The University of Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg Center for Child Development

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Policy and Procedure Manual for Parents
Organizational Structure of the USM CCD

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Melissa Adams (PT Asst. Olivia Carter)

Sherrie Decosta

Myrna McCullum (PT Asst. Latsa Smith)

Sharla Kemp

Samantha Jones (PT Asst. Megan Thompson)
Mission
The mission of the Hattiesburg Center for Child Development is to engage university students, parents, and teachers in developing healthy, motivated, and autonomous children in exemplary child centered and develop mentally effective educational programs that promote evidence-based practice and a joyful, lifelong love of learning.

The primary purpose of the Hattiesburg Center for Child Development at The University of Southern Mississippi is to serve as an academic/teaching and research facility for students and faculty across the university. A secondary purpose of the CCD is to serve children birth to five in a quality child care environment. The CCD operates through the Department of Child and Family Studies in the College of Education and Psychology and is fully accredited by the National Academy for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and is a five-star (out of five) rated program with the state’s quality rating and improvement system.

Philosophy
The philosophy of the program is based on providing opportunities and experiences for the optimal development of each child and family served. Our infants and toddlers are offered play experiences designed to promote development in the 5 developmental domains of: language, physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. This is accomplished in our preschool classroom curriculum (3-5 years), through curriculum that supports hands-on activities in the areas of language arts, math, science, music and movement, creative arts, and special activities. The CCD supports the practice of assessment and evaluation. The teaching and administrative staff is involved with assessing children’s learning so that teaching opportunities will be chosen to address the specific learning abilities and styles of all children.

We support the concept that all children learn through play. Play experiences help children develop emotionally, socially, physically, cognitively, and creatively. Play experiences are provided that are developmentally effective and meaningful to children. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to observe and to participate in day to day activities as well as special events. It is our goal to create interest and curiosity in our children through exciting and engaging play experiences in order to create a lifelong love of learning. We believe that it is the process of learning that is most important, not the product.

The CCD recognizes the importance of helping children belong to the global community. Curriculum and practice at the CCD reflects a commitment to an anti-bias, multicultural education. The CCD embraces the social differences that enrich our community. Teachers seek to encourage the acknowledgement of differences among children and the realization that it is these differences that make us a strong and vibrant community.
Program Policies

Services Provided
The CCD serves children from 8 weeks through 5 years of age who can demonstrate adequate immunizations. We offer an educational full-day program to encourage development of the whole child. The CCD also offers resources to parents through our Family Resource Center. The Family Resource Center is a lending library of adult and child educational materials.

The Family Resource Center library contains books, toys, games, activities, and materials for young children and their families to use. The items in the Resource Center are carefully chosen to promote the optimal growth of children in the areas of cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and language development. The goals of the Family Resource Center are: (A.) to provide parents with a variety of developmentally effective materials for children at all developmental levels, (B.) to involve parents and children in learning together at home, and (C.) to provide lead teachers and teacher candidates with developmentally effective materials to enhance the classroom curriculum. The Family Resource Center is open to all CCD parents.

Absences and Attendance
Children are required to be signed in and settled into their classrooms by 9 a.m. every day. Children are expected to be present each day. The regular fee will not be reduced in the child’s absence. Please refer to the Fees and Payment Plan section for more information on this. According to State regulations, children involved in funded grant programs are expected to maintain a 90%-95% attendance record. Children in those programs who miss 3 or more days in a row must have written explanations for the absences on file in the CCD office before returning to the CCD. If your child will be out for an extended length of time, please be sure to notify your lead teacher, as well as the office staff.

Abuse and/or Neglect
The employees, lab participants, and volunteers of the CCD are mandated reporters and are required legally and ethically to report suspected child abuse to the local child protection agency. Abuse and neglect are defined as follows:

Abuse is any one of the following acts which seriously endanger the physical, mental, or emotional health of a child:

- The infliction, attempted infliction, or allowance/attempted infliction as a result of inadequate supervision upon the child by a parent or any other person.
- The exploitation or overwork of a child by a parent or any other person.
- The involvement of the child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or toleration by the parent or the caretaker of the child’s sexual involvement with any other involvement of a child in sexual activity, constituting a crime under laws of this state.
Neglect is the refusal or willful failure of a parent or caretaker to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, care, treatment, or counseling for any injury, illness, or condition of the child, as a result of which the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health is substantially threatened or impaired. The following are not considered neglect:

- The inability of a parent or caregiver to provide for a child due to inadequate financial resources shall not, for that reason alone, be considered neglect.
- When, in lieu, of medical care, a child is being provided treatment in accordance with the tenets of a well-recognized religious method of healing which has a reasonable, proven record of success, the child shall not, for that reason alone, be considered neglected or maltreated. Nothing shall prohibit the court from ordering medical services for the child when there is substantial risk of harm to the child’s health or welfare.

**Alcohol, Tobacco, Cigarettes, Illegal Substances**
The CCD prohibits the use of alcohol, tobacco, & cigarettes and the use or possession of illegal substances in the center, on the playground, and on any center-sponsored field trip.

**Animal/Pet Policy**
No animals may be brought to the CCD to visit without documentation of current and complete immunizations and proof that they are currently medicated for flea, tick, and worm control. All animals must be pre-approved for a visit to ensure against allergic reactions. All animals must appear to be in good health. All classroom pets must also be immunized and medicated for flea, tick, and worm control if applicable. Classroom pets must appear to be in good health. No reptiles are allowed at the CCD either as a visitor or a classroom pet. Certain birds are also not allowed due to the fact that they may carry diseases.

