



WELCOME!!

Welcome to the Riverview Christian Early Learning Center! We are grateful that you have entrusted your child to our care. We look forward to being a part of your child's growth, development and early education. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of this wonderful process! The Riverview Christian ELC is a ministry of the Calvary Church of the Nazarene. We are a non-profit, non-discriminatory, service organization established in 1987. We are licensed and certified by the PA Dept. of Welfare and comply with all standards set forth by that department. The following policies and procedures have been thoroughly thought out to provide a quality program for your children.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide quality, Christ-centered childcare in a safe, nurturing, home-like and developmentally appropriate environment that promotes spiritual, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. We desire to encourage and support families as they raise their children, presenting God as a loving Savior by modeling Christ's love with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

<u>Riverview Christian ELC Programs</u>	Ages	Staff :Child Ratio	Maximum Class Size
Infant Room	6 Wks. -12 Mos.	1:4	8
Pre-Toddler Room	12-20 Months	1:5	10
Toddler Room	20-36 Months	1:5	12
Preschool 1 Room	30 Months	1:6	12
Preschool 2 Room*	3 by Aug. 31	1:10	16
Pre-K Room	4 by Aug. 31	1:10	18
School Age 1	Kind. - 2 nd grade	1:12	22
School Age 2	3 rd – 7 th grade	1:15	22

(Due to enrollment numbers, the age cut off may be subject to change.)

***Must be completely potty trained as well!**

Hours of Operation

6:30 AM – 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday

Children must arrive no later than 9:30 AM for morning care, and no later than 11:30 AM for afternoon care. Your child is to be picked up by 5:55 PM so everyone is out of the building by 6:00 PM. A fee will be assessed for pick-ups after 6:00 PM. Please notify the office if you must pick-up late due to an unexpected circumstance. Due to lower attendance in the early morning and late evening hours, certain age groups are combined at these times. Please see your child's classroom teacher for current room hours.

Children With Special Needs

Children with special needs will be accepted at Riverview Christian Early Learning Center, provided we have acceptable accommodations. We are not staffed to provide one-on-one care. We require that the child's parents provide us with necessary information about his/her needs, physician, and specialists. The parent should complete an IEP/IFSP sign-off sheet stating that we have been given a copy of the report. The RCELC staff will work with the parents and specialists to facilitate the adjustment for the needs of the child.

Enrollment Policy and Procedures

Children are granted enrollment on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to sex, race, color, religion, creed, political belief or national origin. Enrollment is open to all children, provided the center can meet the needs of the child.

A child should be enrolled no less than 1 day prior to his or her first day of attendance. As part of the enrollment process, the following forms **must** be completed and submitted to the office prior to the first day of attendance (unless otherwise noted below):

1. Registration Form
2. Emergency Contact Form
3. Agreement Form
4. Meal Benefit Application
5. Permission to Photograph Form
6. Toileting Assistance Form (All Children Under Age 5)
7. Child Health Assessment Form (This is required no later than 30 days after enrollment date.)
8. Sunscreen Permission Form (May-September)
9. Parent Handbook*

*All parents will be able to access the Parent Handbook via website, or hard copy for parents without computer access.

As part of the enrollment process, the following payments must be submitted to the office prior to the first day of attendance:

1. Non-refundable Registration Fee
2. One Week Tuition on Deposit- (the deposit is held until the child is completely withdrawn from RCELC—it will not be considered payment for the first or any other week of attendance but will be refunded after withdrawal paperwork is completed)

Part-Time Enrollment Policy

Part-time is defined as 27 hours or less for the week (this includes every age group EXCEPT infants; we cannot offer a PT infant program due to the low staff to child ratio).

Parents enrolling their children part time must choose specific days and

times; this schedule should remain the same each week. The two options RCELC prefers are for your child to attend 3 full days per week or 5 half days per week.

If you desire that your child deviate from his or her part time schedule, a *Change of Schedule Request* form must be completed and submitted to the office **no less than one week** from the date the change is to occur. This includes switches when a holiday falls on your regularly scheduled day and you desire to change days.

We will do our best to accommodate schedule changes; however, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to provide care in the case of a schedule change request.

When enrollment status (full-time or part-time) has been chosen and the agreement form signed, approval from the Director of Administration must be obtained in order to change this status. Switching from full to part-time or part to full-time will require a new agreement form.

Payment Policy

Tuition is due each week, regardless of your child's attendance.

