

Haywood Community College

Regional Center for the Advancement of Children

Parent Handbook

2026-2027



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 and we offer several care options. 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.

Please Note: All belongings should come to school in a CLEAR backpack. We often find forgotten hazardous items and or medications in children's backpacks. Remember, that backpacks are stored in children's cubbies, within reach of all the children in the classroom and children are very curious! With clear backpacks, we can see what is coming in and out of the center/classrooms and keep our little ones safe. Infants and 1 year old's only need a small clear bag for cups and bottles daily. A gallon size Ziplock bag is perfect! Diapers and changes of clothes can be kept onsite and do not need to be transported back and forth daily.

1. Safe Arrival and Departure

As a Healthy and Safety precaution parents and guests are not permitted to enter the classroom spaces for any reason if the room is occupied by children. All drop offs and pickups must be done at the classroom door with the teacher. If you wish to observe your child, you are welcome and encouraged to do so at the window. 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 are required to be at the center no later than 9:00am; NC Pre-K classroom 1 children should be in their classroom no later than 8:00am and PreK classroom 2 children should be in their classroom no later than 8:30 unless other arrangements have been made in advance.

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 or text the Director at 828-777-1719 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. We understand that coming in at 9:01 or 9:02 and not being allowed to stay may seem excessive; however, we **must** enforce a cutoff and consistently abide by it.

It is required that you sign your child in 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 application. If you need to make changes or update any information you may request to do so at any time. With 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 are the biological parent and your name is not listed on the application, you **MUST** provide legal documentation such as a picture ID, birth certificate and/or court records. We involve the Campus SRO in all moments of concern.

If you have an emergency, you can email the center at adworley@haywood.edu and give written 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.

2. Communications

All communications, information sharing and requests **must** be done in writing or email, to the Program Director at adworley@haywood.edu. Providing changes verbally, in person, to the front desk, teachers or other RCAC or HCC staff **will not** suffice.

This include, but is not limited to:

- Fee questions / Tuition payment questions
- Schedule changes
- Absences of more than 2 days
- Tuition payment information
- Changes to the child's file
- Child pick-up and drop-off changes
- Waitlist questions, etc.

3. Showing respect for others

Children learn by example. They watch the adults around them to learn how to navigate this big, exciting, and sometimes scary world. Our staff have chosen this field of work because their heart has led them here. They love children and take pride in what they do on a daily basis to help the children learn and grow. For this, they deserve and will be shown respect.

Parents and visitors are expected to be kind and courteous anywhere on the HCC campus and especially at the RCAC. Our little learners are watching and deserve to feel safe and secure as do our staff.

RCAC staff **are not** to be approached in a hostile, rude, hurtful, or demeaning manner. This type of behavior will not be tolerated. Any parent or visitor that presents themselves in this manner will be immediately asked to leave. Enrolled children may be dismissed from the program if deemed necessary when a family member is asked to leave the center for their behavior. HCC Security and Safety Department will be made aware along with the Haywood County HCC SRO. These mannerisms are not taken lightly, and we will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff and children at all times.

In the event of a conflict or concern, parents are asked to **kindly and respectfully** speak with their child's teacher and/or let the Director know. Parents are always welcome to message teachers on Class Dojo as pick-ups and drop-offs are often a little chaotic and busy. We can also schedule parent teacher conferences at any time during the year at the parent or teachers request. While we strongly encourage communication, inappropriate communication rarely solves anything.

We understand, and appreciate, that we have a lot of “*mama and papa bears*” out there; we fully respect and encourage that. But we will respect each other accordingly. Let's work together as we navigate through this adventure!!

In the event of any concern or an emergency, please text the Director, regardless of the time of day, at 828-777-1719.

4. On Time Pick up

Our staff are 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, with no contact from a parent or guardian, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will be notified promptly at 5:45pm.

Children that are consistently picked up late, may be dismissed from care following the 3rd incident.

5. Application and Registration

1. Parents must meet with the Center Director or Education Coordinator for a pre-enrollment tour and teacher conference prior to attending the program.
2. Parents will be expected to complete:
 - Application Form
 - Provide a copy of a picture ID (Parents and/or guardians)
 - Provide a small, current picture of the child(ren)
 - 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 RCAC Receptionist, **prior** to enrollment in the program.

You will be asked to update immunization and medical information throughout your child’s enrollment at the Center and annually, typically in September of each year.

6. Registration fees

A \$50.00 registration fee per child will be charged at the time of enrollment (between September-June). 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 enrolled child in September, up to two children per family (\$100)

7. Care Options at the RCAC

There is a \$25 discount for all siblings.

