



# **Marshall Child Development Center Operating Policies Manual**

**Revised and Issued March 2023**

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## **NOTICE OF REVISION**

This Operating Policies Manual (the “Manual”) is a revision of any previous Operating Policies Handbook and/or Manual issued by Marshall Child Development Center. This Manual supersedes and revokes all prior versions of any manual, handbook, memo, bulletin, policy, or procedure on any subject discussed in this manual that has been issued prior to the date occurring below.

This revised Operating Policies Manual is issued as of March 2023.

## **WELCOME STATEMENT**

Dear Parent(s)/Staff Member,

Welcome to the Marshall Child Development Center (MCDC). MCDC is a non-profit child-care center managed by the MCDC, Inc. to provide day-time care for children of employees at the Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) and the Redstone Family. MCDC provides child-care for children from six weeks of age through kindergarten age.

MCDC's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment for young children. MCDC will nurture self-esteem, foster well-being, facilitate social development, nourish, and maintain emotional health, foster creativity, and encourage cognitive growth in and of the child. MCDC will also work cooperatively with the parents and the community.

MCDC, Inc. was incorporated under the laws of the State of Alabama as a non-profit corporation in April of 1990 for the purpose of providing quality child-care at reasonable rates to employees, both civil service and contractor, at MSFC. The corporation is governed by a Board of Directors in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. The Board consists of members of the corporation. Board positions are elected by members of the corporation prior to the month of June. New officers take office the first of June. The Board is responsible for conducting all of the business of the corporation, with the MCDC Director handling the day-to-day operations.

The Internal Revenue Service has also granted the MCDC, Inc. tax-exempt status, which makes all donations to the MCDC tax-deductible.

Administration by the parents provides a unique opportunity for the corporation to solicit input for the operation of the MCDC. Parents and the MCDC staff are encouraged to provide constructive comments or concerns relating to MCDC's operation. MCDC can only continue and improve with the assistance and ideas of the parents and the MCDC staff. We look forward to the opportunity of working with each of you to make the MCDC a center of which we can all be proud.

Board of Directors  
MCDC, Inc.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Introduction**

While no operating procedures manual can anticipate every circumstance or question as to policy, the following Manual outlines the basic guidelines under which the MCDC shall be operated and should answer the basic questions that a parent or staff member may have concerning the day-to-day operation of the MCDC. Consequently, while every attempt will be made to address policies through this Manual, issues may arise that are outside the scope of the Manual. These issues shall be resolved by the Board of Directors (henceforth referred to as “the Board”) of MCDC at its sole discretion. If a decision is needed immediately as to a certain issue, but an applicable operating policy is not stated herein, the Board has the sole responsibility and authority for determining the course of action.

The Board and Director are responsible for enforcing the policies set forth herein. Parents and MCDC staff members have a responsibility to support the Board and Director in ensuring the operating policies are followed and that MCDC runs as smoothly as possible to provide a safe, comfortable atmosphere for all the children at MCDC.

### **Changes to this Manual**

The MCDC Operating Policies Manual will be updated annually in accordance with MCDC’s bylaws and maintained by the Secretary of the Board. MCDC expressly reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the Manual at its sole discretion from time to time as it deems appropriate; however, such changes may only be made by a majority vote of the MCDC Board. Recommended changes by a voting member of the corporation can be submitted to any member of the Board. Once a recommended change is received, the Board must, at the next meeting, vote to accept, reject, or accept with change the recommendation. The parent who has requested the change may petition the Board to present their justification at this meeting. The Board will provide feedback to the member submitting a recommended change as soon as possible following a vote.

The Board may pass resolutions updating portions of this manual. If that occurs, the Board will provide a copy of all changes to this Manual to the membership within two weeks of the approval of a change via email, Brightwheel, and the MCDC website. A copy of all current MCDC operating policies and applicable resolutions can be requested at any time.

### **Membership in MCDC, Inc.**

To become a member of MCDC, Inc., prospective members must submit a completed Membership Application form and the payment of the membership fee, to the Registrar of the MCDC, Inc. Board. The current membership fee is available on the MCDC website, or by contacting the MCDC Registrar. Membership is open to all employees at the Marshall Space Flight Center (including MSFC government contractors), MCDC staff members, and the Redstone Family (both civil servants and contractors). Membership (per family) must be renewed in September of each year. A person must be a member of the corporation prior to enrolling their child in MCDC or placing their child on the waiting list. Membership shall

terminate when dues and/or tuition is 45 days delinquent, but not without notification by the Board.

**Registration**

An administrative fee is due upon enrollment of a child and again each September. The current administrative fee is available on the MCDC website, or by contacting the MCDC Registrar. The administrative fee is not prorated or refundable. A pre-paid tuition deposit (per child) is also due within the first month of enrollment and is credited toward the last two weeks of enrollment, when two weeks’ notice of withdrawal is given. Prepaid tuition is non-refundable. The current pre-paid tuition deposit is available on the MCDC website, or by contacting the MCDC Registrar.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**MCDC Address/Telephone Numbers**

MCDC is in Building 4346 Morris Road on Redstone Arsenal. The mailing address is P.O. Box 9138, Marshall Space Flight Center, Alabama, 35812. The telephone numbers are listed below.

Office Phone Numbers	
Main Line/Front Desk	544-8609
Assistant Director	544-8626
Director	544-8607
FAX	544-4956
Classroom Phone Numbers	
Infant A	961-0969
Infant B	961-0970
Creepers A	961-0971
Creepers B	961-0972
Toddler A	961-0974
Toddler B	961-0973
Explorer A	961-0978
Explorer B	961-0977
Pre-school A	961-0980
Pre-school B	961-0981
Pre-school C	961-0982
Other Phone Numbers	
Kitchen	961-0934
Laundry Room	961-0975
Library	961-0976
Cafeteria	961-0979
Multi-purpose Room	961-0985



## **Operating Hours**

MCDC's normal operating hours are from 6:45 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on federally observed holidays, whenever Redstone Arsenal is officially closed, or when otherwise directed by MSFC. Hours of operation are also subject to change when directed by the Board. Any changes will be disseminated to MCDC membership via email and Brightwheel. Tuition will not be prorated or excused when MCDC is closed.

MCDC will close when Redstone Arsenal or MSFC is closed. If Redstone Arsenal or MSFC delay opening, MCDC will delay opening. If MSFC releases personnel for liberal leave or telework due to weather-related concerns, MCDC will close. Parents are expected to pick their children up immediately when released from work due to hazardous weather closings. An email notification will be sent out during normal operating hours as well as posted to Brightwheel and social media that will specify the exact time MCDC is closing. In the event of inclement weather outside of normal operating hours, the Director will inform the parents of the operational status of MCDC by posting an update to Brightwheel as well as posting to our social media. In the event of a tornado warning, classrooms will move to their shelter locations and will not be released.

## **Arrival and Departure**

Children may not be dropped off prior to MCDC's stated opening time. An authorized adult is required to pick up and drop off a child and check children in and out via a legible signature in Brightwheel. The center must have on file the names of all individuals authorized to pick up a child. Valid, government issued picture I.D. will be checked to verify the identity of individuals unknown to the staff.

Parents are required to use Brightwheel's message function to notify MCDC in writing by 0900 if their child will be absent, dropped off later than, or picked up early.

MCDC charges families a late fee if they depart the facility with their children after closing time. We do not offer a grace period. To ensure consistent application of this policy, late fees will be charged if children are checked out via Brightwheel after that day's closing time. Members will be charged \$50 if children are signed out after closing time. For example, if MCDC is closing at 5:45, a \$50 late fee would be applied to members signing out starting at 5:46. Late fees are assessed on a membership basis, not on a per child basis.