Riverview Christian Early Learning Center is a non-profit service organization. Therefore, your commitment to your financial agreement is vital to our daily operations. In order to maintain a stable and consistent program, we must offer our staff the security of knowing that their employment here is secure and stable. Your tuition is the only financial resource we have to compensate our staff. Paying tuition only when you child is in attendance would not allow us to provide our staff with a financial guarantee.

Weekly rates have been calculated with consideration given to holidays, in-service days, and emergency closings (the only exception is the week between Christmas and New Years which we are closed with no charge).

Billing is completed every Monday. Invoices (bills) will not be automatically given for every account. Only accounts with credits or balances from a previous week will receive an invoice Monday afternoon, when billing is completed.

Parents of children in the school-age program will be required to pay the minimum weekly fee each week, regardless of child's attendance, holidays and school vacation days. School-Age parents will be invoiced the flat fee for

the first 12 hours. Any hours over that will be billed the following week, on an hourly basis.

If parents of a school-age child desire to utilize RCELC for only snow days, early dismissals, and school vacation days, the child must be enrolled in the school-aged program and will be billed the hourly rate for the days in attendance.

Invoices (bills) will be placed in your child's mailbox, located in your child's classroom.

Timely tuition payments are required and necessary. Payment is due each week on Monday for *that* week of care/education. **Late fees will be assessed if payment is not made by 9am Thursday.** In the event of an absence or holiday on a Thursday, accounts should be pre-paid to avoid late fees.

If an account becomes delinquent by two weeks, a double late fee will be applied. Arrangements for full-payment or a payment plan must be made with the Financial Director, if a family falls two weeks behind in their tuition the family will be asked not to attend RCELC until arrangements are made. Your spot will not be held and may be taken. If a family is facing a financial hardship, they need to speak to the Financial Director.

Payment Procedures

Payment should be made by check or money order. Cash payments will no longer be accepted after January 1, 2011.

Payment procedures are as follows:

1. Please make the check/money order payable to Riverview Christian ELC.
2. Write your child's name on the "memo" line.
3. Place check/money order into payment box inside the ELC office.
4. Verify payment with a signature on the signature verification form (if a weekly and/or monthly receipt is required, you must notify the office Financial Director).

Attendance and Absence Policy

To ensure quality in our early educational programs and to decrease interruptions during classroom routines, children must arrive no later than 9:30 AM for morning care and no later than 11:30 AM for afternoon care.

If your child will be late or absent for the day, parents/guardians must call their child's classroom by 9:30 AM. Our classroom teachers are required to keep an illness and injury log. They will need to include your child's symptoms in this log. Also, our staffing is based directly on attendance and the staff to child ratios mandated by the DPW.

Absence Due to Illness

If a child is absent one or more **full weeks** and is under a doctor's care, an 80% tuition discount will be given for the week(s) not attended, if a doctor's note is provided covering the entire absence. A "**full week**" is defined as Monday through Friday of a particular week or 5 consecutive school days, even if a weekend occurs in that period.

Free Week

Every family actively enrolled in RCELC's **Full-Time** care programs for one full year, will be eligible for one FREE WEEK. "Actively enrolled" is defined as uninterrupted attendance for one full year. "One full year" is calculated as 365 days from the child's first day of attendance. FREE WEEKS are not applicable to children in the school age program. Children enrolled in the School-Age summer program will only pay for the weeks in attendance.

In order to utilize a FREE WEEK, parents must obtain the *Free Week* form from the office. Your child should not be in attendance at RCELC during any portion of that week. This form must be completed and submitted to the Financial Director prior to utilizing the FREE WEEK. If this form is not completed and submitted to the Financial Director, prior to the utilization of the FREE WEEK, it will be deemed that proper notice was not given and full payment will be required.

Leave of Absence

A LEAVE OF ABSENCE is 4 or more consecutive weeks in which the child is not in attendance (for reasons such as maternity leave, summer vacation, or any other reason). A *Leave of Absence* form must be obtained from the office, completed with your anticipated date of return, and submitted no less than two weeks prior to your planned leave time in order to qualify. Taking a LEAVE OF ABSENCE forfeits use of the FREE WEEK.

Withdrawal Policy

If withdrawal from RCELC is necessary, a *Withdrawal* form and an *Exit Interview Survey* must be obtained from the office, completed, and returned at least two-weeks before your last day in attendance. **This advanced submission of withdrawal forms is required for full refund of tuition deposit.** If less than two-weeks notice is given to the office, the tuition deposit will not be refunded. The family will still be responsible to pay for all dates in which care was provided.