The RCAC is open 7:30-5:30 M-F

<u>0-23 months</u>		<u>24-35 months</u>		<u>36 months and up</u>	
Full Time	\$920	Full Time	\$840	Full Time	\$750
7:30-2:30 M-F	\$820	7:30-2:30 M-F	\$740	7:30-2:30 M-F	\$650
M,W,F	\$570	M,W,F	\$530	M,W,F	\$510
T,TH	\$510	T,TH	\$470	T,TH	\$450
				Wrap Around	\$350

8. Fees

Online payment information will be emailed to you upon enrollment. You will be provided with your Password, Username, and ID#. If these do not work, you must contact the Help Desk at 828-565-4009. If you are prompted to leave a message, give them a couple days to respond. Payments are made at www.haywood.edu under the Child Care tab. (Hint: If you scroll about halfway down the Child Care page, you will find the link for payments).

Fees will be charged on the current schedule approved by the Haywood Community College Board of Trustees and are billed between the 1st -5th of each month. Fees are to be paid by the 10th of the month. Fees are assessed

by enrollment not by attendance and or operating days. Children that enroll during the month will be billed at \$40 per operating day.

A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed for fees not paid by midnight on the **10th day** of every 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 cash payments will be made at the Cashier's office in the Student Services building or credit card payments can be made online.

All fees that are not paid by midnight on the last day of the month, **will result in termination** of care for the following month.

9. Subsidized Care

Southwestern Child Development assists parents in helping pay for childcare and is available for families who meet eligibility requirements. All parents who feel they may qualify for subsidized childcare or are having difficulty paying for their childcare should contact SWCDC at (828)586-5561. Parents must verify proof of their family income. The fee is determined by the case 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 case 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 childcare please pay your fees on time.

10. 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.

11. 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 a morning snack, 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 mealtimes to be served a meal or snack. Special dietary considerations should be discussed in advance, prior to enrollment with the Center Director. For children that have allergies or medical 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 morning snack for all classrooms for children aged one and up ends promptly 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.

You may not choose to opt out of the CACFP food program. The RCAC no longer allows children to bring meals from home.

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.

For Infants, 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 proudly 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. Parents are welcome to bring in bottles breast milk for their children, if you want left over breast milk to be returned home you will need to provide ice packs and for transporting.

When infants turn 1 and move to the toddler room, they should have transitioned over to a sippy cup and finger foods unless extenuating circumstances are present.

12. Clothing

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.

Remember... active children playing indoors and outdoors will get muddy, messy, and potentially covered in messy "stuff". Please do not send your child to school in clothing you do not want to get messy or stained!

Please send a complete set of extra clothes with your child's name on them for emergencies that can 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. Shorts must be worn under dresses.

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

Again, we will play in the rain, snow and the mud!! Your child will get wet, muddy and dirty and will, with no doubt, ruin clothing and shoes! Please dress your child and plan accordingly!

Play is always an adventure here at the RCAC!

13. Toys/Jewelry

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. Toys and clothing that depict violence or scary images 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, unless they have a "break-away" clasp. If your child wears hairbows, hair ties, clips, jewelry, or any other accessories, you may be asked to leave them at home; especially in classrooms with children under 3 due to the potential choking risk. This will be at the discretion of the teacher and Administration.

14. Staff/Child Ratios

Please review our STAR Rated license located on the bulletin board near the workroom and family reading area. 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 are aware of the ratios and the procedure to follow if additional help is required.

Our ratios are as follows:

Infants 1:4

1's 1:5

2's 1:8

3's 1:9

NC PreK 1:10

PreK 1:12

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, 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 as well as pay scales. 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. We appreciate your patience and cooperation in these moments.

15. 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.**

16. 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 pace while appropriately challenging them.

Children in both Pre-K classrooms 1 and 2 are screened using the Brigance and the results will be discussed with parents.

17. Vacation and Holidays

A schedule of holidays observed by the center will be provided at enrollment and are posted in the lobby. This schedule is subject to change. All changes will be provided to the families over Class Dojo in a timely manner. 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 Spring Break.

Pre-K classrooms 1 and 2 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.

18. 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 phone system.

If **Haywood Community College** is closed; 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. We cannot make exceptions.

If the college closes evening classes, the center will close early, typically at 4:00 but possibly earlier depending on the circumstances.

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.

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.

19. 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.

20. 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.

21. 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.

22. Discipline Policy

The goal of discipline is to use teachable moments to build communication and self-regulation skills. This is, to teach each child how to live 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.

