

Family Handbook

Over a hundred years of
quality education



423 3rd St. SW Albuquerque, NM 87102 - (505)242-0557
205 Coal Ave. SW Albuquerque, NM 87102 - (505)295-3682
Sondra Carpenter – Executive Director
sondra@christinakent.org

Table of Content

Page Number:

Welcome to Christina Kent Early Childhood Center	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Statement • Statement of Philosophy • Values 	<p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p>
Admission and Attendance	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment and Tuition • Enrollment Forms • Non-discrimination Statement • Inclusion Philosophy • Attendance and Late Pick-Up Policy • Holidays and Closures • Severe Weather and Disasters • Disenrollment 	<p>6</p> <p>7, 8</p> <p>8</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>9</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p>
Safety and Security	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Door Security Access • Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures/ Release Authorization and Cell Phone Policy • Signing Your Child In and Out • Pick-Up Policy of a Person Who Appears to be Impaired • Parent Custody and Visitation • Filing a Complaint or Concern • Smoke, Drug, and Weapon-Free Campus • Personal Item Disclaimer 	<p>11</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>12</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>13</p> <p>13</p>
Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Procedures	14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidents and First Aid • Disaster Preparedness Plan • If a Child is Missing 	<p>14</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p>
Health, Nutrition and Wellness Policies	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sick Child Policy • Immunizations and Health Records • Handwashing • Medication Policy • Accidents and Incidents • Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect • Meals and Dining • Nutrition Environment • Nutrition Education • Farm to Preschool • Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions • Food from Home 	<p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>17</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>19</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>20</p> <p>20</p> <p>20</p>
Our Staff	21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal Opportunity Employer • Confidentiality 	<p>21</p> <p>21</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication, Cell Phones, and Staff Accessibility • Off-Hour Services 	<p>22</p> <p>22</p>
<p>Curriculum and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reggio Emilia Approach • Assessment • Family Values, Experiences, and Language • Positive Guidance and Discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biting 	<p>23</p> <p>23, 24</p> <p>25</p> <p>25</p> <p>26</p> <p>26</p>
<p>Classroom Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Program • Personal Belongings and Dress • Toilet Learning • Rest/Naptime • Field Trips and Special Visitors • Screen Time and Technology • Photography and Videography • Transitions to a New Classroom 	<p>27</p> <p>27</p> <p>27</p> <p>27</p> <p>28</p> <p>28</p> <p>29</p> <p>29</p> <p>29</p>
<p>Family and Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Engagement • Family Changes and Information • Parent Teacher Conferences • Dealing with Loss and Death • Parent Conflict Resolution • Family Code of Conduct • Community Engagement and Partnerships 	<p>30</p> <p>30</p> <p>30</p> <p>31</p> <p>31</p> <p>31</p> <p>32</p> <p>32</p>



Welcome to Christina Kent Early Childhood Center

We are happy to welcome you to an amazing tradition of quality care, education, and nutritional services. Christina Kent Early Childhood Center (CKECC) is a non-profit program, founded in 1919, by the Albuquerque Women's Club to support working families. We have a 100-year legacy of building relationships and creating enriching learning opportunities for Albuquerque's children. We are proud to welcome you into our community and look forward to watching your child thrive.

CKECC is a 5-star Licensed, Community-based center in the State of New Mexico open 7:00 to 6:00 Monday-Friday. We are nationally accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and have nine classrooms for children six weeks through school aged. We have four NM State PreK rooms that adhere to all state protocols and standards. CKECC has led the charge in child care since we were founded. We have been the business model for many programs across the state, post-WWII, while remaining innovative in our learning approaches by adopting the Reggio Emilia pedagogy in 2010.

This handbook is a guide to help you understand our policies and procedures so your child's transition into our center is seamless. It is important to us that you start with all the tools you need to make your family's time with us joyful. We are a community that values the participation and feedback of our families. We encourage you to drop-in, volunteer, and discuss any concerns or suggestions you may have. Open communication and participation are key to our amazing school.



The mission is to serve the children of economically diverse working families with quality childcare, early education, and nutritional services in a safe and nurturing environment.

--- our image of the child is rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent and, most of all, connected to adults and other children.

Loris Malaguzzi

Statement of Philosophy – CKECC welcomes families without regard to race, religion, nationality, socioeconomic status, family structure, cultural background, gender, abilities, or preferred language into the center. The programs of CKECC arise from a common desire for excellence in meeting the needs of children and their families for nurturing growth and development, learning, relationships, and understanding.

We believe:

- The home is the most important factor in a child’s development and we recognize that the family is the child’s first teacher. We strive to support and compliment the family to promote the healthy development of your child.
- The dignity and the worth of each child as competent and able to learn. We recognize that the child has 100 languages to express themselves.
- Loving, trusting, and respecting each child makes the child capable of loving, trusting, and respecting others.
- It is important to meet each child’s need for physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth.
- Children deserve a nurturing, safe, and happy environment that promotes their desire to learn.
- Children should have the opportunity to learn through play to develop the skills needed to transition to kindergarten successfully.
- Children will have teachers who respect the individuality of each child by working with them in both small-group and large-group experiences.
- Teaching staff should provide guided and unguided experiences in which the children can learn through discovery.
- Children deserve to have teachers who are capable and caring and whose values enable them to be excellent role models.

CKECC Values – CKECC is committed to the standards of ethical behavior in early childhood care and education, as stated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

We are dedicated to the following core values:

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable state of the human life cycle.
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn.
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and family.
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community, and society.
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of everyone (child, family member, and colleague).
- Respect diversity in children, families, and colleagues.
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect.

Admission and Attendance

The admissions process begins with an orientation conducted by the school's Program Manager. This is a great time to ask questions and become oriented with the Christina Kent community. The Program Manager will review all the enrollment paperwork, required state documents, and highlights from the Family Handbook. Following orientation, we invite you to spend time with your child in the classroom observing and introducing them to their teachers. We understand that the transition from home to a new school can require additional support. We are here to help. Our staff are trained to assist in making those first days smooth and joyful. We suggest bringing in family pictures to hang in the classroom to provide comfort for your child.

Enrollment and Tuition

CKECC offers a variety of enrollment and tuition options to accommodate all families. We are **open from 7:30 to 5:30 in the PreK Building and 7:00 to 6:00 in the Annex, Monday through Friday**, and enroll children for full-time care. We participate in Universal Child Care as funded by the state of New Mexico. We offer child care services to children aged six weeks to school age. We are a state-recognized Early PreK and PreK program. NM State PreK provides a FREE, full-day program, from 8:30 to 3:30, Monday – Friday, during the traditional school months. Families can choose to enroll for PreK only or enroll for wrap-around care, to accommodate early arrival or late departure, for an additional fee. We provide care for school-aged children, Kindergarten to 3rd grade, for summer and drop-in while their elementary schools are closed during the school year. Scheduled drop-in care for school-aged children will be coordinated through the Program Manager. We do not provide drop-in care to children due to a school suspension or absence due to illness.