If a child has not been picked up by closing time and the parents have not contacted the MCDC, the Director or staff member in charge will contact the parents and emergency contacts. If the center is unable to reach the parents or emergency contacts by 1 hour after closing, the Director or staff member in charge will contact the Department of Human Resources and the child will be placed in their custody.

This policy will be strictly enforced. Only the Board may waive a late fee by majority vote when extenuating circumstances are present (e.g. unexpected early closing for severe weather). The MCDC Director or designee will review Brightwheel records no less frequently than bi-weekly to ensure all late fees have been applied.

If a child is picked up late more than twice in a 4-week period, the MCDC Director will issue the parents a letter of warning. Members are required to sign the letter of warning; if they refuse, it will be delivered electronically through the email addresses on file with MCDC. Such delivery will constitute formal notice. Picking up the child late within 4 weeks of the date of the warning may result in a formal notice terminating the child's enrollment at the end of the current week. Members may request to meet with the Board to request reconsideration, but any such meeting must occur within 48 hours of the date on the termination of membership notice. The Board can approve a member's request for reconsideration only by majority vote and the family's agreement to adhere to a plan of corrective action.

### **Tuition**

Tuition for the subsequent year will be ratified by a simple majority of the MCDC membership in attendance at the annual budget meeting. The board may re-evaluate tuition at any time during the year if the budget necessitates. A full week's tuition is due even if the child attends only part of the week. There are no discounts on tuition for multiple enrolled children. Tuition will not be prorated or excused for days MCDC is closed for federal holidays, when Redstone Arsenal or MSFC is closed, when MSFC directs that the MCDC be closed, or for closures caused by other reasons outside of the MCDC's control.

Tuition is due by close of business on the first working day of each week. If payment is not received starting the third business day of the current week, then a \$10.00 late charge will be assessed per day until payment is made. Failure to pay tuition after two weeks is grounds for terminating a child's enrollment unless the Board agrees that an extenuating situation necessitates the need for different arrangements.

The preferred method of payment is the Brightwheel application, and MCDC membership is requested to use that option when possible. Cash will still be accepted from time to time based on the event and the discretion and preapproval of the Board. Returned checks will be charged a \$35.00 returned check fee.

When a child is withdrawing from MCDC, the parents shall notify the Director no later than Friday prior to the last two full calendar weeks of enrollment. A calendar week is defined as the five-day period starting with Monday and ending with Friday. If proper notice of withdrawal is given, the pre-paid tuition deposit can be applied to the remaining tuition balance. If proper notice of withdrawal is not given, the pre-paid tuition is forfeited.

### **Liability Insurance**

MCDC, Inc. will maintain liability insurance coverage to the extent deemed necessary by the Board in accordance with the bylaws. This liability insurance covers incidents, injuries, or accidents which are proven to be the result of negligence by the center staff or a deficiency in the center's equipment. The liability insurance does not cover injuries which are not the result of negligence.

Parents with questions should contact the MCDC Director for information about the appropriate procedures for processing a claim.

### **Licensing Standards**

Although not required by law, MCDC will meet or exceed the licensing standard prescribed by the Alabama Department of Human Resources in the Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers and Nighttime Centers. These standards are found at [www.dhr.state.al.us](http://www.dhr.state.al.us). MCDC is accredited by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education programs (NAC). For more information, see their website ([www.earlylearningleaders.org](http://www.earlylearningleaders.org)).

### **Reserve Policy**

MCDC shall maintain an operating reserve fund to provide stability to the budget during times of unexpected income shortages or unanticipated budget shortfalls. The operating reserve fund is only to be used to maintain basic center operations if income is uncertain or to provide for an orderly shutdown to the center. It will not be used for any other purpose except in emergency situations as approved by the board. The operating reserve fund will be funded with surplus unrestricted operating funds monthly until depleted reserves are brought back to designated levels. Depending on the reserve shortage, a repayment schedule shall be established by the board that accommodates current budget restrictions and income predictions, but not to exceed two calendar years. The operating reserve amount will be greater than or equal to one-sixth of the current budget year's annual budgeted operating expenses not including MCDC's current liabilities (pre-paid tuition deposits, staff vacation accrual etc.). Current liabilities will be maintained in a separate account and updated monthly to keep pace with staff wage increases, new member deposits, and leave accrual. Use of the reserves will require authorization from the board and include a plan for replenishment. The MCDC treasurer is responsible for ensuring that the operating reserve fund is maintained and used only as described in this policy and will report the current amount of reserves to the Board monthly. Upon approval for the use of operating reserve funds, the treasurer and director will maintain records of the use of funds and plan for replenishment. The treasurer and director will provide regular reports to the board of progress to restore the fund to the target minimum amount. Accounts at ServisFirst Bank (xxxxxx3826) and Redstone Federal Credit Union (\*\*777) are designated to hold reserve funds.

### **ENROLLMENT AND REMOVAL**

#### **Eligibility to Enroll**

A person must be a member of the MCDC, Inc. prior to enrolling their child in the MCDC or placing their child on the waiting list. Eligibility for children with special needs shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Availability of enrollment shall be determined by the MCDC Director and the MCDC Registrar.

Eligibility for enrollment is lost when a person is no longer a member of the corporation. A person is no longer a member of the corporation when he/she no longer meets the membership eligibility requirements, or when any fees are delinquent. Upon ineligibility, a reasonable amount

of time as determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis will be granted before removal of the child/children from the MCDC will be required.

### **Enrollment Priority**

When openings for children occur at the MCDC, admission shall be offered to eligible children in the following priority order:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) government and contractor children
2. Siblings of currently enrolled Redstone Family children
3. Dependents of full-time MCDC employees
4. Dependents of MSFC government employees
5. Dependents of MSFC contractor employees
6. Dependents of Redstone Family employees
7. Grandchildren of MSFC employees
8. Dependents of MSFC retirees

At no time will a change in enrollment priorities result in the removal of currently enrolled children from MCDC. Please note that at least one parent or grandparent must independently have Redstone Arsenal access before MCDC will sponsor access for additional guardians. The Board reserves the right to approve the enrollment of dependents of full-time MCDC employees ahead of other priorities on this list to facilitate full staffing.

### **Enrollment Wait Lists**

The MCDC Registrar maintains the official wait list for all MCDC age groups. Placement on a wait list does not guarantee that a slot will be available for a member's child. Slots will be offered in priority order to members on the waiting list as space becomes available. Order within the waiting list is based on priority group, so an available slot will be offered first to children in priority group one before moving onto priority group two.

Members who are adopting may be placed on the waiting list with the desired start date set as TBD and updated as additional information becomes available. A slot will not be offered to that member until a desired start date is provided. The member can change their desired start date without losing their place on the waitlist.

Information required for the waiting list includes sponsoring parent or grandparent's name, contact information, child's actual or projected month and year of birth, and desired start date. The MCDC Membership Application can be found in the Enrollment section on the MCDC webpage or by contacting the MCDC Registrar.

The desired start date is the earliest date at which the parent is willing to accept and begin paying for a spot in MCDC. This date is extremely important because if a slot becomes available and the parent's desired start date is later than the current date, that parent will not be offered that slot. The priority list on which a child is initially placed is established at the time the request is made and updated based on changes to the enrollment status of any siblings.