**Assessment Plans**
The CCD maintains a commitment to assessment to ensure we are offering the highest quality learning environment possible.

**Child Assessment**-teaching staff constantly assesses children through informal observations and formal learning activities. These assessments are performed in the child’s natural learning environment – which will typically be in the child’s classroom or outside on the playground. This information is used to identify children’s interests and inform the teacher’s planning for future projects, lessons, and activities. While the CCD teaching staff has developed a scope and sequence of learning for our program, the developmental level of the children serves as a guide for planning. As children grow and develop, each classroom’s lesson plans will be differentiated to meet each child’s individual needs. Parents will meet formally with their child’s teacher to discuss the child’s development. During these parent meetings, developmental information gained from formal and informal assessments is shared. Parents are encouraged to share information or concerns with CCD teaching staff regarding their child’s development at any time. Lead Teachers will send written communication about the child home daily for infant and toddler classrooms, and will provide verbal communication (written if requested) for preschool classrooms daily. If the CCD finds a concern through the assessment process that we
feel needs further inspection we will make referrals to appropriate service agencies once we receive written parent permission.

On an annual basis, information gathered about classroom groups will be used to enhance areas of the program that indicate a need for improvement. Assessment procedures are reviewed annually to ensure that appropriate information is available to promote optimal development of children.

Program Assessment: The CCD asks parents to share ideas and give input anytime they can. At least once a year the CCD will ask parents to formally assess the CCD through a series of questions. Results and a plan of action for the Program Assessment will be made available to parents upon completion.

**Babysitting Policy**
Staff members of the CCD are allowed to babysit for families, as long as there is a babysitting waiver signed by the parent and Director before the babysitting occurs. The CCD is not responsible for any events that transpire while a staff member is babysitting. Requests for babysitting will not be allowed during normal working hours.

**Birthday Parties and Celebrations**
The CCD encourages celebrations. In accordance with nutritional guidelines and the high childhood obesity rates in Mississippi, the CCD hosts requested birthday parties and celebrations after the afternoon nap time (2:30 p.m.). Parents are welcome to bring in healthy, nutritious snacks that are store-bought. Please check with your child’s teacher before purchasing party/celebration items to accommodate for children with allergies and classroom preferences. Large cupcakes, as well as cakes with large amounts of icing, are not allowed for parties or celebrations.

**Biting Policy**
Some children bite often; and some do not bite at all. Biting happens at a specific developmental period and in almost all situations. Biting usually occurs during the toddler years and occurs for many reasons.

- Young children put everything in their mouth. This could include another child’s finger.
- Young children often bite because they are frustrated, tired, or hungry. They do not have the vocabulary to express themselves, so biting is often the basic response.
- Some young children will bite for the attention they receive from caregivers. Frequently, a lot of attention is given to biters, even if it is negative. Children who are in need of attention will bite to get negative attention, as that is better than no attention at all.
- Young children tend to be territorial in their behavior. They need a certain amount of space around them and their toys. Usually, they do not want another child intruding on what they are playing with or doing. When another child comes too close, they may bite that child to remove them from their “space” or to keep them from taking their toys.
• Young children have very limited social skills. They have not learned to discuss their problems or feelings with others. Biting happens as an immediate reaction because they have not learned self-control.

**Preventive Steps:**

The CCD will take steps to prevent biting in the classroom:

- Literature is provided in the family resource rooms that educates parents and guardians on the aspects of young children biting.
- The toddler room group size will maintain a low teacher-to-child ratio. Large groupings of children will always lead to excessive biting.
- Children will be given appropriate toys on which to bite, such as teethers and thick rattles.
- Caregivers will work with children to give them words to express their frustrations, such as “I don’t like that!”
- Children who bite will be “shadowed” by a caregiver to monitor and quickly intervene when a potential biting situation presents itself.
- Caregivers will keep written logs on children who bite frequently. These logs will record the time of day a bite occurs, the activity engaged in, and whom the child bit. By logging these details, a pattern will sometimes emerge as to when or whom the child is most likely to bite. For confidentiality, this log will only be shared with the Director and the lead teacher responsible for the child. Sometimes, this information will be shared with the parent/guardian, as well.

**Actions the CCD will take when a child bites:**

- Our caregivers will focus their attention on the victim. This will avoid reinforcing the negative behavior of biting.
- The bite will be cleaned with antiseptic and a bandage will be applied if the skin is broken. If the skin is not broken, the site will be cleaned with antiseptic.
- An ice pack will be applied.
- With the bitten child’s permission, the biter will be allowed to gently stroke the victim to learn the appropriate ways to touch and relate to one another.
- Parents will be notified immediately if the bite has broken the skin or is in a prominent place.
- An accident report will be completed on each and every bite. The accident report is the CCD’s method of ensuring that parents of the victim of a bite are aware of the bite and know the CCD is aware of the problem.
- An incident report will be completed on each and every bite. The incident report is the CCD’s method of ensuring that the parents of a child who has bitten are aware of the incident and know the CCD is aware of the problem.

**Children with Disabilities**

In accordance with regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Center for Child Development provides reasonable accommodations and appropriate auxiliary aids and services for children whose disabilities qualify under the Act. The
CCD provides full access to its programs and services and also collaborates with school and community programs that provide appropriate services under Part B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). We take pride in considering ourselves an inclusive environment, and we welcome parents, therapists, and service providers to work with children inside the classroom environment. Following the regulations of IDEA and ADA, we will keep all student information confidential. Following best practice, it is highly encouraged that parents of children with disabilities keep lines of communication as open as possible. This is done by: sharing IFSP reports, including the teacher in IFSP meetings, encouraging service providers to meet with the teachers, and talking regularly about progress and goals for the child.