Arrival and Departure Policy

All children must be supervised at all times. This also applies when children are with their parents. Please help us provide consistent guidelines.

Parking Lot

Parents and designated adults should park in one of the spaces in the front parking lot. If all the spaces are taken, you may park directly in front of the building. However, this is a fire zone, so parking is restricted to five minutes. Always turn your car off and never leave children unattended in your vehicle. Please be advised, the speed limit in our parking lot is 5 MPH. Always use caution when backing out of your space. The parking lot is closed from 8:15-8:30 am and again from 3:35-3:50 pm (school year only). If the bus is dropping off or picking up children, you must abide by the PA school bus laws

Drop Off

All families should use the main entrance for dropping off and picking up children. Children must walk with their parent/guardian in the parking lot and on the side walk leading to the ELC. The front door will be unlocked every day from 6:30-9:00am. If you arrive after 9:00 am, please ring the bell and someone from the office will open the door. After checking in at the welcome desk, or in the ELC office, children should be taken directly to their classroom. You will need to write the arrival time on the daily sign-in sheet. Direct parent/teacher contact must be made before you depart, in order for your child to become our responsibility until you return. Please relay any important information to the teacher relating to the child's physical/emotional state, change in pick up procedures or any other pertinent information that may assist the teacher in the daily care of your child.

There is a marked increase in behavior problems during times of transition, that is, when parents are dropping off and picking up their children. The staff must be free to monitor behavior and ease children

through these stressful periods. We understand that some exchange of information may be necessary, however, we ask that you keep your interactions with the staff to a minimum during these times. For more involved conversations, please set up an appointment.

Pick Up

A child shall only be released to the child's parent/legal guardian, or to an individual designated in writing by the enrolling parent. A child shall be released to either parent unless a court order (on file at the facility) states otherwise. If someone other than yourself (or the regular pick up individual) will not be picking up your child, please notify your child's teacher in advance. The following procedure is applicable to any one picking up children.

1. You must have a photo ID ready to show the classroom teacher/assistant. Once the classroom staff get to know you, you may not be required to show your ID.

2. If arriving prior to 3:30, the door will be locked. Ring the bell and office staff will open the door. Please come directly to the office so office personnel can write down your arrival time on the master attendance sheet. If you come after 3:30pm, please check in at the welcome desk and then proceed to your child's classroom. You will also need to write the time of departure and sign the daily attendance sheet.

In an emergency, a child may be released to an individual upon the oral designation of the parent, if the identity of the individual can be verified by a staff person.

If a child is released upon the oral designation of the parent, the following information shall be logged in the child's record.

1. Name of parent making request
2. Date and time of request
3. Name of individual to whom the child is to be released
4. Name of staff person taking the call and recording the information
5. Name of the staff person releasing the child

Parent Conduct

We expect all adults entering the building to conduct themselves in the same mature and moral manner expected and exemplified by the staff (including, but not limited to, language and tone of voice). We may not allow any individuals who have been convicted, or are awaiting trial on charges involving a crime of child abuse, child

neglect, physical violence or moral corruptness, to enter this facility. This is a PA Department of Welfare mandate.

School Age Pick-Up Procedures

After school pick-up procedures at RCELC include:

- ❑ Front parking lot will be closed twice a day. First at 8:30 AM until all SA children are safely on the bus. Second at 3:30 PM until all SA children are safely in the building.
- ❑ In class pick-up only.
- ❑ **Normal morning drop-off must be before 8:20 AM. After 8:20 AM you, the parent, must sign your child in with staff at the bus stop. We encourage you to then leave your child in our care.**
- ❑ Let the teachers know when your child will not be getting off the bus in the afternoon.

Dismissal Policy

We reserve the right to terminate care at any time by giving 5 days notice to the parent/guardian and refunding any unused tuition that was paid in advance. Our agreement form does not constitute a contract but provides an **at will** agreement for child-care between the parent/guardian and RCELC. However, if extreme, uncontrollable behavior occurs which poses safety concerns, a parent may be called to pick up their child immediately.

The following are reasons for dismissal:

1. Delinquent tuition after two weeks
2. Failure to update immunization or physicals in accordance with state regulations
3. Prolonged absence without notification (greater than 1 week)
4. Disruptive behavior that is a detriment to the social or educational well-being of the children
5. Physical danger to self or other children (including biting)
6. Failure to abide by established policies
7. Incompatibility between the program of the center and the needs of the child. We are not staffed to provide one-on-one care of children.