When a child on a wait list becomes eligible for the next age group, the Registrar will transfer the child's name to the next appropriate waiting list in the correct order based on the date the request was received and membership fee was paid to MCDC. For example, if a child is first placed on the waiting list as an infant and has not been enrolled when he/she is old enough to be in the creeper room, the Registrar will move the child's name to the creeper room waiting list based on the date the request for enrollment was received and membership fee was paid to MCDC. This means that this child's name could be placed above another child already on the creeper room waiting list.

### **Slot Openings**

When a slot becomes available, the first parent on the highest priority waiting list for that class whose desired start date is on or before the date of the opening will be contacted and offered the slot. If this parent declines the slot, fails to respond, or cannot be contacted within a reasonable amount of time, then the subsequent parents on the waiting list(s) will be contacted in priority order until the slot is filled.

When a parent is contacted by the Registrar regarding an available slot, the parent must accept or decline the slot within 48 hours. If the child is not ready for enrollment on the date of the offered slot, the parent has the option to register and pay the weekly tuition fee to hold the slot until the child is placed in the MCDC, or to place the child's name back on the waiting list as a new entry. If a slot is declined one time, the child's order on the waiting list will not change but it is the responsibility of the member to provide a new desired start date. However, if a slot is declined twice, the family will be removed from the waiting list and can be placed back on the waiting list with a new membership application and fee.

A child's name will remain on the waiting list until:

- (1) the child is enrolled in MCDC
- (2) the child's name is removed at the request of the parent
- (3) a slot for the child is declined twice
- (4) the child is too old (i.e., kindergarten age) to be enrolled, or
- (5) the parent is no longer a member of the MCDC (e.g. no longer meets eligibility requirements or fails to pay annual membership dues).

### **Enrollment Forms**

Completed enrollment forms must be submitted to MCDC prior to a child's formal start at MCDC. These forms will be kept in the child's folder. Enrollment forms include Child Admission Form, Child's History, Child's Medical Report (updated as necessary), Immunization Record with expiration date, Enrollment Agreement, Parental Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment, signed Parental Acknowledgment Form, and a copy of the current child custody order (if applicable). A current copy of all forms can be requested from the MCDC Administrative Assistant.

## **Enrollment Tenure**

Once a child is enrolled in MCDC, the child will continue to be enrolled until:

- (1) the parent removes the child from MCDC;
- (2) the child graduates from MCDC;
- (3) the child's behavior necessitates his/her removal from MCDC;
- (4) the parent is no longer a member of MCDC, Inc.;
- (5) the parent fails to maintain or renew immunization documentation;
- (6) the parent becomes delinquent in tuition and/or fee payments; or
- (7) the parent fails to comply with the policies set forth in this manual.

## **Drop-In Child Care**

When a temporary opening is available, MCDC provides child-care on a drop-in basis for members of the MCDC, Inc. on a full or half day basis. Parents should give the Director as much notice as possible (24 hours' notice minimum) when requesting a drop-in child-care. This service is available on a first come, first-serve basis. Up to and including Kindergarten age children are eligible to use this service. All enrollment forms must be completed before the child can be admitted. The current tuition rate for drop-in child-care is available on the MCDC website.

## **Involuntary Removal**

Continued use of the MCDC facility and resources is a privilege, not a right. If a child's and/or parent's continued presence at the MCDC disrupts the safety and or well-being of other children, parents or MCDC staff, the child may be removed from the enrollment at MCDC. Please also see section herein entitled "Behavioral Problems."

Alternatively, a parent may be barred from entering MCDC premises for a period to be determined by the Board.

## **Part-Time Enrollment**

Part-time enrollment is an option in which the MCDC allows a child to attend on a part-time basis each week. Under this option, the parent can set a child's attendance schedule consisting of five half days or 3 full days during the week. Half-days are defined as children who attend the MCDC for less than 6 hours per day. The days of the child's attendance must be specified when the parent initially sets the schedule with the Director. Changes to that schedule must be agreed to by the Director.

Requests for part-time enrollment will only be granted if:

- (1) No one from the waiting list of that age group wants the slot full-time
- (2) The space is not needed for a child moving from the next lowest age group; and
- (3) The parent understands that if someone requests the slot for a full-time child, the parent must either begin paying full time tuition within 1 week to keep the slot, or withdraw from the MCDC.

If the parents choose to begin paying full-time tuition, they must continue to do so until another slot in that age group opens.

If a parent whose child is participating in the part-time enrollment option would like to convert their child to full-time enrollment, the parent must notify the Director of the date the child will begin attending full-time.

If there are two children wishing to fill an empty slot with the part-time option, the child who was enrolled at MCDC first will be given the first opportunity.

Part-time fees can be found on the MCDC website.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Children to Teacher Ratios**

The following child to teacher ratios will be maintained at MCDC:

Class	Ratio	Naptime Ratio
Infants	3:1	3:1
Creepers	4:1	4:1
Toddlers	5:1	10:1
Explorers	6:1	12:1
Pre-School C	8:1	16:1
Pre-School B	9:1	18:1
Pre-School A	10:1	20:1

MCDC staff strictly adhere to these ratios. If for any reason a teacher needs to leave a group of children, another available staff member will step in to fulfill ratio requirements. Staff routinely patrols the entire area on the playground to ensure a safe environment.

### **Creative Curriculum**

The Creative Curriculum is an early childhood curriculum designed to foster social/ emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development and to enhance learning in literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology.

The philosophy behind our curriculum is that young children learn best by doing. Learning is not just repeating what someone else says; it requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in.

The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.

## **USDA**

Good nutrition, the development of desirable eating habits, and learning about food choices are vital building blocks for young children. Provisions must be made to ensure that these building blocks are in place to promote good health throughout life. As part of the USDA food program, the following are some responsibilities of our childcare center:

- To serve meals meeting program requirements.
- To keep daily records of participants in attendance, number of meals served, and quantities of food prepared and served.
- To comply with all regulations and instructions relating to the Child/Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Breakfast is served from 7:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Lunch is served from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Snack is served between 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm.

If your child will be arriving after breakfast or lunch is served, we ask that you ensure that he/she has eaten before entering the classroom. If your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions that will restrict what he/she may eat at the MCDC, you must provide written documentation from your pediatrician to place in your child's file. No outside food is permitted without written documentation from your pediatrician.

## **Promotions**

All promotions are made at the discretion of the Director, but the following guidance applies:

A child who is being promoted will visit the new class one week before being moved to the new class permanently, allowing the child ample time for the transition. A child is promoted from Infants to Creepers based on his/her development more than his/her chronological age. This typically occurs when the infant is sitting up on his/her own. Promotion from the Creepers to the Toddlers occurs when the child is walking steadily, no longer requires a bottle during the daytime hours, is eating table food and a slot is available.

Promotions from Toddlers to Explorers will occur when a child has turned 2 and there is a slot available. Promotions from Explorers to Preschool C will occur when the child is 3, potty trained, and there is a slot available. Promotions within the preschool area are based on graduating class size and availability. Preschool C is comprised primarily of young 3-year-olds. Students are ideally in Preschool C for at least six months before moving to Preschool B. Preschool B is 3 ½ to 4 ½ year olds. Preschool A is 4- to 5-year-olds who will be entering Kindergarten the following year. Some enrolled children may not promote to each of the preschool rooms before kindergarten. The one-week transition time is optional between the preschool classrooms.



## **Behavioral Challenges**

MCDC has adopted the Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) strategy to address behavioral challenges. ABA is a multi-method strategy to increase desirable behavior and decrease undesirable behavior.