**Communication Strategies**

The CCD feels that the relationship between the family and the center is key to ensuring optimal development of the children enrolled in our program. Parents should feel free to address concerns with their child’s Lead Teacher. Please inform your child’s Lead Teacher or the Administration if there are changes within the home (one or both parent leaves town, new siblings, new homes, new jobs, or changes in the family structure). Changes in the home life often create a systemic impact, affecting all other areas of a child’s life. Keeping the CCD informed will help lessen any negative issues surrounding changes.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any difficulties, differences, concerns, etc. with their child’s lead teacher. If further discussion is warranted, please review the Grievance Procedure below.

**Grievance Procedure**

We will do our best to meet the needs of our families, however, if a family should have any concerns regarding the way their child is being cared for, a problem with a staff member or volunteer, or questions regarding operations, please follow these suggestions:

1. Discuss the concern with the child’s teacher. If they cannot help you, then they will know who can help.
2. If you are still concerned or the issue has not been resolved, then you can request a meeting with the Director.
3. If the concern is still not settled, then you may make an appointment to speak with the department chair, Dr. Pat Sims
4. If necessary, the dean of the department, Dr. Blackwell, may be contacted.
5. The Mississippi Department of Health complaint hotline: 1-866-489-8734

**Confidentiality**

The CCD administration and staff will maintain a commitment to confidentiality surrounding all information on children and families enrolled at the CCD. Children’s records are kept in a locked file in the office. Information about a child will not be given over the phone to incoming callers regardless of the caller’s reported identity. All developmental information will only be discussed with the child’s parent or primary caregiver in person. All persons involved with teaching or observing the children and staff are required to sign a confidentiality form.
Custody
Parental custody issues arise from time to time. If the parent(s) of a child have custody agreements that we should be aware of, please provide us with the necessary legal documents to keep on file at the CCD. It is important to note that the CCD is legally obligated to release a child to either parent unless there is a court decree on file that states otherwise.

Days of Operation and Arrival/Departure Times
The CCD operates Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:30 pm according to the University office calendar with two exceptions: 1.) periodically the University will make a decision to close offices and cancel classes (often with very short notice) in support of various University events, as a result of catastrophic weather, or as a decision made by the University President. 2) the CCD offers regular full-day professional development programs for CCD staff, which necessitates that the CCD be closed to children and families. The CCD will ensure as much warning as possible for both of these exceptions. The CCD is in operation twelve months per year. A calendar is published at the beginning of the academic year which details every planned closure for the next year.

Arrival
Children will arrive between the hours of 7:30 am and 9:00 am to ensure accurate daily meal counts for lunch, as well as the children’s active participation in the curriculum activities done each morning. Children are required to be signed (parent/guardian’s first and last name) in and out each day on attendance sheets provided by each classroom. For a variety of reasons, arrival after 9:00 am must be approved ahead of time through the CCD office for excusable reasons such as doctor’s appointments, therapy services, unforeseen circumstances, etc. Please do not drop your child off with food. Outside food brought into the classrooms is prohibited by our state regulations. If a child is still finishing breakfast or a snack before arrival at school, he/she must completely finish the food before entering the building. If a child arrives buckled into a car seat, it is our policy to immediately remove him/her from the carrier. If the child is asleep in the car seat, he/she will be removed from the carrier and placed into a crib or onto a nap mat to finish sleeping.

Safety of children is a priority for all administration and staff at the CCD. Parents may help ensure safety for all children by adhering to policies surrounding arrivals and departures. This includes refraining from cell phone use while dropping off and picking up your child. All children must be escorted into the building by an adult (18 years of age or older). Children may not be dropped off in the driveway. Please park as far to the side of the right or left lanes as possible to ensure moving vehicles can drive through the middle lane easily. All children and adults must enter through the front door only. An adult must escort a child into their classroom and sign (parent/guardian’s first and last name) them in for the day. Children should be left in the direct care of the CCD teaching staff assigned to care for the child’s classroom. If a child arrives at school during outdoor play times the child must be escorted outside to their teacher.

We strongly discourage the practice of taking your child out during the day and returning them. If your child has an appointment that must occur during the middle of the day, your child may
not be returned during the hours of 11:45-2:30. This will ensure minimal disruption in the lunch and nap schedule of your child as well as their classmates.

**Departure**
Please arrive at the school by 5:15 p.m. This will give you time to talk with the teacher(s), reunite with your child(ren) and depart no later than 5:30 p.m. when the school closes for the day. Departure after 5:30 p.m. will result in late fees. Remember to sign your child out at departure. Parents are expected to call the office in the event they will be late picking up their child. Parents will be charged $15.00 per child for the first five minutes they are late (up to 5:35 PM) and $1.00 per minute per child thereafter except in cases of emergency. The late fee will be calculated based upon your family’s departure time, not the parent’s arrival time (for instance, if you arrive at the CCD at 5:25 p.m. but do not exit the building with your child until 5:31 p.m. your account will be accessed a $15 late fee for late departure). This fee will be added to the regular billing at the first of the month. The clock at the CCD will be used to determine late departure. Parents who are continually late (three times within three months) may have their child terminated from the program. Failure to contact us or pick up your child by 6:00 p.m. may lead to us calling the Hattiesburg Police Department or campus security.

**Unattended Motor Vehicles**
All unattended motor vehicles in the circle drive must be turned off. Mississippi Code 63-3-909 clearly outlines what you must do before you leave your vehicle unattended in Mississippi. In short: Turn off the engine. Lock the ignition. Remove the key. Safely exit the vehicle.