Following CKECC's Mission Statement, enrollment priority will be given to children with working parents/guardians or parents/guardians who attend school full-time or a combination of both.

Returning all requisite forms, paying required fees, and/or providing a state subsidy Placement Agreement completes the admissions process. The *Registration Forms* and *Enrollment Agreement of Costs and Services* govern the contractual relationship between your family and Christina Kent. If you have any questions after completing all required paperwork, please feel free to contact the Program Manager for an explanation or clarification of any policy.

All tuition payments are to be made in advance of childcare services. CKECC relies on tuition fees to be able to provide care, therefore tuition must be made on time. Your *Enrollment Agreement of Costs and Services* will provide you with detailed information regarding your cost and the date that payment is due. If your account becomes delinquent, we will work with you to get your account current. Excessive past-due payments and lack of payment may result in disenrollment. There is no tuition credit when your child is absent or out due to a program closure. ***Tuition remains the same for all program closures***, regardless of reason.

Christina Kent Payment Options:

- We accept *Full-Time*, NM state child care Placement Agreement as approved by the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). We encourage all our families to apply for this state-provided benefit. You can apply through the ECECD website: www.nmececd.org. Eligibility guidelines, required documents, and the process of enrollment are provided on the website. If you need any assistance, the Program Manager and Executive Director are available.
 - When utilizing the state's subsidy benefit, it is the responsibility of the family to pay all required co-payments and ensure recertification annually. Failure to recertify may result in the disenrollment of your child.
- CKECC is unique in its ability to provide a sliding scale for income-eligible families. We receive grants and do numerous fundraisers to support our working families with affordable, high-quality care. To be eligible for our sliding scale you must first apply for the NM state subsidy Placement Agreement. If you are denied, we will work with you to determine sliding scale eligibility.
 - Documents that may be used to qualify for the CKECC Sliding Scale are pay stubs, tax returns, SNAP, or adult Medicaid eligibility. Sliding Scale eligibility is determined at the discretion of the program Bookkeeper and Executive Director.
- Out-of-pocket, full pay, tuition. If you are not eligible for the other payment options you may choose to pay the current full-time rate.

To best serve you, CKECC, accepts cash, credit cards, or personal checks. There will be a \$35.00 fee for all returned checks. Credit Card numbers and payment schedules are saved in Playground and auto-drafted on the day stipulated in the *Agreement of Costs and Services*.

Enrollment Forms

You will receive a packet of enrollment forms that must be completed before your child can be enrolled. These forms will be reviewed with the Program Manager during your scheduled orientation. These forms may require updates annually and anytime there is a change in phone number, address, immunizations, etc. It is the responsibility of the family to keep us updated on any family changes. Your enrollment packet will include:

- ✓ **Enrollment Requirement Checklist** – This checklist will be used to ensure all required forms and documents are completed and received at the time of Orientation.
- ✓ **CKECC Registration Form** – this form provides us with essential information about your child and your family, including how to contact you. We must have current phone numbers and emails for all responsible guardians of your child.
- ✓ **Primary Contact Information Form** – This form contains your contact information as well as other emergency contacts whom you authorize to pick up your child. In case of a

serious medical or dental emergency, you will be contacted first. If you are not available, we will attempt to reach other emergency contacts as authorized in this agreement.

- ✓ **Medical Information and Release Form** – This is the parental release agreement. It will authorize us to perform basic first aid and/or transport your child if necessary for medical treatment.
- ✓ **Child Health Information Form** – This is to be completed by your child’s physician and returned with a current copy of their immunizations. NM State childcare regulations require that a current record of immunization be kept on file. If your child has any dietary restrictions, allergies, or other health concerns these forms allow for a physician to advise and guide your child’s care to ensure your child’s health and well-being. Other documentation may be required based on the severity of your child’s health needs.
 - *We will also require a copy of your child’s last dental, vision and hearing exam (PREK families only).*
- ✓ **The Child/Family Information Form and Child Profile or Infant Information Form** – This gives us background information on your child including family life, special interests, likes and dislikes, physical abilities, and social behavior. This will give us insight into your child so we can support their development and growth.
- ✓ **Field Trip and Photography Authorization Form** – This gives us permission for your child to participate in field trips and walk-a-bouts in the neighborhood as well as their photograph to be taken for social media and marketing.
- ✓ **Agreement of Costs and Services** – This agreement outlines the terms of your tuition obligation to CKECC.
- ✓ **Behavior Management Policy and Procedures** – This outlines our positive guidance methods and procedures when behaviors do not align with a safe and effective classroom.
- ✓ **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Income Eligibility Form** – As participants of CACFP we are required to have an application on file for every child enrolled in our program. This form is required to be updated annually.

CKECC may require additional forms as needed.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Christina Kent ECC prohibits discrimination against any family or child seeking enrollment or enrollment based on race, color, creed, sex, gender, national origin, disabilities, and/or other religious beliefs. All enrolled children receive equal privileges, programs, and activities to include meals. We will make reasonable accommodation for any special physical, mental, or dietary needs.

Inclusion Philosophy

Christina Kent ECC provides services for children with differences or delays in all abilities, developmental, behavioral, or physical, whose limitations can be reasonably accommodated.

We believe that children with developmental delays and/or disabilities should have a quality early learning environment with their typically developing peers. We believe that inclusive classrooms create a community of mutual learning and tolerance.

We require open and honest communication between administrators, teaching staff, and families to ensure all accommodation is provided. CKECC will collaborate with other local agencies, therapists, health care professionals, and/or any professional with the permission and cooperation of the family. Our goal is to provide excellence for your child through ongoing support, assessment, and curriculum adapted to your child's individual needs.

Attendance

Christina Kent ECC is a full-day educational environment focused on your child's unique growth and development; therefore we ask children to be in attendance, each day, with minimal absenteeism. If your child is going to be absent from school, we require you to notify the school or classroom teacher as soon as you can. Children enrolled in the NM State PreK program are required to be in attendance for 80% of the PreK calendar year. Children are expected to be present in daily routines and must be at school by the start of PreK, 8:30, and not picked up until the end, 3:30. Our hours of operation are 7:00 to 6:00 and wrap-around care is available before and after PreK.

Late Pick-Up: We require that children be picked up on time. Children will only be released to an individual who is 18 years of age or older and authorized by the parent/guardian. If a child is left at CKECC after hours of operation a late fee will be assessed as outlined in the *Agreement of Costs and Services*. The business office will issue an invoice for all applicable late fees. If a child is still in our care after hours of operation and every attempt has been made to contact the parents and/or emergency contacts with no response, we reserve the right to call the proper authorities to pick up the child.