From Behavior Analyst Certification Board:

To date, behavior-analytic scientists have conducted thousands of studies to identify the laws of behavior—the predictable ways in which behavior is learned and how it changes over time. The underlying theme of much of this work has been that behavior is a product of its circumstances, particularly the events that immediately follow the behavior. Behavior analysts have used this information to develop numerous techniques and treatment approaches for analyzing and changing behavior, and ultimately, to improve lives. Because this approach applied behavior analysis (ABA) is largely based on behavior and its consequences, techniques generally involve teaching individuals more effective ways of behaving and working to change the social consequences of existing behavior. Treatment approaches based on ABA have been empirically shown to be effective in a wide variety of areas.

The following links provide information about how ABA strategies are used in a classroom.

<https://www.iloveaba.com/2012/09/aba-in-classroom.html>

<https://www.appliedbehavioranalysisedu.org/2021/11/aba-in-classroom/>

If a child displays repeated aggressive behavior that cannot be improved by normal discipline techniques, then the Director will set up a conference with the child's parents within one week of the repeated challenging behavior, and an outside behavioral therapist may be recommended. The parents, teacher, and Director will agree upon and document a course of action to be taken to correct the behavior problem.

If the Director recommends an evaluation be made by an outside behavioral therapist, that evaluation will be conducted with the consent of, but at no cost to the parents. If the parents refuse a recommend behavioral therapist evaluation, the child's enrollment may be subject to termination. If the behavioral therapist recommends regular counseling, continued enrollment may be contingent on such counseling. MCDC will facilitate any regular counseling for the convenience of the family, but parents are responsible for making arrangements with the therapist, including financial responsibility.

If behavioral problems continue and cause excessive disruption or danger to the other children, the parents may be asked to remove the child from MCDC or be subject to involuntary removal (see Involuntary Removal section).

Parents should notify their child's teacher and the Director of situations at home such as a new baby, death, or illness of family members, etc. which might affect their child's behavior at the center.

## **Management of Aggressive Behaviors**

### **Biting Policy**

MCDC policy regarding biting is established for the protection and health of all children in the program. The Biting Policy applies to the Toddler rooms through Preschool. A bite is considered serious if it leaves a red mark on the victim's skin or breaks the victim's skin. Efforts will be made to have the biting child comfort the child that was bitten and mend any hurt feelings between the two children. A staff member will provide appropriate medical care to the bitten child and will encourage parents to seek medical treatment for their child if the skin was broken.

Staff members will notify parents of both children of the incident. The parents will be informed of the circumstances under which a child bites another child by phone and in writing. Staff members will fill out an Incident Form on the child doing the biting. The parents of the child who bit will be required to stop by the front office and sign the incident report and will be given information about children and biting. The incident report will be placed in the child's file. Additionally, staff members will record the date, time, who was bitten and location of the biting incident in a Biting Log. Staff members will not release any names involving the biting incident for confidentiality reasons. The parent of the child who has received the bite will also be notified by phone and in writing. Staff members will fill out an Incident Report on the bitten child. The original form will be given to the parent and one copy placed in the child's file. A conference can be arranged with the MCDC Director at the parent's request to discuss the behavior modifications strategies that the staff will be using at the center and ways the parents can facilitate correction of the behavior at home.

If any child bites three or more times in one school week (Monday-Friday), the child's parents will be notified to have a conference with the director and teacher that day. After the conference, the parents will be asked to take the child home for the remainder of the day for the safety of other children. The Director or Assistant Director will determine any further disciplinary action that will be needed depending on the age of the child and on the situation. The parents are required to pay full tuition for the day(s) the child is out. If the parents arrive at MCDC more than 45 minutes after notification from the Director or Assistant Director, the child will not be allowed to return the next school day.

Please remember that biting is considered a developmentally normal behavior in the Toddler and Explorer rooms. The Director, staff, and parents must work together during this time to help determine what is triggering this behavior.

### **Aggressive Behavior in Preschool Classes**

The MCDC policy regarding aggressive behavior is established for the protection and health of all children in the program. This policy will only apply to the Preschool classes of MCDC. Aggressive behavior towards another child and/or MCDC staff includes but is not limited to hitting, kicking, pinching, biting, throwing objects, and spitting.

If the aggressive behavior is towards another child, efforts will be made to have the child who was exhibiting the aggressive behavior comfort the child that was hurt and mend any hurt

feelings between the two children. A staff member will provide appropriate medical care to the hurt child or refer the child to the front office if the injury is serious. The parents will be informed of the circumstances under which a child was aggressive by phone and/or Brightwheel and in writing.

Staff members will fill out an Incident Form on the child exhibiting the aggressive behavior. The parents of the child who exhibited the aggressive behavior will be required to stop by the front office and sign the incident report and will be given information about this type of behavior. The incident report will be placed in the child's file. The original form will be distributed to the parents and one copy placed in the child's file. Staff members will not release any names of children involved to maintain confidentiality. A conference can be arranged with the MCDC Director at the parent's request to discuss the behavior modification strategies that the staff will be using at the center and ways the parents can facilitate correction of the behavior at home.

If a child was the victim of aggressive behavior, the parents of the child who was the victim will also be notified in writing if an injury occurs. Staff members will fill out an Incident Report. The original form will be given to the parent and one copy placed in the child's file.

If a staff member was the victim of aggressive behavior, the Board will be notified at the next scheduled Board meeting, or earlier if the situation warrants. Staff members will fill out an Incident Report. The original form will be given to the staff member and one copy placed in the staff member's file.

If any child exhibits aggressive behavior three or more times in one school week (Monday-Friday) towards other children or any MCDC staff members, the parents will be notified to have a conference with the Director or Assistant Director and the student's teacher. After the conference, the parents will be asked to take the child home for the remainder of the day. The Director or Assistant Director and the Board will determine any further disciplinary action that will be needed depending on the age of the child and on the situation. The parents are required to pay full tuition for the day(s) the child is out. If the parents arrive at MCDC more than 45 minutes after notification from the Director or Assistant Director, the child will not be allowed to return the next school day.

### **Other**

The Board the right to review classroom promotions, enrollment eligibility and priority, and involuntary removal. Such review will consider the safety and well-being of the children enrolled in MCDC, and the benefit to MCDC.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

### **SUIDS Prevention**

Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Syndrome (SUIDS) is defined as a sudden and unexpected death, whether explained or unexplained (including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, otherwise known as SIDS), occurring during infancy. SIDS is further defined as the sudden death of an apparently healthy infant aged under 1 year in which investigation, autopsy, medical history

review, and appropriate laboratory testing fails to identify a specific cause. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended since 1992 that infants be placed to sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of SIDS. Since that time the frequency of US infants sleeping in the prone position has decreased from 70% to 20%, and the SIDS rate has decreased by 40%. However, SIDS remains the highest cause of infant death beyond the neonatal period.

The occurrence of SIDS is rare during the first month of life, increases to a peak between 2 and 4 months old, and then declines. To protect the children in our care, we will place all babies up to one year old on their backs to sleep and use sleep-sacks while they attend MCDC. Only fitted sheets are allowed in the sleeping environment for infants under one year of age. Wedges to be used underneath the mattress must be approved by the child's pediatrician in writing. Infants will not be allowed to sleep in any stationary devices.

### **Injuries**

The initial assessment of an injury shall be done by the caregiver. The Director may be consulted if necessary.