23. 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 learn action must be taken. **Physical abuse, spitting, hitting, slapping, kicking, etc. children and/or staff will not be tolerated.** All staff and children deserve a safe and healthy learning environment.

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.
- Children will be given verbal warnings and reminders.
- Children 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 must 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.
- Written communication will be sent out detailing the behavior with a request for a parent conference that will involve the teacher, parent, and the Director and or Education Coordinator.

- With prior parental consent, if and when deemed appropriate by the Director and Lead Teacher, we may 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 behaviors.

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) until a in person parent conference can be held to discuss a plan of action.

If after the remedial actions above have been exhausted, 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 (CLASSROOM 1) - behavior action plan (Per NC DHHS Guidelines):

The NC Pre-K 1 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.
- 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.

24. Biting

Some bites can be prevented, and some cannot. These moments are the only moments in time where a staff member is allowed to “yell” across the classroom to attempt to prevent an injury. Staff supervision is always our priority; however, it takes a split second for a bite to occur, even within arm’s reach of a teacher. 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 are 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 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 the biter by consoling the child that was injured. This also models appropriate empathetic behavior for the child that bit.
- 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 affirmations and 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 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 parent’s request, a referral to CDSA (Children’s Developmental Service Agency) for children under 3 can be submitted 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 may also 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 may be given up to two weeks to find alternate childcare to be determined by the Director by taking into consideration the level of the health and safety concern for all children involved.

Health and Safety Policies, including infectious diseases.

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

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

Children may NOT attend when:

- The child does not feel well enough to participate in daily activities of the center. **Children must be able to participate in daily activities and feel well enough to participate to be in care.**

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 simply cannot provide care for sick children.

- The 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 cannot return the following day and/or 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 when part of medical care.

- 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 –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 – To be determined based on current guidance
 7. Tuberculosis (TB) – until a health care provider determines, that the disease is not contagious
 8. Chicken Pox – To be determined based on current guidance
 9. Mumps – To be determined based on current guidance
 10. Hepatitis A – until 7 days after start of symptoms
 11. Measles – To be determined based on current guidance
 12. Rubella (German measles) – To be determined based on current guidance
 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 Doctor's note to return to care yet is still exhibiting symptoms of illness and or is unable to participate in classroom activities the child must continue to 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, RSV or Hand Foot and Mouth, 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 throughout the center. As illnesses spread through the center, affecting staff and children, classroom closures become imminent.

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.

25. Notifying parents of an injury or incident

Teachers will notify parents **immediately** for:

- Any type of head injury
- Falls involving the head or face
- Bites that break the skin
- Injuries requiring more than basic First Aid (All staff are CPR and FA trained)
- Difficulty breathing, skin color changes
- Allergic reactions of any stage or symptom
- Unusual behavior changes

Occasionally, you may be asked to come to the center and make your own determination as to if you feel that additional medical treatment is needed. This does not necessarily mean you will need to take your child home for the day. This will be determined on an as needed basis.

Teachers will notify parents the **same day** for:

- Minor Bumps
- Scrapes
- Small Bruises
- Bites that do not break the skin

All injuries or incidents will be documented on the appropriate incident reporting form for parent signature. A copy of the form is available to you upon request.

26. Emergency Procedures

The RCAC follows a comprehensive **Emergency Response Plan** for fire, severe weather, lockdown, medical emergencies, and utility failures. Emergency Drills are conducted every three months, fire drills are conducted monthly.

27. Campus Safety Expectations

For the safety of all children, families, students, and staff, RCAC families must follow all HCC traffic rules while driving on the HCC campus. Our campus is active throughout the day with pedestrians, student drivers, maintenance vehicles and college classes in session. Safe and responsible driving protects everyone.

Drivers **MUST** follow campus signage at all times.

Drivers **MUST** maintain slow, cautious speeds at all times. Even when not posted the expectation is 10 mph or slower near the RCAC, reduced speeds in parking lots and around crosswalks.

Drivers **MUST** watch for children walking with families and teachers, strollers and small children who may be hard to see, staff escorting groups of children outdoors and college students and pedestrians.

Drivers **MUST** avoid use of cell phones while driving on campus. Distracted driving is a major hazard in areas where children are present.

28. Potty Training

Potty training is an **ADVENTURE!** We are here to support your potty-training efforts and work together to meet the changing needs of your growing and developing child. We are happy to assist you with this process within the parameters of our capabilities. We are able to assist with potty training once your child enters the 2-year-old classroom, as our 1-year-old classrooms are not equipped.

After two accidents, your child will be put in a pull up or diaper for the remainder of the day due to sanitation reasons. All children entering Private PreK #2 (4-year-old classroom #314), must be potty trained, as this room is not equipped for diapering.