**Unattended Children and Pets**
When you come into the CCD to pick up your child, please do not leave any children or pets in your car. We want to ensure the safety of all of our families as they enter and leave the building and circle drive. Leaving children and/or pets in your unattended vehicle can put them at risk for injury, death, and/or kidnapping.

If you notice a child left in a vehicle, please let us know so we can call 911. We will also be closely monitoring the circle drive to ensure every vehicle is left safely.

**Third Party Release:**
The CCD cannot release children to individuals who are not identified in writing on the “Third Party Release Form”. Upon enrollment, the parent/guardian has the option to name additional individuals who are 18 years of age or older who can pick up their child. This information can be updated at any point in the year. All persons who have been named on the “Third Party Release” and are attempting to pick up a child are required to provide a government issued photo ID at pickup. This ID will then be compared to the Third Party Release Form. Per Mississippi Law MCA § 63-7-301(1)(a) All adults are expected to have appropriate child restraint devices installed in their vehicles before the CCD will release the child. Children are required to be signed out (first and last name of the person picking up the children) of their classrooms at the end of every day.
Discipline Policy
Corporal punishment will never be used at the CCD and parents may not use corporal punishment on CCD premises or during center-sponsored field trips. Positive guidance techniques will be used in an effort to maintain all children’s sense of safety and dignity. The CCD embraces the Conscious Discipline approach to helping children learn to regulate their emotions.

Appropriate discipline gives children the rationale for behaving a certain way. Our caregivers focus on teaching children how TO act, as many common misbehaviors result from this lack of knowledge. When this emphasis on teaching is at the root of discipline, they will not need an adult nearby to control them. They will learn how to regulate their own behavior. Good discipline techniques teach children self-control, which is the ultimate goal of discipline.

The Difference between Discipline and Punishment
The word discipline actually means teaching children acceptable behavior. Punishment refers to inflicting negative consequences to control behavior through fear and intimidation. Punishment causes poor self-esteem. It may stop the behavior, but the child will be left not knowing how to handle the situation the next time. It is important for us to separate discipline from punishment when caring for young children.

Communicating with Parents about Children’s Behavior
You will be informed each day of your child’s behavior, both appropriate and inappropriate (if needed). If a child’s behavior becomes a problem, a conference will be scheduled. At that time, we can discuss what may be causing the misbehavior and logical consequences if the behavior continues. If the child’s behavior becomes threatening to other children or the staff, dismissal from the program may be a last option. (See “Behavior Supports” pg. 13)

Techniques for Discipline
- **Separate the child from the behavior.** We will have unconditional love for our children. We will not label any child as “bad” but only see the behavior as unacceptable.
- **Redirect behavior.** If a child misbehaves in one play area, he will be redirected to another. Changing the situation will sometimes change the behavior.
- **Give acceptable choices.** Children can be given choices when both choices are acceptable to the adult. This facilitates limit setting and appropriate guidance practices with children.
- **Use positive language.** We will use positive language when speaking to our children. “No”, “stop”, and “don’t” can be used so many times a child can tune out adults. We can easily turn these phrases around to use positive language. “Don’t climb on the fence” can be changed to “Keep your feet on the ground.”
- **A Safe Place.** Used correctly, this can be an effective tool for helping children learn how to control their behavior. The time out/ “safe place” concept is meant to give the child a chance to calm down and reflect on what has happened. A special place is needed, within supervision, but away from the group. After the child has calmed down, the teacher will then talk to the child and help him/her learn from the experience.
- **Children will neither be allowed nor be instructed to discipline other children.**
Restraint of a Child
Children shall not be physically restrained, except as necessary to ensure their own safety or that of others, and then for only as long as is necessary for control of the situation. Children shall not be given medicines or drugs that will affect their behavior, except as prescribed by a licensed physician and with specific written instructions from the licensed physician for use of the medicines or drugs.

Behavior Supports
In some cases, a clear plan of action is needed for guiding a child’s behavior that involves full participation by both CCD personnel and the family. Below is the outline of our procedure in these instances:

1. The parent will be informed that the CCD has concerns about behaviors being displayed by their child and that their child is entering the Evaluation Process.
2. Anecdotal records and detailed observations are kept in order to determine patterns of behavior in the context of the environment.
3. The parents will attend a conference with CCD personnel to develop an Individualized Discipline Plan (IDP) outlining specific plans to assist the child. Terms of the IDP will be agreed upon by both CCD personnel and parents.
4. A date will be set for review of the child’s progress. Further action may be agreed upon at that time and an additional date for review may be set.
5. Failure on the part of the parents to participate in any part of the Evaluation Process will result in termination of the child’s enrollment immediately.

As per the Mississippi Department of Health, Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities, the following behaviors are prohibited by anyone (i.e., parent, caregiver, or child) in all child care settings:

- Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, beating, shaking, pinching, biting, and other measures that produce physical pain;
- Withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities
- Abusive or profane language;
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment;
- Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating (out of view of caregiver), or corrupting a child;
- Use of any food product or medication in any manner or for any purpose other than that for which it was intended;
- Inappropriate disciplinary behavior includes, but is not limited to, putting soap or pepper in a child’s mouth; or
- Any acceptable disciplinary action that is not age-appropriate for the child or is excessive in time or duration.
Dress
Weather permitting; all children will play outdoors every day. Please have at least two complete seasonal changes of clothes in your child’s cubby each day. Please be prepared for your children to get messy; their clothes may get dirty. Accidents happen, even with older preschool children (toileting accidents, milk spills, paint, etc…). If your child is in the potty training stage, please provide several changes of clothing daily. If children are walking, shoes must be worn and must be close-toed with a backing for support (e.g. tennis shoes). No sandals or thong flip flops are allowed.