A child who has been dismissed may be reinstated to RCELC if the reason for dismissal is corrected and an opening is available.

Discipline Policy

Our staff will treat all children equally, and will **never** use physically or verbally abusive behavior to correct a discipline problem.

At RCELC, we all share a common goal: to train up our children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). We continuously rely on the Lord to show us what it means to "train up" a child so he/she will ultimately be obedient to God.

What do we know about God? We know that God loves children (Matthew 19:13). Our teachers not only love the children in their care, but also love to teach. Because we love your children, we consider safety one of our top goals.

We know our God is a God of order. This is why each room follows a curriculum and a daily schedule. We feel it is important to teach the children to clean up classroom centers and help to keep the room neat.

We know our God is very creative. Just take a look around! Nature alone speaks of God's unique creativity. At RCELC we emphasize art, music, exploring nature, and the use of high quality resources to develop each child's creativity and imagination.

We know our God is a God of discipline. Without his loving discipline, we would be lost! Our children need his loving discipline too. He uses a child's parents first and foremost for this (often challenging) job. As teachers, we partner with parents and therefore also play a role in accomplishing this job. The main tools we use in our classrooms are re-direction time-out.

When is time-out used? Time-out is used in the classrooms of 3 year-olds and up when a child's negative behavior continues despite warnings, loving guidance, moving a child to a different location in the classroom, and/or separating a child from others. We DO NOT use time-out for normal childish behaviors that are part of learning and growing. Teachers use Bible stories, puppets, role-playing, and other creative methods to help children learn about behavior that is pleasing to God.

Time-out will also be used when a child is physically aggressive and therefore threatens the safety of others in the classroom, including himself/herself.

A child will sit in time-out one minute for each year of age. A notice of the time-out will be sent home explaining the reason for the time-out.

All teachers will deal with each child individually and will inform the parents regarding behavior in the classroom. In the case of extreme behavior challenges, a plan will be developed and implemented both in the classroom and at home.

Health Policy

Every child enrolled at RCELC must have a current and age appropriate physical on record at all times (the *Child Health Assessment* form). The Pennsylvania Department of Welfare requires that we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendation for up to date physical examinations. Failure to submit and update records could result in dismissal.

Initial Health Reports Must Be Dated According to the Following Schedule:

- ***Infant (6 wks-12 mos.)**: no more than 3 mos. prior to first day of enrollment
- ***Young Toddler (12-24 mos.)**: no more than 6 mos. prior to first day of enrollment
- ***Older Toddler or Preschooler (2 years-entry to Kindergarten)**: no more than 1 year prior to first day of enrollment
- ***School-Age**: Entry into Kindergarten and 6th Grade

After Initial Examinations, the Following Schedule Should Be Followed:

Infants and Young Toddlers:	Every 6 Months
Older Toddler & Preschool:	Every 12 Months
School-Age:	Entrance into Kindergarten and 6 th grade

RCELC will make every effort to protect the health of each child. Parent cooperation is necessary in helping prevent the spread of communicable diseases!! (A communicable disease is an illness that can be spread from one person to another person.)

Children with Allergies

If your child has an allergy that requires special attention, please make sure to convey this information, (in writing), to the office and the teacher. We will want to post a picture of your child and the allergy information in the classroom. We will ask for your signature on the back of this sign, permitting us to post this information.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

*Parents should be alert to detect symptoms in their own child such as sore throat, nausea/vomiting, runny nose, coughing, diarrhea, and colds. We strongly recommend that every family finds someone who can provide child care in case of an unexpected illness. Please keep your child at home if he or she has:

- *fever (100 or higher, per CDC recommendation)**
- *vomiting**
- *uncontained diarrhea (pre-toddlers and up)**
- *diarrhea (infants)**
- *rash accompanied by a fever**

This will protect your child and others in the school.

If a child is well enough to come to school, we will expect him/her to go outdoors with the rest of the class (weather permitting). We are not staffed to provide one-on-one care for children who cannot go outdoors.

*If a child develops an elevated temperature (99.6°F - 100°F) while at RCELC, parents will be notified so they can begin to prepare for the possibility of an early pick up. If the temperature goes above 100°F, the family will be contacted for pick up.