All children learn to potty in their own time. Studies have shown that forcing a child to potty train before they are ready can be detrimental to their emotional and mental health. Children typically should be able to pull their pants down and back up independently with help, indicate on some level that they need to potty, and not be fearful of the potty before they are ready to extend potty training into the school setting.

We will not force a child to sit on the potty or shame a child for having accidents; we will encourage children to use the potty, praise their efforts and we will have children change themselves (with assistance) after having an accident to encourage their independence unless they are not developmentally ready to do so on their own.

Please remember, that at home it is realistic to have a child to attempt to potty frequently; however, in a classroom setting this is **not** always possible. Children may be outside on the playground, eating, on a walk, napping, etc. Teachers will make every possible attempt to encourage children to use the potty as the schedule allows.

29. 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.

30. 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.

31. 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.

32. Family Engagement

- Parents and children must be present during the enrollment process and are required to tour the center and meet the Teachers and Administrators prior to the child's first day.
- Beginning in the Spring of 2027, **parents are required** to participate in Parent Teacher conferences throughout the year to discuss ongoing learning, meeting and establishing individual developmental goals and to review child assessments. This is also a time to discuss available additional service providers should it be deemed appropriate and necessary. These include Speech and Language service providers, Occupational therapists, etc.
- Make anonymous suggestions and recommendations through our Parent Suggestion Box or during our Parent Advisory Committee meetings.
- 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. Our two biggest events are our Family Easter Picnic prior to Spring Break and in the Fall we have a Fall Festival around Halloween.
- 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, these times will be announced in advance to the fullest extent possible.
- Parents are enrolled in Class Dojo (please download the mobile app) and will receive phone notifications upon enrollment at the center. It is extremely important that we have current contact information.
- Our NC Pre-K 1 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 Director for details.
- Parents are welcomed and strongly encouraged to participate in our PAC (Parent Advisory Committee) which meets 4-6 times per year. Dates and times are announced on Class Dojo.
- Parent workshops, trainings and support groups will be offered throughout the year starting in January of 2027! Please join us when you can! Information regarding workshops will be provided on Class Dojo.

30. Parties and Celebrations

Due to allergies in our classrooms, only 100% fruit popsicles and/or fruit trays are permissible for birthday celebrations and holidays. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Balloons and small party favors, plastic bagging are not permitted.

31. Naptime and Rest

All classrooms, children ages 1 and up, have a scheduled naptime daily. We are required by DCDEE to provide a time for rest. Sometimes parents request that we not allow their child to sleep due to sleep patterns at home in the evenings. We are not permitted to stop children from sleeping. Children that do not nap are given quiet activities while other children are resting after the first 20-30 minutes.

32. Photo, Video and Media Policy

RCAC uses photos for classroom documentation, learning portfolios and developmental assessments. Photos of children are NEVER posted public without written parent permission. PARENTS AND VISITORS ARE NEVER PERMITTED TO TAKE PHOTO OR VIDEO FOOTAGE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE RCAC for the safety of our children. If you have questions, please see the Program Director.

33. 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.

34. Transportation Policy

We do not transport students in vehicles to or from the center, except in case of an emergency situation.

35. 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. A transition letter from the Director will be sent home when a transition is scheduled to occur. Parent conferences are strongly encouraged during this time. If you would like to schedule a conference, please let your child's teacher know.

When your child moves from classroom to classroom there will be changes to the daily routine and different expectations. For example, a rising 1 year old will need to use sippy cups instead of bottles and will eat our foods instead of baby foods brought from home. Also, children moving to the two-year-old room will begin drinking from open face cups instead of sippy cups. There are also other similar changes to expect that will be communicated prior to the time of transition.

Our Pre-K 1 and 2 classrooms further prepares for transitions by staggering the entry of children into their classroom each fall. They will host a parent-teacher conference at the beginning of the year and throughout the year to communicate the child's progress with families. In preparation for the transition to kindergarten, the Pre-K 1 and 2 classroom teacher prepares a final transition report of students' progress using Teaching Strategies Gold and The Brigance.

36. Grievance or Complaint Procedures

If concerns arise, speak with your child's teacher. If you feel your concern is unresolved, or if you feel that the concern is of a serious nature, contact the Program Director directly, preferably by email at adworley@haywood.edu, for documentation purposes. The Program Director will happily schedule a time to meet with you to find a resolution. We are strongly committed to addressing concerns respectfully and promptly.

Families may also contact the North Carolina DCDEE for State level licensing concerns at 1-919-527-6335.

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	