Holidays and Closures

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day	First Friday + Monday of August for In-Service Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Labor Day
President's Day	Veteran's Day
Day After President's Day for In-Service	Close at 12:30 Wednesday before Thanksgiving
Good Friday	Thanksgiving and Friday After
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
Juneteenth Recognition Day	The week after Christmas for Winter Break
Independence Day	

Severe Weather and Disasters

In the event of severe weather CKECC will follow the closure announcements of the Albuquerque Public School System. Please watch your local news station and the CKECC Playground App for updates regarding a program delay or closure. In the event of a localized

disaster or state of emergency, we may be required to close. We will make every attempt to notify you via Playground, phone/text, etc. If an emergency forces a closure while your child is in attendance, we will call you as soon as possible. CKECC will follow all procedures as outlined in the Disaster Preparedness Plan and this handbook.

Disenrollment

If you need to disenroll your child from CKECC, for any reason, we require a two-week written notice delivered to the program office staff. If two weeks' notice is not received, you will be charged accordingly. All payments must be received and accounts settled at the time of notice. There will be no refunds on paid accounts.

CKECC reserves the right to disenroll children for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to pay tuition.
- Falsification of claims regarding income statements for admission or sliding scale determination.
- Excessive lateness in picking up child(ren) at the close of the school.
- A pattern of excessive, unexcused absences.
- If your child has continuous behavioral issues that cause harm to other children and/or staff, we will require you to obtain other services to assist us in working with your child. If you fail to follow through in the process and do not cooperate with classroom teachers or the Behavioral Plan established in cooperation with the classroom teacher, your child *could* be disenrolled. Our policy is outlined in *The Behavior Management Policy* provided to you at the time of enrollment and reviewed during orientation.



Security and Safety Procedures

Christina Kent ECC has policies and procedures in place to ensure that your child's safety comes first. We take our responsibility for securing our buildings and playgrounds seriously and monitor and/or update our security measures regularly. Our school has a camera system that monitors the program both indoors and out. This allows us to watch the front door from the office as well as the classroom and parameters of the playground.

Our staff is trained to maintain proper supervision which includes adhering to 5 star state licensing mandated ratios. Ratios are posted in each classroom and will be followed at all times of the day including naptime, outdoor play, etc. Their training includes how to take attendance before and after all transitions, which includes leaving the classroom for any purpose such as visiting neighboring classrooms, cross-campus visits, field trips and more.

Front Door Security and Access

Christina Kent ECC has a front door security system that remains locked 24 hours a day. Families and authorized personnel will be provided a keypad code or FOB that is unique to them. We ask that you do not share your personal entrance code/FOB with anyone. All other visitors are required to ring the doorbell. We ask that you do not hold the door open for a person following you in; although we know that may be difficult, that person may not be authorized to enter our building. Our secure entrance procedures are critical to the safety of our children and staff.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

You must accompany your child into the building each day. You must escort your child into their appropriate classroom for safety reasons. This will also provide your child with a positive transition into the academic day. We ask that you and your child's hands get washed upon entering the classroom. This is a key component to providing your child with a healthy school. If your child is feeling anxious, the classroom teacher is trained to comfort and assist your child as you depart.

We ask that you greet your child's teacher at the beginning and end of the day so they can acknowledge you. This is a safety measure to ensure all children are accounted for and the staff can monitor the adults who are picking up each day.

Release Authorization: The CKECC *Primary Contact Information Form* will list all individuals who have been authorized to pick up your child(ren) unless you notify us in writing of changes. We will not release a child to a person not authorized by a parent/guardian. We require a government-issued photo ID for verification from anyone picking up a child who we do not know. Our staff and teachers have been authorized to ask for the same. The parent/guardian assumes full responsibility for the children once signed out. We require all authorized personnel to be over the age of 18.

Please refrain from using your cell phone during drop off and pick up. This is an important time for you and your child's teacher to exchange information and important for your child. Children are naturally attuned to your attention and they depend on that for their social and emotional development. We know it is important for your child to share their classroom each day and for everyone to feel welcome and accessible during these transitions. Your undivided attention is appreciated.

Signing Your Child In and Out

Authorized adults dropping or picking up a child(ren) are required to sign them in and out using Playground. Playground provides families access through individual logins for touchless sign-in/out using their own cellular devices or you may use a CKECC tablet, available in the classroom. In the event the computer system is not working, a manual sign-in sheet will be available in the classroom.

We will release children only to adults who have been authorized by the parents/guardians with the proper documentation provided to CKECC as outlined in this handbook.

We ask that children arrive no later than 9:30 each day and that children not be picked up during naptime. This helps create a consistent and calm environment for your child as well as all children enrolled. If you will be arriving late we ask that you call and notify the classroom teacher. This ensures our lunch meal counts are correct and that your child is included in all daily planning.

Pick-Up Policy of a Person Who Appears to be Impaired

If a designated person comes to pick up your child and appears to be visibly impaired or possibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol we reserve the right to temporarily refuse pick up. This will be determined in good faith with the well-being of the child the priority. The front desk staff will contact other custodial parents/guardians or alternate authorized pick-up people in an attempt to resolve the situation. Due to a parent's legal right to immediate access, we cannot deny a custodial parent access to their child even if impairment is suspected. However, we will make every attempt to keep the child safe including, but not limited to, calling the Albuquerque Police Department and/or Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who appears to be impaired and attempts to pick up a child will be denied access to the child and the staff will contact the child's immediate family.

Parent Custody and Visitation

If a family member is denied custody of, or visitation rights for a child, or if those rights are in any way limited by a court order, we require a copy of the legal court order. We will file all documentation in the child's file and will treat them as strictly confidential. We will honor all legal parental rights when appropriate court orders are not provided. All legal guardians can add and/or remove authorized adults from enrollment paperwork.

Filing a Safety Complaint or Concern

If you have a concern or questions regarding your child's safety or classroom, please speak to your child's teacher. If you are not comfortable addressing your concern with the classroom teacher, you are welcome to speak with the Executive Director, Director, Assistant Director, or Program Manager.

Smoke, Drug, and a Weapon-Free Campus

Christina Kent ECC is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe environment for families, children, and staff. We are a smoke-free environment and prohibit smoking of any kind. We also prohibit the use, possession of, and/or sale of drugs or alcohol on the property. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal of your student.

Firearms or any weapons are prohibited unless you are an authorized law enforcement officer.

Personal Item Disclaimer

CKECC is not responsible for the theft or loss of personal items. When picking up or dropping off your child(ren) always turn off your car, lock it, and remove all valuable items.

We have two campuses on the corner of 3rd and Coal. It is important to be a mindful pedestrian, take your time crossing the street and use the cross walk.

We ask if you are parking off of Coal or in our parking lot, near the playgrounds, please turn off your engine to reduce pollution emissions exposure to the children playing outdoors.



“If children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share their feelings, and grow.”

- Alfie Kohn

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plans

At Christina Kent ECC the safety of our children and staff is our priority. We maintain and review policies and procedures to ensure that we are prepared to respond appropriately to emergencies. If an emergency were to occur our first responsibility would be to the children and controlling the situation. Communication with families will occur as soon as it is deemed safe and appropriate. If you have any questions regarding emergency procedures, please discuss them during your program orientation.