*If a child develops episodes of vomiting or diarrhea while at school, we will conduct a general assessment that includes tolerance to activity, body temperature, appetite, etc. before contacting parents for early pick-up. If we determine that early pick-up is necessary, we ask that you or someone designated by you, come as quickly as possible. We will isolate your child and provide a place where your child can rest until you arrive.

***Diarrhea – A child will be excluded from group setting if:** (1) stool is not contained in the diaper for diapered children, (2) diarrhea is causing “accidents” for toilet-trained children, (3) stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for that child, or (4) blood or mucus is found in stool.

A child can be readmitted to group setting: (1) After a health professional clears the child for readmission for all cases of bloody diarrhea, (2) once diapered children have their stool contained by the diaper, and when toilet-trained children do not have toileting accidents, or (3) once stool frequency has reduced to fewer than 2 stools above normal for that child, even if the stools remain loose.

*If a child develops a rash during the day, parents will be notified. A rash accompanied by a fever or an oozing rash will require early pick-up.

***Please refer to the guidelines below for readmission to RCELC in the event of illness:**

Conditions Requiring Temporary Exclusions

Condition	Child may return when
Temperature above 100° F	Normal temperature for 24 hrs. without fever reducing medication
Diarrhea/Vomiting	No episodes for 24 hrs. In the case of diarrhea containing blood, a health care professional must provide written clearance.
Bacterial Infection	On medication for 24 hours or 3 doses of antibiotic
Rash	A doctor’s note indicating rash is not bacterial & not contagious, on medication for 24 hours, or without oozing or fever
Conjunctivitis	On medication for 24 hours.

If a child has been ill for more than three days, or has contracted a communicable disease, a doctor’s note is required for readmission to RCELC. If this ever occurs, please call the RCELC office as soon as possible, so we can inform other parents. We do this by posting a confirmed diagnosis reference sheet on classroom boards. This provides parents with facts and symptoms regarding common childhood illnesses while informing them of confirmed illnesses within the school. We will **never** use any child’s name when displaying this information. In the event that other children happen to contract similar symptoms, parents are able to pass this information along to their family doctor.

Medication Policy

Whenever possible, all medication should be given to your child before or after school. If this is not possible, please follow these

guidelines:

*All medication must be received in the ELC office in the original labeled container along with written instructions from the prescribing physician.

*Instructions contained on a prescription label are acceptable. To protect our students, the instructions on the medication must coincide with your written instructions or we will not be able to administer the medication. Prescription medication will be administered only to the child whose name appears on the container. Medication will be administered by a staff person in the office, where all medications will remain. The office staff will be responsible for making sure the child receives the medication at the correct time.

*We will not administer over-the-counter cold medications to children under 4 years of age unless a doctor's note is provided.

*A label (see example below) will need to be completed by the parent each time a medication must be administered. At the time of drop off, a label will be obtained from the medication container on the counter as you enter the office. Medication should be placed in a zip lock bag (available in the office) along with the completed label and set in the basket in the office. **Do not remove label from its protective backing. The adhesive backing must remain intact in order to place the label in your child's file.** In the event that medication needs refrigeration and office staff is not present when dropping off medication, please take it to your child's classroom and his or her teacher will refrigerate until office staff is available.

Office staff will administer the medication and complete the lower portion of the label. These completed labels will be kept in each student's file on a Medication Authorization Log. A copy of the completed label will be placed in the student's classroom bin.

Label Example:

I give permission to administer medication to my child _____

as stated below:

Parent Signature _____

Name of medication _____ P / N (Presc./Non-presc.)

Amount/Dosage _____ Refrigerate Y / N

Date _____ Time(s) to be given _____

Staff Initials

Comments/Reactions

Time Given

Amount/Dosage

Date

We **cannot** store prophylactic medications (Children's Tylenol, Advil, etc.) on site to be given as needed per compliance with state regulations. **If your child is taking a new medication, please give 1 or 2 doses at home before sending the medication to be given at school.**

Food Program

All children enrolled in our center receive their meals at no charge to the families. However, we must determine family income to receive federal funds for the meals served. Therefore, all household must complete the form and hand it into the office. Please return forms to the early learning center office as soon as possible. Every child must have a completed child enrollment form on file.

Meals include breakfast – served from 7:30-8:00 for School Age. Other classrooms served from 7:30-8:30. **There will be no breakfast served after 8:30.** AM snack – 9:30; Lunch – 11:30 and PM snack – 3:00-4:00.