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures
Fire drills shall be held monthly in order to ensure that the center can be evacuated in record time. If the evacuation requires a relocation of children and staff, we have an agreement with the Clinic for Family Therapy (next door) for infants and toddlers and with the Children’s Center for Communication Disorders (next to the DuBard School) for preschoolers to use their facility.

In case of a need for evacuation off campus premises, the alternate location for emergencies is St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church located at 3117 W. 4th St. in Hattiesburg. If this type of evacuation is deemed necessary, the Director and administrative staff will contact each parent or emergency contact by phone. The children will remain at the church with CCD staff until they are picked up by a parent or guardian.

In case of inclement weather, the President of USM will make the decision regarding school dismissal due to severe weather conditions. If the President decides it is necessary to close campus, the CCD will also close. Parents will be notified by telephone to retrieve their children from the CCD as soon as possible. The CCD is equipped with a weather alert system that signals us to severe weather in the area. In cases of tornado warnings, all children and staff will gather in the hallways until notified that the warning has expired.

In the event that a lock-down is necessary, the CCD is equipped with an emergency notification system that will alert the staff to the situation. To go into lock-down the CCD locks the front door and disables the keypad, closes all blinds and windows, and the staff hide children away from the doorways. No parents or children are allowed to enter or exit the building until Campus Police have given an all clear notification.

Extended Medical Leave
In the event that a child should incur a medical condition that would require them to be out of school for an extended period of time, full tuition will be required to hold the child’s spot. The CCD does understand that this may be a financial burden on top of incurred medical expenses. To support families during this difficult time, the CCD is willing to undertake, with the family’s permission, fundraising efforts to assist the family in meeting their financial obligations to the CCD during the medical leave. Parents/guardians also have the option of ending enrollment for childcare during the extended medical leave, and, at the time the
child is eligible to return to school, the child will be given first priority if and when a spot is available.

**Fees and Payment Plan**
The CCD accepts checks and money orders. No cash is accepted.

The CCD charges an annual enrollment fee of $100.00 per child. Monthly tuition is due on the 1st working day of the month. All families will be granted a grace period until the 5th day of the month. If your child’s tuition is not paid by the 5th day of the month, a $25.00 late fee will be assessed. An additional fee of $5.00 per day will be assessed for each day thereafter. If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, your child may not return to the CCD until such time as full payment has been made. If a pattern of delinquency forms (3 times in 6 months), the child may be terminated from the CCD.

Returned Check Policy: In the event that a check is returned due to insufficient funds, the parent will be put on a warning list. If a check is returned more than twice within a six month period, the CCD reserves the right to require a money order for every subsequent tuition payment.

**Field Trips**
At this time, the CCD is not able to provide transportation for field trips. The CCD hosts center-wide field trips twice yearly, in which a parent or guardian is asked to transport the child and participate in the field trip. In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to transport and attend the field trip, the child will remain at the center under supervision of a staff teacher.

From time to time, a walking field trip is requested for the child’s classroom. These will be on-campus to nearby locations such as the library, rose garden, nature trail, etc. A signed permission slip for a walking field trip is required to be on file for every child before a classroom is able to take a walking field trip. The CCD staff will be responsible for having cell phones with them, as well as a complete first aid kit. The staff will notify the center immediately if problems arise.

**Health and Safety**
Children should not come to the CCD when ill. Each child will be given a health inspection upon arrival at the CCD. The teacher who receives the child when he/she enters the classroom will check to ensure that no major health issues are present. This can include (but is not limited to) severe coughing, breathing difficulties, yellowish skin or eyes, pinkeye, infected skin patches, feverish appearance or feeling warm to the touch, unusual activity level or crying, unusual or unexplained body odor, and/or significant (in size) scrapes or bruises. If at any time a child appears at school with any of these conditions, the teacher and/or Director may require that the child is sent home until medical clearance is provided by a doctor.

Any child with diarrhea and/or fever of 100 degrees or above will not be allowed to stay at the CCD while symptoms continue. A child must be fever free without medications for 24 hours before they can return to the center. **This means that a child must be absent from the center for at least one full day before returning to ensure they are fever free.** Parents of a child who
develops any symptoms of illness while at the CCD will be notified to pick up the child within one hour of notification. Children will be kept isolated until the parent arrives. The parents will need to pick up the child for observation and contact a physician for diagnosis and treatment.

Below is a listing of some diseases and conditions that warrant exclusion from attendance at the CCD. A more complete listing with further explanation of various illnesses and conditions is provided by the State Dept. of Health and is on file for review in the CCD Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Exclusion from School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Pox</td>
<td>6 days after eruption appears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)</td>
<td>Proof of treatment**, pinkness and matting gone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrheal disease</td>
<td>Free of fever and diarrhea has ceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Disease</td>
<td>Free of fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand-foot and Mouth Disease</td>
<td>Lesions must be crusted and dry, free of fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis</td>
<td>One week after onset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetigo</td>
<td>24 hours after treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza (Flu)</td>
<td>Free of fever and feeling well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>5-7 days after eruption appears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningitis</td>
<td>Clearance by a physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>Clearance by a physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediculasts (Lice)</td>
<td>Statement indicating treatment has been done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide shampoo box, if possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinworms</td>
<td>24 hours after treatment, must provide proof of treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring Worm</td>
<td>After treatment has started, must provide proof of treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scabies</td>
<td>24 hours after treatment completed, must provide proof of treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingles</td>
<td>Lesions need to be covered with clothing; if they cannot be covered they need to be dry and crusted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strep Throat</td>
<td>24 hours after treatment, fever free, and provide proof of treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whooping Cough (Pertussis)</td>
<td>5 days after treatment has begun, must provide proof of treatment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please note: If the Exclusion from School list requires a “proof of treatment,” a physician must provide the proof in the form of written notification. It is very important for the health and well-being of all children and staff at the CCD that we adhere to these regulations established by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Parents will sign a release for emergency medical attention. Should an emergency situation arise, the Director or the child’s teacher will attend to the child. While this is being done, the parents will be notified. If there are complications, the child may be taken to a hospital or clinic before the parents arrive.