Injuries of a clearly minor and superficial nature will be treated by the caregiver utilizing the first aid kit. A child's parent(s) will be notified at the time the injury occurs through either Brightwheel or a phone call. Injuries of a more significant nature may require the immediate notification of the MSFC Medical Center ambulance followed by the notification of the parent(s) of the child. The child will be sent to the hospital designated by the parent on the child's Emergency Medical Treatment form.

All injuries requiring any form of treatment shall be followed up within 24 hours by a formal Incident Report describing the circumstances under which the accident occurred, the method of treatment for the injury, and the outcome of the treatment. Copies of this report will be distributed as follows:

- (1) One copy provided to the parent(s) of the injured child
- (2) One copy retained in the child's file, and
- (3) One copy retained on file at the MCDC.

In some circumstances, investigations into injuries may be conducted by MCDC, MSFC, NASA, the Army and/or other various federal, state, and local agencies. MCDC is committed to fully complying with all requirements of these investigations but reserves the right to participate in the investigatory process, including receiving all documents created as part of an investigation.

To protect the integrity of this process, parents and staff agree to protect the privacy of children enrolled at MCDC and MCDC staff (including the Director and Assistant Director). Parents or staff members who violate the privacy of a child enrolled at MCDC or MCDC staff member, slander any party involved in an incident, or otherwise impede the investigatory process may be subject to appropriate action. Such action may include revocation of MCDC membership in the case of a parent, or disciplinary action in the case of a staff member. Notwithstanding this paragraph, there is no intent to discourage parents from reporting an incident involving their child to any appropriate authority.

## Illness

For everyone's protection, children will not be admitted to the center with a suspected contagious disease or symptoms of such an illness. If a child should contract a contagious disease or illness and has potentially exposed other children at the center, the parent must notify the Director as soon as possible. An email and Brightwheel message will be sent to inform parents of the possibility of their child being exposed to a contagious disease or illness. Each parent is responsible for minimizing the impacts of contagious diseases or illness to other children at the MCDC.

If a child becomes ill while at the center, the parent will be contacted to pick up the child immediately. Once the parent has been personally notified, the parent must pick up the child **within 45 minutes**. It is imperative that the parent/guardian maintains up to date contact information on file in the event of an illness or injury. When a teacher suspects that a child is ill the office is notified, and the child's temperature is taken if deemed necessary. When the child is ill and cannot continue their day, the child is brought to the office. Parents are notified that the child must be picked up immediately. A Sick Child Form is completed by the teacher and sent home with the child.

Any child who is sent home with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or any other symptoms indicative of a contagious disease or illness, will not be readmitted to the center until the child is free of the symptoms for 24 hours or a physician has stated the child is no longer contagious. A written statement from the child's physician stating that the child is not contagious to other children will be required to re-enter the center prior to the 24-hour symptom free interval specified above.

The MCDC will follow guidelines prescribed by the American Academy of Pediatrics in Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools. Children displaying the following illness or symptoms shall be temporarily excluded from the MCDC:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff of the childcare program or school; or
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff of the program determines they can provide without compromising their ability to care for other children; or
- The child has any of the following conditions:
  - Appears to be severely ill. This could include lethargy/ lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or having a quickly spreading rash.
  - Fever (temperature above 100.4°F [38.3°C])
  - Diarrhea-defined by more watery stools or decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet. Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper, and toilet-trained children if the diarrhea is causing "accidents". In addition, diapered children with diarrhea should be excluded if the stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for that child, because this may cause too much work for the teacher/caregiver and thereby challenge the teacher's/caregiver's ability to maintain sanitary diaper changing techniques. Readmission after diarrhea can occur when diapered children have their stool contained by the diaper (even if the stools remain

loose) and when toilet-trained children do not have toileting accidents. Special circumstances that require specific exclusion criteria include the following:

- Toxic-producing E Coli or Shigella infection, until the diarrhea resolves and the test results of 2 stool cultures are negative for these organisms.
- Salmonella serotype Typhi infection, until diarrhea resolves. In children younger than 5 years with Salmonella serotype Typhi, 3 negative stool cultures are required.
- Blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
- Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Mouth sores with drooling unless the child's physician or local health department authority states that the child is noninfectious.
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes, until a physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease.
- Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health department states child is on appropriate treatment and can return.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e., strep throat or other streptococcal infection), until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Head lice or nits, until after the first treatment. (Note: exclusion is not necessary before the end of the program day.)
- Scabies, until after treatment has been given.
- Shingles, child may return only if the sores can be covered by clothing and/or dressing or until sores have crusted.
- Chickenpox (varicella), until all lesions have dried or crusted (usually 6 days after onset of rash).
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues for more than 2 hours) or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other signs or symptoms of illness.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice or as directed by the health department (if the child's symptoms are mild). (Note: protection of the others in the group should be checked to be sure everyone who was exposed has received vaccine or receives vaccine immediately.)
- Ringworm Infection: Defined as tinea capitis, tinea corporis, tinea cruris, and/or tinea pedis. Child may not return until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.

For more details and other diseases, see Appendix A1, "Signs and Symptoms Chart". A reference copy of Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, published by the American Academy of Pediatrics is kept on file in the Director's Office.

A child may return to the center prior to the above guidelines if the child's physician provides a statement, in writing, stating that the child is no longer contagious. Even if a child does not display any of the above noted symptoms, the MCDC Director or Assistant Director has the discretion to exclude a child pending a physician's written statement that the child is safely able to return to a group care environment.

### **COVID-19**

MCDC will follow MSFC and Redstone Arsenal guidance on masking adults within MCDC. Children will not be required to mask. The Board will review the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control for quarantine and isolation guidance for early care and education programs when making decisions about MCDC policies.

MCDC students and staff are required to isolate for 5 days following a positive COVID-19 test. Students and staff may return to MCDC earlier than recommended with a doctor's note stating their approved return date. The date of a positive test is day 0, and the student or staff may return on day 6. Staff are required to wear a properly fitting face mask through day 10. MCDC students and staff are not required to quarantine following a positive exposure but are expected to be monitored closely for symptoms and test if symptoms develop.

MCDC will not as a matter of regular course close a classroom due to positive COVID-19 cases, but from time to time the Board may close a classroom for the safety of the larger MCDC community due to a high number of cases within a particular age group.

The MCDC Director will notify all affected classes when a student or staff tests positive for COVID-19, and the last day that individual was at MCDC to enable families to make the best decision for their families. All staff and the Board will also be notified of any positive cases.

MCDC is a community, and the protection of our most vulnerable is dependent on mutual trust. All families and staff are expected to abide by the guidelines above in good faith, and violation of these guidelines (e.g., failing to report a positive COVID-19 test or failing to test when symptoms develop following a confirmed exposure) will be assessed by the Board and may result in disciplinary action, up to termination of membership.

### **Dedication of MCDC Resources**

MCDC is committed to caring for and educating children equally, regardless of physical, mental and emotional capacity or disability. However, to maintain ratios required to comply with MCDC guidelines, MCDC staff resources may not be repeatedly dedicated to serving the needs of one child over another. Therefore, if a majority of the Board determines that a child's injury, illness, or other incapacity has created an imbalance of MCDC resources, a conference may be requested with the parent to determine the course of action to be taken.

### **Administering Medications**

A medication authorization form must be completed for each week for all prescription and non-prescription medications and may only be used for that current week. Medication is defined by Alabama DHR as anything that is used to treat or prevent a condition. Items such as diaper cream, toothpaste, insect repellent, and sunscreen are included in this definition, and require an authorization form updated once yearly by the child's physician.