Accidents and First Aid

Our classroom and playground environments are designed to meet national accreditation standards for safety and wellness. They are checked daily for potential hazards. Accidents, however, do occasionally occur. We maintain first aid kits and have them accessible in each classroom. If First Aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is needed, all CKECC staff are required to hold a current First Aid and CPR certification as well as attend training for health and safety issues.

Accident/Incident Reports are completed and provided to parents/guardians if an injury, accident, and/or incident occurs at school. Families will be notified at the time of pick-up or immediately based on the severity of the injury and/or if it is a head injury. If the injury is serious, we may call emergency personnel and emergency transport if we feel it is required. All attempts will be made to promptly notify you by phone, according to the information provided on your child's registration forms.

Disaster Preparedness Plan

Christina Kent ECC has a Disaster Preparedness Plan (DPP) in place to guide us in the event of an emergency. Emergencies can occur with or without notice; therefore we will conduct emergency practice drills to ensure your child's safety. You will not be able to pick up or drop off your child during an emergency drill. Our preparedness plan is reviewed and updated annually. A copy is kept in each classroom and our staff receive annual training to help them be as prepared as possible for any unexpected event. Emergencies include hazardous conditions or situations that may impact the welfare of children and staff or those that prevent us from complying with health and safety regulations. Classroom teachers are responsible for ensuring every child enrolled in the class has an Emergency Evacuation Form and that there are emergency materials and/or equipment readily available if needed.

The following outlines potential emergencies and protocols:



- **Fire Evacuation** – all classrooms have evacuation plans posted near their designated emergency exit doors. Fire drills are conducted monthly. In the event of an actual evacuation, temporary relocation sites have been assigned. **If an on-site evacuation is determined all classes will proceed to: the sister location across the street OR The First United Methodist Church** located directly behind and to the north of CKECC. Once at the church, staff and children should proceed to the Fellowship Hall. If the church is also under evacuation, or we have to relocate to an off-site location, the secondary evacuation site will be the **Barelas Community Center** located at Atlantic and 5th Street. Classrooms will have evacuation packs to assist the children while transitioning to an off-site location. Attendance will be taken during all transitions per CKECC Supervision and DPP policies. Families and the appropriate authorities will be contacted once children have been relocated and settled into their new environment.
- **Shelter in Place/Lockdown** – Each classroom will have an assigned safe place equipped with the appropriate supplies to assist in the safety and well-being of the children in the event of being confined to their classroom. Shelter in Place/Lockdown drills are conducted quarterly. Notification and implementation procedures are outlined in our DPP and unique to each classroom. Parents, guardians, and visitors will not be permitted to enter the building during a drill. If you have any questions regarding our policy and procedures, please contact your site director.
- **Power Failures** – In the event of a power failure the staff will comfort the children and keep calm until power resumes. Emergency lighting is available and maintained. If, for any reason, we are unable to stay open during a power outage we will notify families to immediately pick up.
- **Children with Disabilities** – Children who are unable to walk or have a disability that requires assistance during an emergency will have an assigned staff person available to assist them. This person will be the program floater, cook, or administrator.

If a Child is Missing

CKECC adheres to strict supervision policies as outlined by the NAEYC Accreditation standards. This helps ensure that no child is left unattended. Our teachers take attendance of their class before exiting outside and when returning to the classroom. If a child is found to be missing after a thorough search is conducted, the parents will be notified, and a report will be filed with the Albuquerque Police Department.

Health, Nutrition and Wellness Policies

Christina Kent ECC is committed to keeping our program healthy so our children and staff can thrive and be successful. We can do this through several policies focused on handwashing, nutrition education, staff training, including Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid certification, and a commitment to our Sick Child Policy. We adhere to New Mexico state regulations and accreditation standards and review our policies annually. We have two full-time cooks who cook from scratch, so we can prioritize whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and raw proteins. Nutritious and delicious meals are part of our mission. Our Family/Community Board and table, by the entrance, will provide you with applicable resources and community events when needed. We are here to support you and your family.

Sick Child Policy

It is quite common for young children to become sick when enrolled in a group care setting. We will exclude from care any child who exhibits the signs and symptoms of illness. If your child becomes ill while at school, a parent or authorized contact person will be called to pick up the child immediately. While your child waits for pick up they will be placed, separately, from the other children to minimize the continued spread of illness.

We ask that you help us maintain the healthiest environment for all children by keeping your child/ren home when they are sick. We will send your child home and we ask that you keep them home when they exhibit the following signs of illness:

- Temperature of 100.4 or higher.
- Heavy nasal discharge that is yellow or greenish.
- A persistent, undiagnosed, cough.
- Draining of the eyes, ears, nose, or any open sores.
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting.
- Any unidentified rash, including impetigo (doctor's note required to return)
- Thrush and/or any other symptoms of sores in the mouth or feet.
- Strep throat (Child must be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours following a doctor's care and/or a 24-hour dose of prescribed medication).
- Inability to participate in play both indoors and outdoors.
- Lice or a contagious or communicable disease such as COVID-19

Children may return to school when they have been fever and/or symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours and/or a doctor's note stating they are not contagious.

We ask that you call us when your child will be out due to illness or has been diagnosed with an illness by a licensed physician. This helps us ensure the wellness of our children and program.

CKECC staff are trained to do **Daily Health Checks**. These checks occur upon arrival each day and throughout the school day. The teaching staff will check the child's overall appearance including skin, eyes, nose, mouth, and breathing. They will watch a child's emotional state and note any changes. Parents or guardians will be notified regarding identified health or physical concerns.

Immunizations and Health Records

Children enrolled must maintain current immunizations as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and provide appropriate copies after each update. A copy of mandated immunizations is available on the Parent/Community Board. CKECC will accept a New Mexico Health Department Certificate of Exclusion for families who choose not to immunize. Under-immunized children may be excluded from care if a vaccine-preventable disease, to which children are susceptible, occurs in the program or the child is placed near a classroom of children at risk such as infants.

National accreditation and state PreK standards require we have current health evaluations on file. Child health records should include current information about any health insurance coverage as required for treatment in an emergency. These will be reviewed during orientation and must be completed by your physician and/or dentist. All children participating in the New Mexico Prek program will also be required to have a vision, hearing, and dental screening.

Results of health examinations and names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information, instructions for all or any special health needs, and supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized due to a medical condition will be confidential and shared on an as-needed basis.