**Medication**
If bringing medication to the CCD is absolutely necessary, the prescribed medicine bottle must show the child’s name, dosage, and time for administering. Regardless of whether the medication is prescribed or over the counter, the CCD requires a doctor’s note for any medication requested to be given to the child. Parents will be asked to fill out a permission to administer medicine form daily. No medicine should be left at the CCD overnight. The only staff who are allowed to administer medication are those who have received the annual Medication Administration training provided by the center.

**Meals and Snacks**
The CCD offers menus in compliance with the USDA and the Mississippi State Department of Health to offer nutritionally balanced eating experiences. Children will be offered breakfast, lunch, and two afternoon snacks each day. According to MS DOH Child Care Licensing Regulations, “outside foods shall not be brought into the facility, with the exception of special dietary needs.” Children will eat from the menus as required by state and federal agencies. No foods from home should be brought to the CCD, with the exception of special dining events/parties. If your child has special dietary needs, we must have documentation from your child’s physician in order to accommodate this need. If a doctor’s note is on file and you wish to provide alternatives, the substitute must meet the same compliance guidelines for USDA and the Department of Health (for example, if replacing a vegetable, please bring a vegetable, if replacing a starch, please provide a starch.) Portion sizes must also match USDA regulations. If your child is a vegetarian, please inform us in writing and we will provide a meat alternative for the meat component of the meal; if your child has special dietary needs due to religious reasons, a religious waiver, provided by the front desk, must be on file for the child. The CCD will make every effort possible to accommodate for those with special dietary needs.

**Nap and Rest Times**
Toddlers/Preschool: For children under six years of age, rest periods are scheduled for a minimum period of 1 hour and will not exceed 2 ½ hours. Nap mats will be placed a minimum of 3 feet away from each other. Children who do not sleep will be encouraged to rest quietly for 45 minutes. Children who do not fall asleep after this time will be offered quiet alternative activities such as looking at books. The nap mat cover will be sent home every Friday and will need to be returned by Monday at drop-off after being washed at home.

Infants: Infants under 8 months will sleep in cribs provided by the center. All children will use only the crib assigned for their use. Cribs will be kept a minimum of 3 feet apart from each other. Crib sheets will be changed weekly or more frequently when soiled. Infants are allowed to rest/nap on demand.

**SIDS Prevention Regulations:**
SIDS, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, is a serious threat to infants. The following procedures will be followed to reduce the risk:
1. Infants will be placed on their backs (unless otherwise indicated by the child’s physician) to sleep on a firm sleeping surface.
2. Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheep skins, stuffed toys, bibs, and other soft items may not be placed in the crib with infants younger than 12 months.
3. The infant’s head must remain uncovered during sleep.
4. Any child brought to the CCD sleeping in a car seat will be immediately removed from the car seat and properly placed into a crib or on a nap mat to finish sleeping.

**Oral Health**
All children will participate in oral health practices. Parents/Guardians are required to provide a toothbrush for each child. Teachers will encourage children to brush their teeth at least once daily. Toothpaste is not required.

**Outdoor Play**
All toddlers and preschoolers attending the CCD will have a minimum of 2 hours of outdoor activities every day, and all infants will have a minimum of 30 minutes of outdoor activities every day, weather permitting. In the case of inclement weather, children will be provided opportunities for gross motor activities in the classroom.

**Sun/Insect Safety**
Sunscreen, sunglasses, and hats will be used to protect the children from the sun when they are outside for extended periods of time between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm during April 1 – September 15. Parents should apply sunscreen or sun block with a UVA and UVB protection with an SPF of 15 before arrival at the CCD. If the center has written parent permission, teaching staff are able to re-apply sunscreen for the afternoon outside time.

Due to insect borne illnesses in this part of the country, children over 2 months of age should be protected from bites using insect repellent. Parents are expected to apply the repellent before arrival at the CCD. If the center has written parent permission, teaching staff are able to re-apply insect repellent for the afternoon outside time.

**Parent Involvement**
Parental involvement in the program is valued and encouraged. Parents have opportunities to participate in class trips, story times, class celebrations, and projects. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to observe and to participate in the day to day activities, as well as special events. Parents may visit any area of the CCD during normal business hours. All volunteers are welcome at the CCD, regardless of family structure, abilities, or preferred language. Surveys may be sent home on occasion to identify special skills/interests that match with needs in the classroom. Parents will be asked to share those special skills/interests with the classroom to encourage parent volunteering and involvement.