The MCDC Director, Assistant Director, or Administrative Assistant will administer authorized prescription medications to all children at MCDC. The prescribed medication to be given must be authorized by the parent on the designated medication authorization form. All prescribed medications must be in the original container with a childproof cap, and labeled with instructions, a physician's name, the child's name, dosage, and name of medication. The Director, Assistant Director, or Administrative Assistant may give a child over-the-counter medication if the parent provides written instructions signed and dated from the child's doctor. Otherwise, only the parent can administer over-the-counter medications. All medication will be locked in the Director's office and out of reach of children and shall be removed when no longer needed. No medication may be stored in the classrooms or in diaper bags located in classrooms.

### **Speech & Hearing Screenings**

From time to time, speech and hearing screenings may be performed by qualified professionals with prior approval from the parents. Notices of the screenings are given in advance with information regarding any fees associated with the screenings.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

The MCDC staff is required to report child abuse and neglect. If the staff suspects abuse and/or neglect the Department of Human Resources will be notified immediately.

If a formal allegation of institutional child abuse or neglect is made against MCDC, MSFC Protective Services will handle the initial response and will coordinate as they deem appropriate with the Army Provost Marshall's Office on Redstone Arsenal and/or with Alabama DHR.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

MCDC will follow the instructions given by MSFC Emergency Management System (EMS) and take appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the children.

MCDC will participate in all drills conducted by the MSFC Emergency Preparedness Office. The emergency evacuation plan, developed by the MSFC Emergency Preparedness Office, shall be clearly posted at the MCDC. Additional drills will be conducted throughout the year as described below.



## **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are normally conducted once a month with the total time to clear the facility closely monitored. At least annually, MCDC will utilize the building fire alarm system with participation and support from the Army Fire Station.

## **Tornado Drills**

Tornado drills are normally conducted quarterly. During a drill, the children are moved into inside rooms at the MCDC:

- Infants and Creepers: Laundry Room
- Toddlers: Lobby Storage Closet
- Explorers: Kitchen
- Pre-school: Library

## **MCDC Emergency Preparedness Procedures (Emergency Allows/Requires Relocation)**

MCDC has emergency procedures in place in the event faculty and staff must evacuate. All staff members are aware and in practice to follow the necessary procedures in the event of such an emergency. This procedure includes the following.

- Upon notification of an emergency, teachers will collect their attendance sheets and calmly escort their class to the closest exit.
    - o Infants and creepers will be transferred to the evacuation cribs and pushed to the evacuation site.
    - o Classes will exit via the closest exit door (multipurpose room door, any classroom door, front door, cafeteria room door)
    - o Children who have been on the playground will exit through the playground gate.
    - o Children will follow their teacher to the field located to the south of the main entrance.
    - o The Director will take the Emergency Backpack and meet the children in the field.
    - o Each class lines up and roll call is taken. If a child is missing the Director is immediately notified and Rescue personal will take appropriate action.
- Classes will remain on the field until the “All Clear” is given by Security. If children and staff are unable to return to the building, they will proceed to Building 4316, which is located across the street. Once children and staff have reached Building 4316 roll call is again conducted.
- o Director will determine at this time how best to notify parents for pick up.

NASA Security, Fire, and Rescue will respond immediately to close off Morris Road and assess the situation. If it is necessary to relocate to Building 4316, Security will assist as necessary to assure a safe transition.

## **MCDC Emergency Preparedness Procedures (Normal Systems not in Service)**

MCDC maintains an Emergency Contact List for children enrolled. This list contains parent’s names, cell phone numbers, office phone numbers, and home phone numbers. MCDC also maintains a Child Roster which includes the names of those adults allowed to pick up a child.

These lists are both updated as necessary. A copy of each list is included in the evacuation backpack located under the Director's desk. This backpack follows the children in the event of an emergency.

In the event of any emergency NASA Security, Fire, and Rescue personnel respond. Should normal systems not be in service, NASA security detail will assist MCDC in contacting parents to pick up their children.

### **MCDC Emergency Preparedness Procedures (Emergency does not allow Relocation-Lockdown)**

MCDC has emergency lockdown procedures in place. All staff members are aware and in practice to follow the necessary procedures in the event we have a security lockdown. All parents are aware that in the event of a lockdown, staff will follow stated procedures. NASA Security, SWAT Team, Fire, and Rescue are aware of these procedures. The severity of this issue is great. NASA Security has counseled the MCDC Director to maintain the highest level of confidentiality about the steps MCDC follows in the event of a lockdown.

### **MCDC Safety and Supervision Procedures**

- Teachers attend annual safety training meetings
  - Fire extinguisher training- (one training done after hired)
  - Fire drills-(Included in annual Emergency Preparedness Training)
  - Tornado drills-(Included in annual Emergency Preparedness Training)
  - Lockdown drills-(Included in annual Emergency Preparedness Training)
  - Child abuse and neglect training – (Every two years)
  - Standard Precautions Training – (Every two years)
- Fire drills, tornado drills, lockdown drills performed
- Teachers are CPR and 1<sup>st</sup> Aid certified
- NASA Safety Officials have conducted training to assure staff that the Emergency Response Teams are trained and prepared.
- NASA Security Officers routinely visit MCDC for security sweeps.
- NASA Safety announces electronically any weather-related warnings.
- Teachers monitor Brightwheel and attendance forms to be aware of the children in their rooms.
- The MCDC building is equipped with security check points. Staff and parents must have an approved MCDC badge to enter the building. Classrooms are secured behind another set of doors that require badges.

### **MCDC Hand Washing Procedures**

When to wash hands:

- When arriving for the day or when moving from one group of children to another. When leaving for the day.
- Before and after: eating, handling food, or feeding a child; administering medication; playing with water used by more than one person/child.

- After: diapering and toileting; handling body fluids (e.g. mucus, blood, vomit); wiping noses, mouths, and sores; handling uncooked food; laying in sandboxes; cleaning (handling garbage).

How to wash hands:

- Make sure a clean, disposable paper towel is available
- Turn on water
- Moisten hand with water, apply soap, and rub hands together for at least 10 seconds. (Including fingers, nail beds, under nails, around jewelry and back of hands)
- Rinse hands
- Dry hands with clean, disposable paper towel
- Turn off tap with paper towel
- Dispose of paper towel

### **MCDC Steps to Diaper Changing**

- Be organized
  - Have supplies ready including paper liner, fresh diaper, wipes, plastic bag for soiled diaper, disposable gloves.
- Carry the child to the changing table
  - Always keep a hand on the child
- Clean the child's diaper area
  - Unfasten the diaper
  - Lift the child's legs as needed to clean skin with disposable wipes
  - Wipe with a front to back motion
  - Put soiled wipes and diaper in plastic bag to be put in a plastic lined, covered can
  - Remove the soiled surface by folding liner inward
- Put on a clean diaper and dress the child
  - Slide the fresh diaper under the child, fasten the diaper, and dress the child
- Wash the child's hands
  - Wash the child's hands with soap and water
- Clean and sanitize the diaper changing surface
  - Wash diaper changing area with disinfectant or soapy water
  - Spray sanitizing bleach solution onto the entire changing area
  - Leave bleach sanitizer on surface for at least 2 minutes (can be wiped down or air-dried)
- Wash hands and record diaper change in child's daily log
  - Wash both your and the child's hands using hand washing procedures
  - Record diaper change in the child's daily log

### **MCDC Toilet Learning Procedures**

Children are most likely ready to begin toilet learning when they display the following:

- Has preference for clean diapers.
- Understands when they have eliminated and know the meaning of terms for body functions. ("wet," "pee," "poop," and "b.m.").