All of our meals must meet nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). If a child has been determined by a recognized medical authority to be unable to consume certain foods because of medical or other special dietary needs, the center will make any substitution as prescribed by that medical authority. Substitutions will be made when supported by a statement from the recognized medical authority. If a substitution is required, there will be no extra charge for the meal.

Safety

Safety is a priority at RCELC. Conditions at our facility are regularly inspected using the Department of Health and Family Services' Safety Checklist. We assume responsibility for all children until picked up by a parent or approved contact person. Once this person has made contact with the student's teacher, our responsibility ceases.

1. Injuries: Parents will be responsible for all medical expenses for bodily injury of a child enrolled at RCELC while the child is attending our programs.

If a child is injured while at school, staff will assess and treat the child accordingly. An incident form will be completed detailing the nature of the accident and injury as well as what treatment was given. Parents will be asked to sign this report and will be given the original for their records.

In the event of a serious/life-threatening injury, an ambulance will be accessed and parents will be contacted immediately. If parents are not able

to get to the RCELC, the director or a teacher will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with them until parents arrive.

2. Supervision: RCELC requires that parents bring their child to his/her classroom each day, not just to the front entrance to the school. No child should be unsupervised. The daily sign-in sheet must be completed by the parent entering at time of arrival, and contact with the teacher should be made before leaving.

3. Pick-Up: If a family would like their child to be picked up by ANYONE other than himself/herself, we recommend that the classroom teacher be notified. The authorized person picking up the child must be listed on the child's emergency contact form. All persons, other than the parents, will be asked to show a photo ID at the time of pick-up.

4. Parking Lot: Children should never be left alone/unsupervised in parked cars. Teachers are required to supervise children at all times and we expect that parents will follow the same guidelines. The speed limit in our parking lot is 5 MPH. Always use caution when backing in and out of parking spaces. **Parking lot will be closed daily surrounding School Age bus times. If the school bus is on the main street and the stop sign is out and the red lights are on, you must not exit or enter the parking lot.**

**75 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 3345. (PA Department of Transportation)
Meeting or overtaking school bus. Duty of approaching driver when red signals are flashing** --Except as provided in subsection (g), the driver of a vehicle meeting or overtaking any school bus stopped on a highway or traffic way shall stop at least ten feet before reaching the school bus when the red signal lights on the school bus are flashing and the side stop signal arms are activated under section 4552(b.1) (relating to general requirements for school buses). The driver shall not proceed until the flashing red signal lights are no longer actuated. In no event shall a driver of a vehicle resume motion of the vehicle until the school children who may have alighted from the school bus have reached a place of safety. The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection at which a school bus is stopped shall stop his vehicle at that intersection until the flashing red signal lights are no longer actuated.

5. Dress: Children should be dressed appropriately for active, messy play. We want to ensure that your child is safe at all times while they are here with us. Therefore, we are asking for your compliance with the following policies.

*All children must have a change of clothing to be kept in the classroom at all times. Please make sure to update clothing according to size and season and, **label everything!!**

*Sturdy shoes and socks are necessary for climbing and jumping. Please refrain from putting sandals/clogs on your child.

*Our teachers try to keep your child as neat as possible in regards to mealtime and art activities. However, young children are messy and that is appropriate for their age. Please do not dress your child in their best clothing for school.

*If the snow is falling, children will go outside to explore. Please provide snow gear (boots, water proof snow-suit, mittens, and hat) whenever the forecast calls for snow.

*When it's time for fun in the sun, you will need to provide sunscreen for your child as well as a signed permission form approving administration. No swimming or wading is allowed on the premises. We have water play which consists of sprinklers, spray bottles and water tables. You will need to send swimwear for these occasions.

*Please provide sweaters in the Fall and Spring when transitional weather produces cold mornings and warm afternoons.

Emergency Operations

This policy is in place to assure you of our concern for the safety and welfare of children attending Riverview Christian Early Learning Center. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

Immediate Evacuation - Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.

In-Place Sheltering - Sudden, unexpected occurrences (weather or hazardous materials related), may dictate that taking cover in other areas of the building.

Relocation - Total evacuation of the facility and the premises may become necessary if there is a danger in the area or the building is unsafe for return. In this case, children will be taken to a re-location facility at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, (4201 Stoudt's Ferry Bridge Rd., Reading, 19605) or Little Angels Academy 2127 Pricetown Rd., Temple, 19560). This information will be posted on the front door of the

Early Learning Center.

