored for symptoms of illness during this time. If the child becomes symptomatic, please refer to the above guidelines. Often when an illness is in the home the child will inadvertently carry the illness into the classroom exposing the other children and staff at which point the illness spreads rapidly amongst the other children and throughout the center.

In the event that we are unable to meet required child to staff ratios, we will be forced to make classroom closure decisions. This can happen during flu season and other outbreaks of illnesses. Closures may affect specific classrooms, multiple classrooms, or the center as a whole including full day room closures, late openings or early closures. We will make every possible effort to avoid closures and every attempt to create minimal impacts on our parents and families. The Early Childhood industry as a whole in NC is in a state of crisis due to educational requirements vs. hiring and availability of individuals that meet those guidelines. Many no longer enter the field of early Childhood due to minimal pay and benefits failing to line up with required educational levels. If the industry paid teachers what they are worth, parents, in turn would not be able to afford the tuition.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation in these moments of closures and appreciate your efforts in helping us keep all of our little ones and teachers healthy.

## Medications

Parents must personally administer medications (antibiotics, cough medications, etc.) before and after child care services are needed with the exception of Emergency medications and diaper creams or sun screens.

All emergency medications (Inhalers, Epipens and Benadryl) must come through the office, given to the Director and require a Doctor’s signature. Diaper Creams and sunscreens can be given to your child’s teacher.

All applicable permission forms must be signed and dated. All medications and cream’s must be within the expiration date.

1. **In case of an EMERGENCY**

During the enrollment you will sign a Child Release and Emergency Information form and have it notarized. In case of emergency center staff will take appropriate action to notify 911, transport the child to get medical care and notify the parent/guardian immediately.

Emergency phone numbers are posted near all phones and all staff have been instructed on how to act appropriately to emergencies. A first aid kit and AED are located at the center and all staff are trained in CPR/First Aid.

## It is critical that we have telephone numbers where you may be reached in case of an emergency or illness. Please keep us informed of any changes and update contact information as often as needed,

**The RCAC has a full evacuation procedure that is documented and approved** **by the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education.** Part of that procedure involves RCAC and College staff to load children into their vehicles / HCC vehicles and transport to pre-approved evacuation sites. HCC staff will contact parents by phone as soon as possible during or after the evacuation is complete and children are safe in their new location.

## Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

North Carolina law states that anyone who cares for children are required to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. We are required to follow this law accordingly and we will cooperate with officials as needed.

## Family Engagement

## Parent must be present during the enrollment process and are required to visit the center with their child prior to the child’s first day.

* Provide current medical and immunization information for their child.
* Immediately notify the staff of any changes with your contact information or changes to who can or cannot pick up your child.
* Participate as you are able in various events planned throughout the year. We try to schedule events at different times so that all families will have a chance to participate.
* Notify the Lead Teacher of any concern you have and also the Center Director or Education Coordinator. We will work together to find a solution. We have information about community resources and can help determine if your child could benefit from them.
* Parents are welcome in the center any time we are open; however, **must** check in with the Receptionist at the front desk. We want this to be a place where you and your child feel comfortable so do not hesitate to call, ask questions, or stop by. We may have to limit access at times for Health or Safety purposes.
* Parents are enrolled in receiving notifications from our CrisisManager app upon enrollment at the center. Parents will receive different notifications through this app via call and text. It is important that we have current contact information.
* Our NC Pre-K classroom uses the Ready Rosie website and app to send home learning games and videos to families. These activities help promote the home-school communication through enrichment activities and are optional for parents to sign up and start using. Parents will be given an invite through their phone number or email to sign up with at the beginning of the NC Pre-K school year.
* Parents are welcome and encouraged to volunteer here at the RCAC! See the front desk or Director for details?

1. **Families of Limited English Proficiency/English Language Learners**

We encourage and welcome children and families of Limited English Proficiency to apply and enroll in our center and in our NC Pre-K classroom. We will support all cultures and languages through classroom materials and written communications in each family’s language, to the fullest extent possible.

1. **Transportation Policy**

We do not transport students in vehicles to or from the center, except in case of an emergency situation or in the event of a planned field trip

1. **Transitions Between Classrooms**

We recognize that young children need consistency and routine to help feel safe and secure in their environments. When we anticipate a change in a child’s classroom, such as a move up to the next-age classroom, we plan for the child to make multiple prior visits to their new classroom. This helps the child to get to know the new teaching staff and the routines of their new classroom. Teachers will communicate with each other and the family about the child during the transition process.

Our NC Pre-K classroom further prepares for transitions by staggering the entry of children into their classroom each fall. They will do home or center visits with parents at the beginning of the year and parent-teacher conferences throughout the year to communicate the child’s progress with families. In preparation for the transition to kindergarten, the NC Pre-K classroom teacher prepares a final transition report of students’ progress using Teaching Strategies Gold that goes to the students’ kindergarten teachers.

Further information for families of rising kindergarteners can be found at <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Kindergarten-Search>. Here families can research public, private, and charter schools in the area of their child’s pre-kindergarten classroom and the opportunities available for kindergarten.

**Important phone numbers:**

Denise Worley, Program Director 565-4187 (text 828-777-1719)

Karen Hoyle, Education Coord. 565-4052

Makenzie McMahon, Receptionist 565-4050

HCC Cashier’s Office 565-4161

School Resource Officer 593-8477

HCC Security 734-5410

Coordinator of Campus Safety 564-5113