- Indicate that they need to use the potty by squatting, pacing, holding their private parts, or passing gas.
- Show that they have some ability to hold it for a short period of time by going off by themselves for privacy when filling the diaper or staying dry during naps.

Communicate with the child's parents and have a joint plan.

- Have additional changes in clothing available for accidents.
- Use familiar words and actions both at home and at school for consistency.
- Share information daily on how the process is going.
- Decide together how long to wait between trips to the potty and how long the child will sit on the potty.
- Be consistent with the use of pull ups or big girl/big boy underwear.
- Reinforce sanitary processes with the parents such as wiping bottoms, washing hands, and flushing commodes.

Become a cheerleader for the child.

- Encourage and celebrate positive steps.
- Never scold, punish, or lecture the child for accidents.
- Do not use food as a reward or punishment.
- Remember that the process does not happen overnight and be patient.

### **Other**

For the safety of the children, parents must enter and exit the playground through the building.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **Special Events**

Special events involving students and parents are part of what makes MCDC an exceptional environment. Typical annual events include Staff Appreciation Week, Muffins for Moms, the Trike-a-thon, Donuts for Dads, the summer picnic, Pre-K Graduation, Fall Festival, the family Thanksgiving Lunch, and the Holiday Program.

Staff Appreciation Week consists of five days of parent sponsored activities to celebrate the staff, including an annual staff luncheon. Parents are asked to provide children's artwork, snacks for teachers, and to volunteer their time.

### **Food**

Food brought into MCDC to be shared by the children must be commercially prepared. Our NAC accreditation prohibits homemade food from being brought in for consumption by children. Homemade lunches made by a parent for their child only, such as for field trips, are allowable as long the food is not provided to the other children. This restriction does not affect food brought in for staff members or for other adults. MCDC is a peanut-free facility. Food that contains

peanuts, tree nuts, or has been processed in a facility that processes these items are prohibited in the classrooms.

### **Holidays/Birthdays**

Holiday activities will be scheduled for each classroom. Parents are encouraged to take part in these activities. Parents are also welcome and encouraged to celebrate their child's birthday at the center. Parents should coordinate the time, refreshments, and activities with their child's teacher.

### **Transportation/Field Trip Procedures**

Periodically, field trips will be organized for the Pre-School A, B, and C classes. Trips to local parks, museums, or other age-appropriate activities are planned. Announcements for upcoming field trips should be posted as early as possible to allow parents to plan accordingly. Field trips will be added to the monthly newsletter and calendar. Parents are required to sign permission slips prior to the field trip for their child to participate. Children without parental permission will not be allowed to participate. All admission fees are the responsibility of the parent.

MCDC children will not be transported in any vehicle without seatbelts. The cost of bus transportation may be prorated and charged in addition to any admission fees for field trips and is the responsibility of the parent.

At least two adults per class will supervise the children on the trip. Parents may be allowed to attend. Any parent attending will be responsible for their admission and transportation fees. Teachers need to complete a Field Trip Transportation Log and always keep it with them. Roll should be taken as the class enters the bus prior to leaving MCDC and again when the bus is loaded for the return trip to MCDC. Attendance sheets should be taken on field trips. Emergency contact information for parents should be taken on field trips in case a parent needs to be contacted. Teachers should take a First Aid kit on field trips. If any children have emergency medication (inhalers, Epi pens) it should be kept in the First Aid kit. At least one teacher needs to have a cell phone in case of a 911 emergency. Should an emergency arise, the teacher will call 911, notify the Director of MCDC and she will contact the parent.

Teachers should schedule time in the classroom to discuss the field trip with the children so the children will know what to expect. Children should be told what activities will be available to them. Safety should be reviewed and the children reminded to stay with the group. Children will wear their classroom t-shirt on the field trip for ease of recognition.

### **School Pictures**

School pictures are usually taken at least twice each year by a professional photographer with prior approval from the parents. These pictures may include individual, sibling, and group poses. Participation is optional and may require a sitting fee. Purchase of finished pictures is optional.

## **Optional Programs**

Optional programs may be offered to parents at the discretion of the MCDC Director. These programs are not included in the weekly MCDC tuition. If a family chooses to enroll their child(ren) in such a program, payment arrangements must be made with the program sponsor. The guidelines for such a program, including class ratios, will be provided by the program sponsor to interested parents.

## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

MCDC is a service provided to the members of the non-profit corporation. Along with MCDC staff members, parents are a key element in ensuring that the operating policies set forth in this Manual are followed. More importantly, parents play a significant role in ensuring that the MCDC runs as smoothly as possible to provide a safe, comfortable atmosphere for all children attending MCDC. As a result, it is important that parents follow a code of conduct designed to foster a high quality, safe and educational--yet nonetheless efficient--environment.

The following basic requirements must be followed, and the acknowledgement of this Code of Conduct must be memorialized by execution of the Parental Acknowledgement Form:

- Parents must provide the Director with current medical information on their child.
- Parents must sign their child in/out via Brightwheel every time the child enters/exits MCDC.
- Parents must ensure that their child is properly clothed for the appropriate seasonal temperature, and that a weather appropriate change of clothes has been provided for their child.
- Parents must ensure that their child is provided with athletic or other appropriate closed toed shoes for safe outdoor play.
- Parents must ensure that their child is properly fed prior to coming to the MCDC or arrives in time for a scheduled meal at the MCDC.
- Parents must inform the Director when their child has been exposed to or has a contagious disease.
- Parents must take each child to his/her class upon arrival.
- Parents must notify the caregiver responsible for the child when the child is departing the center.
- Parents must pick up children within 45 minutes when notified by the Director (see “Health and Safety Policies” and “Management of Aggressive Behaviors”).
- Parents are prohibited from using MCDC facilities and/or resources for personal gain.
- Parents are prohibited from using all forms of physical and verbal abuse at MCDC, including without limitation, yelling, shouting, the use of profanity, name calling, shaming, making derogatory remarks to or about any child (including their own child), a child’s family or an MCDC staff member, and/or using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens a child, a child’s family or an MCDC staff member. Corporal punishment is prohibited at MCDC. Parents who confront other children, a child’s family, or MCDC staff may be subject to temporary suspension or involuntary removal (see Involuntary Removal section).

## **Communications**

Open communication between each family and MCDC is encouraged. The staff will make every effort to communicate with the parent(s) daily to let them know how their child's day went. Communication will include, but will not be limited to, Brightwheel updates which highlight daily activities and note supplies which are needed.

Parents who wish to have a discussion with their child's caregiver should schedule a parent/teacher conference. This allows for arrangements to ensure proper supervision in the classroom while the caregiver engages in a discussion. Prolonged discussions in the classroom can be disruptive and divert a caregiver's attention from the children.

Any questions or problems a parent has concerning his/her child should be directed to the child's primary caregiver first, and then, if necessary, the Director. All problems should be discussed with the Director prior to any further action. If a question or problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the Director, the parent may bring the subject to the Board for resolution. The Board is the final authority concerning all problems regarding the MCDC.

## **Confidentiality**

Parents should keep all information regarding any child, other than their own, attending MCDC or any MCDC staff member confidential. Staff members have been instructed that issues relating to a child should only be discussed with that child's parents and the appropriate personnel. Staff members not working directly with a child will not be given information on that child; likewise, parents will not be given information on other children unless the Board determines that parents should be notified. Parents should discuss issues related to staff members or other children only with the Director, Assistant Director, Board, or individuals participating in an official investigation. Violation of this policy may result in revocation of MCDC membership.