Handwashing

Frequent and proper handwashing is essential in keeping the spread of germs at a minimum. We ask that you wash your hands, and your child's, upon entering our classrooms. All of our classrooms are equipped with sinks, running water, soap, and paper towels. Handwashing procedures and policies are posted in each classroom

Medication Policy

CKECC will administer prescription and/or non-prescription medications only with written authorization from a child's legal parent/guardian. A consent form is provided by the front desk and must be signed daily as required by New Mexico state licensing. Medications are administered by qualified staff who have completed specialized training and will follow the written instructions on the medication form. The completed form must include dosage, start/end date, possible side effects, and method by which to administer the medication. All medications must be in their original containers labeled with the child's complete name and not be expired. Prescription medications must also include address, physician's name and number,

recommended dosage, and times and method of administration. Non-prescription medications such as ibuprofen, cough syrup, Benadryl, etc will be dispensed per state regulations.

All medications will be stored in a labeled, locked container that is readily available when needed and inaccessible to children.

Lotions, sunscreen, and/or diaper creams will only be applied with parental written permission.

If maintenance medications are required or medications for any medical emergency we will require the CKECC consent form to be completed as well as an individualized medical care plan issued by the child's pediatrician. This requirement includes medical conditions such as severe allergies requiring an Epi-Pen, asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, and/or diabetes.

Accidents and Incidents

Although CKECC trains all staff on the proper supervision and care of young children, there will be occasions when your child may receive an injury. It is not uncommon for children in group care to get hurt. When injuries occur the staff will administer basic first aid procedures. If more care is required we will ask that you follow up with your physician or seek emergency medical or dental care.

All accidents or incidents will be immediately reported to administrative staff and an accident/incident report will be completed. These reports will be available at pick-up and require your signature. Any incidents or accidents that require more than basic first aid or involve the head or face will also be followed by a phone call to the parents and/or guardian.

Parents or guardians whose child has been involved in an accident or incident may request a conference with the classroom teacher and/or administrative staff to discuss any concerns.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

The state of New Mexico requires all people working with young children to report suspected child abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) and neglect. CKECC staff receive training to ensure they understand what is and what are the signs of child abuse and neglect, as well as what to do if they suspect abuse and neglect. If a staff member has reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected, they will be required to report their suspicions to New Mexico's Child Protective Services Department. Our legal obligation is to report and complete all appropriate documentation. All investigations are confidential; therefore, staff members are not at liberty to discuss them, even with parents. New Mexico law establishes immunity for any person reporting in good faith.

If you have any reason to suspect child abuse or neglect, of any child, reports can be made to the state-issued hotline: 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or text #SAFE.

Meals and Dining

Christina Kent ECC is a participant in the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). We adhere to all of the policies and procedures as outlined in their guidelines to ensure that children have nutritious meals in a safe and healthy environment. We provide three meals a day; breakfast, lunch, and snacks that are prepared by our full-time cooks. All meals are 'home-cooked' and made from scratch. We follow the CACFP meal component guidelines and focus on whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, low-sugar foods, and no fried foods.

CKECC does not utilize a cycle menu. We plan meals based on seasonal availability, including new foods, add foods and dishes from a variety of cultures, and celebrate 'Meatless Monday' and 'Taco Tuesday'. Menus are posted on the Parent Board in each classroom as well as at the school entrance. We welcome any special recipes from our families so we can include them in our menus. Water is provided to all children, 6 months and up, consistently throughout the day and available during meals, upon request. Milk is served daily with meals.

Nutrition Environment

CKECC staff are trained to create a positive and relaxed atmosphere for all meals. We believe in the competency and independence of our children; therefore we create a 'family-style' dining experience with a focus on table manners, how to set a table, *Our Plate*, and the components of good nutrition. We encourage and facilitate conversations that encourage healthy eating. All children will learn to serve themselves using child-sized utensils, bowls, and pitchers which will develop their motor and self-help skills. We are committed to helping our children learn about food, good nutrition, and appropriate mealtime socialization.

All environmental health and accreditation standards for sanitization, hygiene, and handwashing are followed during food prep, table setting, mealtimes, and clean-up. Children have the opportunity to brush their teeth, at least once daily, *upon request*.

Nutrition Education

The CKECC curriculum requires nutrition education to include learning about different food groups, cooking activities, hands-on activities such as gardening, visits to farms or from farmers, physical exercise and movement, taste-testing, and much more. These activities help our children learn about the world around them, developing everyday math skills and science concepts. Our staff receive annual training on CACFP standards and nutrition education.

We are participants of New Mexico's ***Healthy Kids/Healthy Preschool*** which challenges us and our families to participate in state-wide events that incorporate movement, minimal screen time, and healthy eating habits. Family engagement is key to building a healthy foundation for a child's development and learning. We will provide CKECC families with nutrition education opportunities throughout the year and in our monthly newsletter.

Farm to Preschool

Christina Kent ECC has created a Farm to Preschool Program in conjunction with our commitment to **Healthy Kids/Healthy Preschool**. This program incorporates some of the following:

- Gardening: learning to plant and harvest fresh foods and herbs to use for classroom nutrition education activities and/or meals.
- NM Grown Grant: we are awarded a grant each year to support us in purchasing locally grown foods from CACFP-approved New Mexico farms. We have won the top level Golden Chile Award for many years.
- Recycling: each classroom has a recycle bin and our curriculum includes an understanding of the importance of protecting our planet, our communities, and each other.



Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

We recognize that food allergies and/or dietary restrictions are common among young children. We will require a physician's note outlining special dietary restrictions. If your child has special feeding needs we will work with you to create a **Food Plan** that aligns with all physical and developmental needs and restrictions. This plan will need to include the types and quantities of food to be provided. We will work with you to review our menu and make appropriate accommodations following CACFP guidelines. Classroom educators will be informed of all food allergies, dietary restrictions, and Food Plans. CKECC is a peanut-free school.

If your child will need substitute food items due to religious or cultural preferences, you will be asked to provide written information for our records.

Food from Home

The CACFP is an integral part of our nutrition program; therefore, we discourage any outside food being brought from home. If a child arrives at school with food they will be asked to sit with their parent until the food is consumed or disposed of.

If bringing food for a birthday or special holiday we ask that you work with the classroom teacher and follow the guidelines provided to you at orientation. Food to be shared must be either whole fruits or vegetables or commercially prepared and in their original, sealed containers.

Our Staff

Christina Kent Early Childhood Center employs and supports a team of professionals who have the qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment to promote children's learning and development. We understand it is the relationships and expertise of our staff that encourage each child's self-worth and allow them to flourish and explore in their classroom communities. We are committed to supporting our staff so they can support each family and child's diverse needs and interests.

We are proud of the professionalism, passion, and commitment of our teaching teams and focus on their mental and physical health and renewal through a robust benefits program, professional development, a Wellness Policy, paid breaks, and retreat days. We take the care of our teachers seriously and invite you to embrace building a relationship of mutual respect and kindness.

CKECC employees are required to have a background check as regulated by New Mexico state regulations. Background checks are completed before employment and updated as set by current state regulations.

Equal Opportunity Employer

CKECC is an equal-opportunity childcare employer. We accept applications for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or any other status protected by law.