Modified Operation - May include cancellation, postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of

situations. Please understand that these situations may occur anytime during the year, even in the Summer.

Lockdown – Intruder in the area or in the building. All classrooms are to close and lock all doors and windows, close blinds, draw curtains to cover door and sink windows. All children and staff must stay in the classroom until the “All is Safe” sound is given.

Please listen to Y102 or WFMZ TV channel 69, or their websites for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above.

We ask that you not call during the emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information.

The facility Directors may provide an alternate phone number (i.e. cell phone number, etc.) to call in an emergency event.

The information you have provided on the “Emergency Contact Form” (designating persons to pick up your child) will be used to contact you if needed. Please keep the information up to date on this form in the Early Learning Center office.

Please do not attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties. In order to assure the safety of your children and our staff, we ask your understanding and cooperation.

Inclement Weather

Plan for the unexpected! Emergencies vary and may occur at any time. For that reason, we urge all families to have a back-up child care source ready, in case we are not available.

Delays and closings are rare, but both do happen occasionally. Consideration must be made in regards to the safety of our families and their young children as well as our staff. If the need arises for a weather related delay, closing, or early dismissal (due to weather emergencies or power outages), please turn on, or listen to one of the following:

**TV CHANNEL 69-WFMZ (OR WWW.WFMZ.COM 24 HRS. A DAY)
This web site can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with closing information delivered directly to e-mail addresses, pagers, cell phones, and PDAs. 102.5 FM-WRFY RADIO**

Please know that it is our desire to provide you with quality care and early education. We understand the importance of dependability. However, if local police and transportation officials feel that conditions are extremely hazardous, we may decide to delay our opening until the road conditions improve. We will try to make our decision by 5:30 am. SO, IF THE SNOWFLAKES KEEP FALLING OR THE ICE IS NOT MELTING, PLEASE TURN ON THE RADIO, TV, OR LOG ON, TO STAY WELL INFORMED!!

School-Age Parents

*The school-age program follows the Muhlenberg School District schedules. If a delay, closing, or early dismissal is announced by Muhlenberg, we are available to provide care until you arrive. If a delay is announced, we will provide extended care until the bus arrives. **However, please remember that if weather conditions worsen, we may also need to close early. Please pay close attention to local updates!!***

Parent – Staff Communication

We strongly encourage communication between parents and teachers. Our teachers are happy to answer any questions about your child's behavior, daily routines, etc. However, questions regarding RCELC policy and procedures, as well as financial concerns, MUST be directed to the office. Parents are asked not to discuss such issues with teachers.

The following are all methods used to encourage open and consistent communication between parents and staff regarding programs and events.

Phone: Each classroom has its own direct extension and we welcome calls from our parents during our operating hours.

Parent Board: Every classroom has a parent board located in the hallway right outside the door. Teachers will post important reminders and sign-up sheets. Please remember to check this board frequently.

Mail Box/Cubby: Every child will have their own private space to store artistic treasures, as well as important teacher/administrative information papers. Please check this spot daily.

White Board: Every classroom has a white board outside their room. This will be used to communicate daily highlights as well as important reminders.

Parent Board (located in the office to the right of the drop box) and Brochure Shelf: Many educational and community related pamphlets are located here. We also post important information on the easel by the front door. Please take time to occasionally browse through this area.

Administrative Newsletter and Communication: Newsletters will be delivered to every family through out the year. Concerns and comments can be communicated verbally or written and placed in the Directors' mail boxes.

Early Education

Our desire is to provide a quality early learning program for all the children attending RCELC. We want to emphasize the basic skills of learning, while complying with the directives from our regulating agencies. We also consider it a privilege to be able to provide a spiritual foundation for the children who attend RCELC. As our teachers display Christ-like attitudes and behaviors, we hope that each child will develop a basic understanding of God's love, God's Word and the principles of Christian living.

Our Teaching Team brings a wealth of education, experience, knowledge and love to our ELC. These individuals are dedicated and committed to providing a quality early learning environment for the children. Our teachers, assistants, aides and volunteers must comply with the PA Department of Welfare's Regulations regarding:

1. Educational Requirements
2. Annual Fire Safety Training
3. Bi-Annual Pediatric First-Aid and Blocked Airway Training
4. Criminal and Child Abuse Background Checks
5. FBI Clearance (Finger Print Check)
6. Thorough Interviewing Process
7. New Staff Orientation (15 hours of video training, workbook completion, and classroom observation)
8. 6 Hours of Extra Training Annually (Most of this training is provided by local colleges and professional organizations. Many of our teachers go beyond the required amount.)