## **Grievance Review Process**

Parents may contact the Board at any time. Additionally, a grievance may be filed with the Board after a parent has made every effort to resolve an issue with the Director and the parent remains unsatisfied. The grievance may be filed with any member of the Board in writing and should contain a full description of the issue to be addressed. The Board must address this grievance at a special meeting called by the Board or at the next scheduled Board meeting. The Board or the individual(s) filing the grievance may ask other individuals to discuss the issue with the Board. The Board should attempt to resolve any issue as quickly as possible. If for any reason an issue needs more time for research, the Board can delay the decision until the following scheduled Board meeting. Within two concurrent Board meetings a decision concerning the grievance must be made unless a further extension is granted by the individual(s) filing the grievance. The Board must provide an explanation of its decision to the individual(s) filing the grievance within two weeks of reaching the decision. The individual(s) filing the grievance may request and be given a meeting with the Board to discuss the decision. If an action (as the result of a grievance) which affects the members of the corporation is taken, the members will be notified of the action by the Board while the individual filing the grievance is notified.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

MCDC is governed by the parents, so parental involvement is vital to the continuation and improvement of the MCDC. Opportunities for participation include but are not limited to the following.

### **Visiting**

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit the center at any time. Parents may also have lunch with their child for a nominal fee. Parents should contact the front office by 9:00 a.m. when they plan to have lunch with their child. The lunch fee may be paid to the Director, Assistant Director, or the Administrative Assistant. Any outside food must be cleared through the Director.

While parents are welcome to visit, parent visits shall not interfere with the teacher's ability to supervise the classroom. If extended conversations with the caregiver is warranted, the parent must schedule a parent/teacher conference.

### **Board of Directors**

MCDC voting members are eligible to run for MCDC Board positions. Serving on the board provides parents the opportunity to oversee the operation of the MCDC. There are seven Board positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, and two Members-at-Large. The positions of President, Treasurer and Registrar must be filled by NASA civil servants. The remaining positions may be filled by any member of the corporation in good standing.

Parents may petition to present an issue at a regularly scheduled Board meetings. Parents are also highly encouraged to attend the General Membership/Open Forum meetings where a majority vote by the MCDC membership is required to approve yearly budgets and elect new board members.

### **Parent Committees**

Parent committees are formed to work specific projects throughout the center on an add needed basis. Room coordinators and volunteers are needed every year during Staff Appreciation Week.

### **Maintenance/Repairs/Special Project Volunteers**

Volunteers are always needed for routine repairs, maintenance, or new projects around the center. Workdays to accomplish several tasks may be organized from time to time.



## **Special Talents**

Parents who have a talent, career, or hobby that they think would be interesting to the children are encouraged to plan with the staff to set up a time to share it with the children. Parents are also encouraged to share anything they may have to aid in the center's curriculum or studies.

## **Communication**

Communication with the parents is accomplished in a variety of ways. A yearly Parent Survey is one method of soliciting input regarding the operation of the MCDC; it also helps to evaluate the areas that need improvement. A newsletter that informs the parents of Board activities, upcoming events, items to be saved for the center, classroom activities, staff news, and monthly menu is available each month on the MCDC web site. Notices of various items of interest to the parents are posted on the parent bulletin board located in the lobby. Board meeting minutes are also available on the MCDC website.

The MCDC web site address is <https://mcdc.msfc.nasa.gov/>. Please consult the website for current emails for MCDC staff.

## **MCDC STAFF**

### **Responsibilities**

MCDC staff is responsible for following the policies, procedures, and duties outlined in this Manual as well as in the most-recently issued MCDC Staff Handbook. The MCDC Director may instruct staff to follow other policies, procedures, and duties as outlined in the Employee Handbook. The Director will keep the staff current on policy changes that affect the MCDC.

Upkeep of the toys and equipment is the responsibility of the teaching staff. Toys in the infant, creeper, and toddler rooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily or more often as needed. Cribs and cots will be sanitized once a week. Cot sheets will be laundered weekly and crib sheets will be laundered daily.

All MCDC staff members are responsible for monitoring the MCDC facility for potential safety/health hazards. If a problem is discovered, the Director should take the appropriate action to rectify the situation in a timely manner.

### **Requirements**

All MCDC staff members must have Infant and Child Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and basic First Aid training. Minimum staff requirements as set by the National Accreditation Commission shall be followed, and at least 25 hours of training per year is required of each staff member.

## **Lesson Plan and Evaluation of Lesson Plan**

### **Lesson Plans**

MCDC operates under the philosophy that children learn best through play. MCDC has embraced the Creative Curriculum and their goals and will maintain current training with up-to-date materials. Teachers are required to submit lesson plans to the Assistant Director for review and approval on Monday prior to the teaching week. These plans include “Group Time, Special Activities, Outdoor Activities, and Changes to Environment.” Teachers are encouraged to allow the child to learn through play and devise lesson plans that are both enriching and interesting to the children.

### **Evaluation of Lesson Plans**

MCDC requires teachers to complete a Lesson Plan Evaluation Form on the Monday following the lesson. This task allows teachers to step back and evaluate the previous week. Teachers can assess what activities worked well with the class and which activities may need some adjustment.

### **Professional Development**

Employees are required to upgrade performance of duties through professional reading, membership in professional organizations, attending meetings and workshops, and study of Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers and Nighttime Center and the NAC Accreditation Manual.

### **Director/Staff Communications**

MCDC staff is encouraged to work all problems, issues, or concerns directly with parents, Director, and/or Board as the situation dictates. All issues will ideally be handled at the lowest level possible. The Board is the final authority for resolutions of all problems within the MCDC.

### **Media Policy**

MCDC operates under the auspices of NASA: George C. Marshall Space Flight Center. As such, MCDC’s media policy falls under the NASA guidelines. The release of information to the media must be coordinated with the Public Affairs Office at George C. Marshall Space Flight Center.

### **NASA Name and Initials**

MCDC’s use of NASA’s name, initials, and emblem is governed by our Space Act Agreement.

**STAFF ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of MCDC's 2023 Operating Policies Manual and reviewed it on the date indicated below. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the contents and provisions of this Manual, as well as any revisions or modifications made to it. Furthermore, I understand that I should consult the Director regarding any questions about the day-to-day running to MCDC, or the MCDC Board regarding any questions about the corporation not answered in the Manual.

I further understand that if I violate a policy set forth in MCDC's 2023 Operating Policies Manual, MCDC reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action against me, including and up to involuntary termination for the first violation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

**PARENTAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have read a copy of MCDC’s 2023 Operating Policies Manual and reviewed it on the date indicated below. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the contents and provisions of this Manual, as well as any revisions or modifications made to it. Furthermore, I understand that I should consult the Director regarding any questions about the day-to-day running to MCDC, or the MCDC Board regarding any questions about the corporation not answered in the Manual.

I further understand that if I violate a policy set forth in MCDC’s 2023 Operating Policies Manual, including, but not limited to the Code of Conduct set forth in the section entitled “Parental Responsibilities and Requirements,” MCDC reserves the right to take appropriate action against me, including and up to temporary suspension of my family’s privilege to use MCDC, permanent removal of my child(ren) from MCDC, or a bar upon my access to MCDC premises.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian’s Printed Name

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Guardian’s Printed Name

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Guardian’s Signature

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Guardian’s Signature

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Date

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Date