At times, we do participate in an Intern program that allows adults with varying degrees of abilities to learn to be an early childhood educator. We are committed to building the early childhood field and are excited to offer the opportunity to enrich the lives of our staff, students, and families through a diverse workforce.

Confidentiality

All child-written records and files are confidential but are immediately available to parents/guardians, administrators, and educators who have consent from a parent/guardian and all regulatory authorities. All Christina Kent ECC staff are required to sign a confidentiality agreement that requires them to respect the privacy of all children enrolled and all information concerning the children and/or their families.

We will send home Incident and Injury reports as stated in this handbook. Please note that our Confidentiality Policy does not allow us to share the names of any child other than your own either verbally or in writing involved in any incident.

Communication, Cell Phones, and Staff Accessibility

Christina Kent ECC believes that open, honest, and kind communication is essential to quality child care. Your child’s teacher, administrative staff, and all other support staff are here to support you. Regular two-way communication is vital and should be happening, daily. You can request a meeting at any time if additional communication is needed.

CKECC utilizes a Parent Board, Parent Pockets, and Playground to provide daily communication between families and the classroom. Our teaching staff have the Playground app on their cellular devices and check for family communication frequently throughout the day. If you feel that an educator is using their cell phone inappropriately, please notify the front office immediately.

Off-Hour Services

CKECC is not responsible for and discourages any of its employees from providing babysitting services off work hours. This may create a conflict of interest between the childcare program, our staff, and the family.



“...a willingness to questions all your own abilities, your knowledge, to become humble. Only then will be able to listen to the child, to set off on a common search to ‘educate each other together.’

- Loris Malaguzzi

Curriculum and Assessment

Christina Kent Early Childhood Center is committed to providing a responsive, evidence and research-focused curriculum framework that allows for reflective practice and the flexibility needed to be responsive to children and their families. We offer a play-based, Reggio Emilia-inspired program that will strengthen your child's love of learning. This framework allows the educator to gather information about the individual child's needs and interests through direct observation and assessment and build classroom goals accordingly. The ability for young children to have hands-on experiences through open-ended exploration, using all five senses, helps them organize information and form new concepts. These concepts are the building blocks to learning and skills that will be used for a lifetime. We focus on learning through doing rather than an end product. This approach incorporates direct feedback and communication from families regarding individual family values, religion, language, and unique circumstances. The following will provide an in-depth understanding of curriculum expectations.

The basics: Lesson plans are posted weekly and are developed using a collaborative approach with the classroom teaching team through weekly Planning Time and monthly Team Meetings. Planning Time will be a part of the educator's weekly schedule and be used to ensure that lesson plans reflect the culture of the classroom, the individual needs or struggles of the children, and appropriate curriculum topics.

The Reggio Emilia Approach: The philosophy and pedagogy of CKECC are inspired by the world-renowned schools for young children in Reggio Emilia, Italy. To understand the Reggio approach, you must understand some basic underlying principles:

- The Image of the Child: The foremost principle of the Reggio Emilia approach is that adults see the child as competent, full of potential, and active in constructing their knowledge through interactions with others. At CKECC we believe children are powerful, curious, and ready to learn. We believe that children have rights rather than needs (Malaguzzi, 1998).
- The Hundred Languages of Children: Reggio educators believe that children can represent ideas in a wide variety of symbolic and graphic modes. They emphasize various visual and expressive arts as symbolic tools or 'languages' of the children that should be cultivated. The 'Hundred Languages' are the many modes of expression, such as speech, writing, movement, drawing, painting, sculpting, shadow play, collage, music and so much more, through which children communicate and learn about their world.

- The Role of the Environment: Through the conscious use of space, color, natural light, displays of children’s work, and attention to nature and detail, the environment serves as the ‘3rd’ teacher. The classroom environment and materials adapt to accommodate the individual needs of each child.
- Teachers, Children, and Families as Partners in Learning: We believe parents, teachers, and children are partners in education. Collaboration must exist between all three so that ideas and feedback are shared and valued. A strong image of the child has to correspond to a strong image of the teacher. They are the researchers who bring it all together in the classroom.
- Emergent Curriculum: The process of inviting and sustaining learning is possible once an intentional environment is prepared with rich materials and followed by observation and reflection. The child will lead the learning environment through exploration, and the teacher will capture that learning through documentation. The power of documentation is that it is visible in the learning process. Documentation includes children’s drawings, dictations, photographs, video recordings, and other representations that teachers and children revisit and reflect on. Children’s learning experiences are shared with parents and other visitors through documentation panels that are displayed and parent/teacher conferences.
- Children’s Relationships and Interactions: CKECC believes in the importance of collaboration and cooperation in each classroom community. The skills developed when children learn to work together, self-regulate, and communicate are essential for their success as they grow. Loris Malaguzzi, the leading founder of the Reggio Approach, claimed that “things about children and for children are only learned from children.” It is essential that teachers collaboratively discuss their interactions and make changes to the curriculum, their practice, or the environment based on their reflections.



Christina Kent’s use of an **emergent curriculum** and in-depth studies reflect developmentally appropriate practice along with school readiness skills. Scheinfeld, Haigh, and Scheinfeld (2008) have documented in their research school readiness outcomes observed in children enrolled in



Reggio-inspired programs that use an emergent curriculum. Four of these attributes are considered in CKECC’s curriculum planning and include 1) self-regulation; 2) language development; 3) numerical awareness; and 4) social-emotional development. According to Scheinfeld et al. (2008), skill development is most meaningful when it builds on children’s interests and motives. Within the CKECC’s curriculum model, children experience skills such as speaking, writing, and mathematics while pursuing their curiosities about the world.

Assessment

As part of the reflective planning cycle, teachers use documentation for portfolios and assessments. Documentation is organized and collected in portfolios to show evidence of a child's diverse ways of learning, individual progression of developmental milestones as well as each child's individual strengths. CKECC has chosen the Focused Portfolio Assessment Tool to guide our practice. This tool has been adopted by NAEYC as a standard and is widely accepted as the most appropriate assessment tool for young children. These assessment processes allow us to see individual children's development over a period of time. It also provides us with data and documentation to share with parents during parent/teacher conferences.

Portfolios are a great tool for teachers to use when assessing child outcomes and designing curricula. The information gathered from the assessment and portfolio review should be used to adjust teaching strategies, the classroom environment, and the rotation of materials and to evaluate if all of the child's needs are being met.

- ✓ When a child is struggling to meet classroom expectations reviewing assessment data and portfolio entries will assist in determining the functions of unwanted behavior. This will help the teaching team to develop an individualized plan of action focused on success and positive behaviors. The CKECC *Behavior Management Policy* will outline appropriate steps that include connecting families with community child and family support services if needed.
- ✓ CKECC staff are strictly prohibited from using any of the following to redirect behavior: physical punishment of a child; withdrawal of food, rest, water, outside play or bathroom privileges; the use of abusive, profane, threatening, or hurtful language; isolation of a child and separation without supervision, and; the use of any other form of punishment that is hazardous to the physical, emotional or mental health of a child.