**Parent Advisory Board**
Parent Advisory Board meetings are held periodically throughout the year, and all parents are welcome to attend. This is an opportunity for the parent to be involved in center events, as well as provide a venue for open communication and collaboration for parents and the CCD. Any parent is able to a part of the PAB by attending a meeting.
Parent Responsibilities
Parents are responsible for attending all meetings requested by the CCD staff/administration, including two 30 minute (minimum) Parent/Teacher Conferences each year. Conferences are held in the spring and fall. Parents are also responsible for collecting all information that is sent home through the child’s folder every day. It is the responsibility of all parents and caregivers to be familiar with the information presented in this handbook. Parents are responsible for adherence to all guidelines as described. By signing the notice of receipt at the end of this handbook, the parent is agreeing to adhere to all of the guidelines and policies provided.

Photography
Photography and videography are daily parts of our life at the CCD. We want to document the children’s work through these forms of media. We use these photos and videos for educational and décor purposes (e.g. we post photos on bulletin boards, in cubbies, on classroom walls, CCD webpage, etc.) as well. We request permission from the parent and/or guardian to photograph, videotape, and/or publish photographs in newspapers and other such types of correspondence in the enrollment paperwork. If at any time you wish to change your preference, please communicate this with the administration.

Records
Children’s files are kept in a locked file cabinet in the office to ensure confidentiality of information.

Each child’s file must contain the following information before the child can be admitted to the CCD.

1. Application
2. Developmental history
3. Health history
4. Up-to-date immunization records
5. Emergency information including numbers where parents may be reached; two other names and telephone numbers to be used for emergencies. At least one emergency contact must be local.
6. Current work and/or class schedules of parents. This must be kept up-to-date as schedules and phone numbers change.
7. Records as required by the public funding agencies.

Statement of Insurance
The University of Southern Mississippi Center for Child Development does not offer insurance coverage for children. Parents will accept responsibility for expenses incurred for medical care required by their child. Parents also agree that the administration and staff of the USM Center for Child Development will not be held legally or financially responsible for any accidents, injuries, or sickness which may occur during regular operating hours of the CCD, including those due to transportation or school related activities.
**Supplies**
Parents provide wipes, disposable diapers or pull-ups until children have mastered toileting. *Prepared* bottles and jars of commercially prepared baby food are provided by parents for those children not yet eating table food.

Teaching staff will communicate when your child is low on supplies. If you have been notified and your child runs out of diapers, pull-ups, or wipes, we will add a $10.00 fee plus the cost of the supplies to your bill. This will ensure that your child is dry and clean at all times and not waiting for someone to bring them a fresh diaper.

At the beginning of the fall semester, you will receive a school supply list. These items will be used by all the children in the classroom and do not need to have your child’s name on each item. If additional supplies are needed, a notice will be sent home in your child’s folder.

*According to the Mississippi Department of Health, prepared bottles means that the formula or breastmilk is in an individual use bottle, ready for consumption. The bottle must be labeled with the child’s full name (first and last) as well as the current date. If the milk is expressed, the bottle must also be labeled with the date the milk was expressed.*

**Toileting Policy**
When your child begins to show signs that he or she is ready to toilet train, a conference will be conducted with the child’s teacher and parent to establish partnership roles regarding the toilet learning process. The CCD views toilet training as a partnership between school and home and its success depends on each group supporting each other. The CCD strives to meet family preferences and cultural practices in establishing toilet learning. Toilet learning is a developmental milestone, and the entire process can be complex. We will gladly assist you in toilet training your child. During the toileting process, children should have three to four changes of clothes, including additional socks and shoes, as mishaps happen frequently. In addition, your child’s teacher may have other requirements to help the toilet training process.

**Transitions**
Consistency in care giving is important in supporting positive emotional development among children. The CCD makes every effort to support consistency in care, the environment, and teaching staff. The CCD classrooms are designed to grow developmentally with children so that transitions to new classrooms are minimized.

From time to time, transitions are necessary. The CCD will make every effort to assist the child and family in the transition process. Parents will be notified when a classroom change for their child is being considered. Decisions to promote children are based on a combination of the child’s age and developmental progress. The transition process allows for the child to spend increasing amounts of time in their new classroom to facilitate the transition by getting to know the teacher, their new classmates, the new routine, and the new learning materials. The transition process usually occurs over the course of one or two weeks, but exceptions (according to the child’s adjustment) are always allowed.
Withdrawal from the Program
Each parent is required to notify the Director of the CCD and any funding agency (when applicable) at least two weeks prior to withdrawing their child from the CCD. Parents will need to sign a termination statement and complete an exit survey. Parents will be billed for at least two weeks from the date the termination is signed.

Termination Policy
In addition to the circumstances described in other sections, any child may be dismissed if:

- The center cannot meet the physical, mental, or emotional needs of the child
- The child threatens the safety, health and/or well-being of others
- A formal parent conference is not attended
- It is advised by a physician or child psychologist
- Parents ignore center guidelines, and/or cause undue stress to center staff or operations
- Parent/Guardian threatens the safety of the children and/or staff

This program is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Appendix A

Lab School - Research
We are excited about the opportunity to play, learn with and teach your child or children, and to get to know and work with your family.

As part of our mission to best nurture young children, we conduct research aimed at deepening our understanding of children’s development and how to best support that maturation. Recent brain research underscores what parents and educators have suspected for a long time: the first five years of life are critical years for setting children on a path that optimizes their capacity for learning, getting along with others, and remaining vitally engaged in work and play. How to best foster these abilities is one central focus of our research program.

Research at the CCD generally takes the following forms:

1. **Action research.** Projects that teachers undertake with children, informed by the children’s evolving interests that lead to curriculum development and enhancement. Methods can involve informally interviewing children and recording responses, documenting projects through still- and video photography, and occasionally, more formal interviews or play sessions with an individual child or small group.