CKECC uses the ASQ Assessment Tool, a parent-completed questionnaire, to formally assess development, such as language, gross/fine motor, cognitive, and social/emotional development.

Family Values, Experiences, and Language

CKECC values parents as partners in their child's education. In our curriculum approach, we include and will adapt to the child's home experiences, family values, beliefs, and language in classroom studies. For example, a teacher can invite a family to bring in meaningful objects to the classroom for discussion, provide a favorite family recipe for a nutrition education project, share stories about how each child received their names at birth, share a favorite book for story time, etc.

- ✓ Classrooms will display family pictures throughout the classroom to create a bridge between the children's homes and school.

“The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experience.” – Loris Malaguzzi

Positive Guidance and Discipline

CKECC values positive relationships and from these relationships' guidance techniques will be implemented in ways that are respectful and supportive of the children in our care. All CKECC personnel will adhere to the following:

- Physical punishment in any form is prohibited.
- No child will ever be humiliated or frightened.
- Verbal abuse is prohibited. Harsh or profane language and threats of any kind will not be used.
- No child will ever be denied food, toileting, outside play, or rest privileges as a form of punishment.
- No isolation of a child without supervision.

We will use positive guidance and discipline techniques to help a child refocus unwanted behaviors. Our teachers strive to understand the meaning behind challenging behaviors and work toward the best solutions to assist a child through their negative emotions while helping them find alternatives to challenging social interactions. We will address a child's behavior with positive but firm language, clear and consistent limits, and developmentally appropriate expectations.

Other techniques that will be implemented will include praise, a focus on the behaviors we want to see and celebrating successes, mindful breathing and calming exercises, natural consequences, redirection, using literature that focuses on conflict resolution and problem-solving, quiet/safe places, individualized behavior plans, role-playing and providing choices.

If a child displays inappropriate behavior on an ongoing basis, CKECC has a *Behavior Management Plan* in place to support the child, the family, and the classroom community. A parent meeting will be required to set up specific, appropriate, and mutually understood action items that will include terms of suspension, if necessary. If such efforts do not improve, or the inappropriate behavior jeopardizes the health or safety of other children and/or staff, disenrollment of the child may occur. The stated goal of our *Behavior Management Plan* is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension and expulsion.

Biting: Early childhood experts and developmental researchers have agreed that biting in young children is normal. It is considered a developmentally appropriate behavior for many reasons, but primarily due to a lack of communication and self-regulation skills. Children who bite generally stop through guidance, redirection, and the support of family and teachers. Our staff will address biting by redirecting children from trigger situations, examining the classroom environment and incident circumstances, observing as well as communicating with the family. When a child is bitten, appropriate first aid will be administered, an Incident/Accident report will be completed, and the family will be notified. If biting behaviors become excessive, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled and will adhere to the guidelines as outlined in the CKECC Behavior Management Plan.

Classroom Expectations

Daily Program

Children function best and are most comfortable in an organized and structured program. They feel secure and safe when they know what takes place each day and follow a daily schedule. The daily schedule allows the school and classroom to flow predictably. Each classroom will have a scheduled time for meals, rest/nap, outside play, and classroom activities. Daily schedules are posted in the classroom.

Personal Belongings and Dress

CKECC will provide a personal cubby space and a hook to hang things for your child's personal belongings. Blankets and stuffed animals are welcome to help with comfort during nap and rest times. Please be sure to label all of your child's belongings with their name.

Each classroom has guidelines regarding personal items, such as toys or other play items, being brought to school. Those guidelines will be discussed with the classroom teacher at the time of enrollment. CKECC is NOT responsible for lost or damaged personal items, please be advised that we do not replace items.

CKECC will provide your child with many opportunities to play indoors and outdoors. We ask that your child come dressed for school in comfortable clothes that are functional, practical, and designed to get dirty. Choose play clothes that permit your child independence in the bathroom and the freedom to draw, paint, and encourage mobility. We do not recommend your child wear jewelry to school. We ask that all shoes have a back strap; no flip flops. It can be easily lost and often poses a safety hazard. We cannot accept responsibility for damaged clothing or personal items.

Bring A Change of Clothes: You will need to provide a seasonally appropriate change of clothing for your child. We ask that you include a change of socks and underwear and that all clothing be labeled with your child's name. This is especially important during toilet learning.

Toilet Learning

We, at CKECC, are happy to play a vital role in your child's toilet learning. Our teachers will work closely with you to ensure continuity between home and school while keeping toilet learning positive. We will not force any child to use the toilet, nor will we punish children for not using the toilet. Attempting to potty train a child before they are ready can be detrimental to their normal growth and development. We will look for signs of 'readiness' such as physiological ability and desire (like attempting to manipulate their clothing and wanting to sit on the potty).

Rest/ Naptime

All classrooms will provide a daily rest/naptime for your child. A child's development needs to have a quiet period each day as a reprieve from group care. CKECC will provide a sleeping mat/cot and a sheet labeled with your child's name. We ask that you bring in a blanket for your child to provide comfort while sleeping.

We will never force your child to sleep. We will encourage your child to rest but, if they choose not to, they will be provided with a quiet activity for their mat/cot while their peers sleep. We will ask non-napping children to be respectful of their friends and to be as quiet as possible during this time.

Field Trips and Special Visitors

To enhance our curriculum and your child's learning experiences we will schedule special field trips and invite visitors to our program. Families will be given advance notice of all special events, and if taken off-site, that notice will include location, time of departure, and expected time of return. Permission slips must be completed for a child to participate in any field trip. Supervision policies and adult-to-child ratios will be maintained on all field trips including a final vehicle walk-through for any bussed field trip. We welcome volunteers on these special days and enjoy when families can experience these learning adventures with their children. Teachers will carry a backpack with a first aid kit, individual child contact information and have access to a cell phone during all trips.

- **Walking Field Trips:** CKECC views our downtown location as an asset to our program and values our ability to be connected to our community. Classrooms will participate in neighborhood walks and/or visit local spots such as the library, Civic Plaza, the park, etc.
- **Bussed Field Trips:** CKECC will host a few school-wide field trips and charter a bus to assist in transportation. Transportation will be available for children 3 years and up due to vehicle safety regulations.



Screen Time and Technology

Christina Kent values the ‘hands-on’ learning experiences that the Reggio Emilia approach provides to our children. We value the importance of young learners expressing themselves in a ‘screen-free’ environment while still developing the skills for success in a modern education system. Our curriculum supports experiences with technological concepts through everyday activities such as working with tools, camera/video exploration, projectors, other building materials and so much more. Listening centers and planned media viewing may be included in the classroom curriculum to promote discovery and enhance the learning outcomes on a specific subject. Media viewing is limited to 6 hours per month.



Photography and Videography

CKECC will take photographs and/or video recordings to be used for educational or promotional purposes or otherwise displayed or reproduced in the course of business. This may include postings on our website and/or social media pages. If you prefer your child not to be photographed for the above purposes, you will need to refer to the *Field Trip and Photography Permission Form* in your enrollment packet. You may not take pictures, videos, or audio recordings without the expressed permission of Christina Kent.

Transitions to a New Classroom

Children at CKECC move (transition) from one classroom to the next based on their academic peer groups. The NM PreK classrooms have restricted enrollment based on a child’s birthday occurring before September 1st.

Family and Community Engagement

Family Engagement

Christina Kent values and understands the importance of family engagement in the development and growth of young children. Our relationship with you is critical to building your child's self-confidence and your satisfaction with the care we provide. We have an open-door policy and welcome you into the school at any time. We encourage parents/guardians to participate in the education of their child through a variety of events and classroom volunteering opportunities, such as:

- Attend our family-centered events: Fall Open House, Family 'Falloween', Family Thanksgiving Luncheon, Kindergarten Transition Night (outgoing kindergarten families only), Family Science or Literacy Nights, and so much more.
- Participate in a variety of ways in our Family Committee.
- Volunteer to accompany children on field trips.
- Volunteer in the classroom to read to the children, share a special family recipe, custom, and/or tradition, or demonstrate a special talent and/or skill.
- Donate special materials such as objects from nature, old boxes or bottles, collage materials for art, etc.
- Volunteer to help with basic maintenance needs such as building new shelves.

We ask that you check your child's Information 'Parent Pocket'/parent space for daily communications, monthly family newsletters, or flyers. You will be required to download the **Playground** app to ensure daily communication with your child's teacher. This will serve as a tool to bridge communication between home and school. You will receive frequent updates to the classroom, pictures, and program reminders simply and easily.

Family Resource Area: Just inside the entryway or by the gate to the Annex is a resource center filled with a variety of information for your family. You will find resources such as current product recalls, local community events, eco-healthy practices, information regarding different social services provided in Albuquerque, and much more. Do not forget to check out what is new each day.

Family Changes and Information

It is important to communicate any changes in your life, family, living arrangements, and/or people who are important to your child. These events may have an impact on behavior, your child's feelings, or participation in the classroom. We will work collaboratively with you to ensure the well-being and healthy transition of your child through any important life transitions. You are welcome to request a meeting with the classroom teacher or administrative staff if needed.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are an essential part of understanding your child's growth and developmental needs. Conferences will be scheduled every year in Fall and Spring, at minimum, to discuss your child's progress and address your questions and concerns. Your child's progress will be reviewed using the Focused Portfolio method, as stated in this handbook. Families will receive a copy of the portfolio. Your attendance is important during conferences. Conference schedules will be posted in the classroom and communicated by your child's teacher. Conferences can be used to raise questions or concerns regarding assessment practices and how those methods will meet the needs of your child. A Parent Teacher Conference is always available upon request.

Dealing with Loss and Death

Dealing with the loss of a loved one, a student, an employee, or a child's friend can be difficult and emotionally stressful for our staff and the families we serve. We understand that children grieve differently and will require additional support when dealing with death. CKECC will provide help to children and families by:

- Communicating with families about the loss and providing a safe environment to discuss how best to support the child during their bereavement.
- Providing resources that encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings, such as books and guest counselors.
- Reassuring families that it is normal for children to show changes in behavior when sad, but with support and time, they will heal from grief and trauma.
- Reassuring the child that being sad and/or angry is normal and that outbursts or tears are a normal part of grieving.
- Responding sensitively to children's questions and using developmentally appropriate language.
- Working with families and classrooms to keep routines consistent and predictable.
- Seeking support for families, and staff if needed, from professionals such as counselors, doctors, and health specialists.

Parent Conflict Resolution

Questions, concerns, and/or conflicts do happen from time to time. Our goal is to assist you and address all your worries positively and proactively. We ask that you start with your child's classroom teacher for any concerns. All discussions are confidential and will not affect the treatment of your child. If you feel the concern is more serious, please discuss it with the Program Manager, Assistant Director, Director, or Executive Director. We have a team of professionals to ensure your concerns are addressed and a resolution is determined.

Family Code of Conduct

CKECC is committed to building a positive school community filled with mutual respect, active listening, and proactive problem-solving. We have a code of conduct that guides our staff when defining the parameters of professional behavior. We extend that code of conduct to our families and all other people who may enter our program. To provide a safe and appropriate environment for your children, all adults are asked to behave with courtesy, kindness, and decency and use a respectful tone of voice. We expect that children be the priority; therefore, exposure to unacceptable behaviors or language will not be tolerated. The following is prohibited and could potentially result in the immediate removal from the premises, suspension, and/or disenrollment of the offending adult.

- Yelling, screaming, or berating your child's teacher, your child, another child, or any other adult. It is expected that all disagreements be handled respectfully and calmly.
- Swearing, cursing, and using profane and/or inappropriate language in a classroom or in front of children.
- Physical confrontation or physically threatening anyone, in any form.
- Physical or punitive verbal punishment of your child, or any other child. Corporal punishment in any form is prohibited.
- Smoking, alcohol, or any substance abuse on CKECC property.

CKECC reserves the right to suspend a parent or guardian for investigatory reasons when an unresolved conflict occurs. A meeting and/or terms of return will be determined at the time of suspension.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

CKECC works to establish relationships with our community that will allow us to access resources that support the needs and goals of our children and program. These relationships are focused on promoting a learning environment that is diverse, inclusive, and reflective of the needs of the families enrolled.


We maintain a current list of child and family support services such as health, mental health, child welfare, nutrition, assessment services, parenting programs, basic needs such as housing, and much more. This list includes culturally and linguistically appropriate services such as interpretation services. This information is available in the entryway on the Family/Community board and through the administrative office. We will help access services and advocate for our family's needs when applicable. We have established relationships with different agencies and organizations so we can help meet the needs of our families.

We work to expand the learning experiences of the children by integrating and accessing community resources. This will include inviting members of our community into our program for special events or presentations (i.e., DocTalks, dancing, storytelling) or inviting interns and other


specialists to observe and participate in daily activities. Guests, volunteers, and/or interns do not work alone with children. They will be with and supervised, by regularly scheduled educators at all times.

We seek ways to break out of the classroom and enlarge the children’s understanding of the learning environment to include our local library, nature centers, local places of business, public transit centers, and more. Classrooms will participate in neighborhood walks that support curriculum development and create learning experiences that cannot be found in the classroom. Our collaborations with local programs help us act as citizens of our neighborhood and work together on neighborhood needs and/or community projects.

Families are encouraged to support and participate in local events and activities.



100 Years
Christina Kent
Early Childhood Center • Est. 1919



The mission is to serve the children of economically diverse working families with quality childcare, early education, and nutritional services in a safe and nurturing environment.