2. **Curriculum or classroom assessment.** In order to ascertain the effectiveness of a given practice or module in the classroom, or to assess the “climate” of a given room, we may periodically conduct a formal evaluation. Methods to evaluate curriculum or classroom processes might include observation, videotaping, behavioral coding,
analysis of children’s conversations, group activities, teacher reports, parent reports, interviews with children, and/or tests or experimental procedures designed to assess a given skill or capacity.

3. **Basic research on child/family development.** These studies typically examine a specific facet of development, such as cognitive or social development. Methods are diverse, and may include researcher observations, interviews, parent and teacher observations, standard assessment procedures, and so on.

4. **Other.** Studies on playground development, toy design, or other important topics may be conducted; we anticipate our site may be used in future research related to a variety of disciplines.

**Participation and informed consent**
As part of enrollment, we ask that you carefully review our consent form (“Parent Permission Form”) regarding our use of observations, statements from, and works by your children, as well as our use of pictures, video and audiotapes of your children for educational, training, quality assurance and research purposes. Research activities covered by this consent form cover ongoing projects undertaken by CCD staff as part of our laboratory school mission. This includes action, curriculum-oriented, and some basic developmental research for the most part. No more than minimal risk is anticipated in any of these projects. Studies that involve any elevation in potential risk level to your child or your family require separate procedures that seek your permission for specific tasks. Research activities related to the ongoing activities of the CCD are part of classroom life and as such, it is expected that all children enrolled in the program will participate as a matter of course. At times, procedures to evaluate a teaching practice or module require individual or group assessment.

“Informed consent” refers to a process in which you have been told or have read about procedures involved in research, been informed of possible risks and benefits to you, have had your questions answered, and that you agree that you and/or your child may participate. Children are also asked if they will take part. Giving your permission does not mean you can never withdraw it. If you have questions or concerns about any aspect of research at the Center, we urge to contact our Director, Stephanie Haney, M.S. at (601-266-5410) to discuss your concerns.

All research conducted at the CCD has been reviewed through the standard internal review process at Southern Miss for research involving human participants, to ensure compliance with federal regulations.

**Please let us know if English is not your native language and you need translation services for this letter or informed consent forms. We will do our best to facilitate finding an appropriate translator.**

**How to be involved**
As parents, you know your children best. We ask you to be partners with us in making the CCD program truly exemplary by participating as fully as you can in our ongoing research efforts. Your involvement will help us understand more about children’s and family’s developments, about what aspects of our program are working well, and what might benefit from changes. Many of these factors may differ, depending on the personality of the child. This is where your contribution is especially important.

All responses will be kept confidential. We will assign each of you and your child a research code number that protects your personal identities. Questionnaires and all child data used for non-action research will be kept in locked file drawers and computerized data will only include your research codes (i.e., no names). Responses to the questionnaires will not be read or used by teachers or educational staff in any way that reveals the identity of you, the responder.*

*The only exceptions to our keeping your confidentiality are if your responses indicate child maltreatment. In this unlikely event, the Director would arrange a private meeting with you to clarify the information and communicate our legal obligations, if any pertain.

Further details of how we seek to protect your confidentiality are provided on the cover sheet of the questionnaire packet. Information may be used by research staff to develop, evaluate or otherwise interpret curricula, inform teacher practice, train teachers, or used anonymously in basic research in child and family development, including publications, presentations and grant applications.

Possible Risks to Your Child:
No serious risks are anticipated. The greatest potential risk might be temporary fatigue and/or frustration (for example, regarding having to wait to knock down his or her block tower). In the rare event that a child seems to be upset with him- or herself regarding performance with the tasks, the interviewer will try to talk with the child, provide comfort and reassurance, and let the child’s teacher know in order to smooth transition back to the classroom.

Possible Benefits to Your Child:
This information should help your child’s teacher understand your child better. They may be able to tailor learning challenges more precisely to your child’s level of comfort. They may also use the information to provide additional support to your child in specific areas. Having developmental information on the entire class can help teachers provide more appropriate environmental materials to engage the children. Your child’s information can help us understand more about what we do well and what might benefit from change, so that our program can continue to nurture children to the best of our ability. The information can be used by your child’s teacher to share with you during parent conferences.

These assessments serve multiple purposes at CCD. For the research component, please note that this procedure will only be conducted when it has been approved through the Institutional Review Board for the use of human subjects in research at the University of Southern Mississippi. If you have questions or concerns, you can call our Director, Stephanie Haney at (601-266-5410).
Notice of Receipt (CCD Copy)

Please sign this copy and return to the Office.

By signing below, I am indicating that I have received a copy of the Policy and Procedure Manual for Parents, updated 09/2016. I have read the Policy and Procedure Manual for Parents and understand and agree to adhere to the contents.

(Parent(s) Signature)

(Child(ren)’s Name Please print all children enrolled at the CCD)

(Date)

This copy must be signed and submitted to the CCD.

The CCD does not have liability insurance.

Walking Field Trip Permission Form

I, ________________________________, give permission for my child

________________________ to go on impromptu walking field trips on the campus of The

University of Southern Mississippi.

Lab School Participation Acknowledgement

I, ________________________________, understand that my child is enrolled at the Center for Child Development, a lab school for the Department of Child and Family Studies. I further understand that my children will interact and engage with the University students under the direct supervision of the classroom lead teachers. As such, I acknowledge my child’s likeness, initials, or other confidential indicators may be used in University students’ assignments.

____________________________________
Parent(s) Signature