Curriculum Statement

RCELC developed the following statement to inform families about our philosophy regarding how children learn, materials and methods we will use to teach young children, what children need to learn, the teacher's role, assessment and the role of the family.

How Young Children Learn

Play is the primary vehicle that children use to explore their world. "Play facilitates the growth of children's reasoning abilities." (David Elkind, Ph.D.)

This exploration needs to be offered in an intentionally planned environment that is developmentally and culturally appropriate. Children learn most when they are provided with hands-on learning activities and materials that stimulate exploration through the use of many senses.

Characteristics of learning readiness are developed rather than taught. Only through numerous, concrete interactions with the natural world that God created, can a young child prepare to benefit from formal instruction later on in the elementary years.

Learning will take place when a young child builds on prior knowledge. In other words, the young child must have the opportunity to combine new knowledge with earlier experiences. If these early experiences are not taught using authentic/concrete materials with which the child can relate, the child will not have the acquired knowledge and experience with which to build on. Children also need repetitive activities for many reasons, but especially, to begin to feel successful.

Children learn best in a setting where loving, experienced and educated adults model appropriate behavior and language. Children feel secure when there is a safe and predictable environment in which to play and grow. When children feel loved and accepted, they will begin to acquire knowledge, develop a love for learning and begin to become the individuals that God created them to be.

Materials and Methods

RCELC utilizes a wide variety of materials to develop educational plans and appropriate learning environments for the children we serve. The following lists are divided into categories according to age.

While books, guides and learning standards are powerful resources to help teachers plan for children, curriculum decisions primarily come from the children, their families and the teachers/adults with whom they interact.

Curriculum may change from program to program and year to year, (even within the same classroom). On the other hand, the curriculum statement (the framework for classroom practice) will remain the same.

Infant/Toddler

- *The Bible
- *"Think Orange"
- * Wee Learn Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers" (Lifeway Christian Resources)

- *"Creative Curriculum For Infants and Toddlers, A Comprehensive Approach" (Teaching Strategies)
- *Pennsylvania Infant/Toddler Early Learning Standards
- *Miscellaneous Teacher Resources

Preschool/Pre-K

- *The Bible
- *"Think Orange"
- *"Essentials Preschool Curriculum, A Comprehensive Approach" (Gospel Publishing House)
- *"Creative Curriculum For Preschool, A Comprehensive Approach"(Teaching Strategies)
- *Miscellaneous Teacher Resources
- *Pennsylvania Preschool Early Learning Standards

School Age

- *The Bible
- *"Think Orange"
- *Miscellaneous Teacher resources

Attention will be given to the specific needs of each child. At the same time, every child will be encouraged to become a part of the classroom community. If it becomes evident that a child has a special emotional, behavioral or physical need, we have the responsibility to recommend professional assistance to the family. We are willing to work with the child, the family and the community agency in order to provide the best help possible. However, if the needs of the child are beyond our ability or scope of practice, we will help you find an alternative agency to provide you and your child with a more comprehensive program.

What Young Children Need to Learn (According to the PA Early Learning Standards)

Infant/Toddler

Approaches to Learning and Cognitive Development
Communication and Emerging Literacy
Creative Expression
Physical/Motor Development
Social, Emotional and Personal Development

Preschool/Pre-K

Approaches to Learning
Creative Arts
Language and Literacy
Logical and Mathematical
Personal/Social
Physical/Health
Program Partnerships/Family Involvement
Science/Social Studies

The above list of standards is an abbreviated version of what children need to learn in the early years. If you would like to view a copy of the PA Early Learning Standards, please stop by the Director's Office.

The Creative Curriculum offers support for teachers to help them teach content in ways that respect the developmental stages of children. The goal is to offer appropriate activities in content areas that are connected to the standards. This will hopefully allow children to meet criteria for school readiness, get excited about learning, academically succeed for years to come and become a person of character and integrity, the person God created them to be.

The Teacher's Role

At RCELC, teachers are committed to providing care and early education in a loving and nurturing way. The following list contains only a few of the many responsibilities that our teachers and assistants have regarding the educational portion of our program.

Teachers observe, guide children's learning and assess children's learning in order to plan for the individual needs of the children and to promote the acquisition of knowledge.

In order to guide learning, teachers, (with the help of assistants and aides)...
-Design, set up, and maintain a safe, developmentally, culturally, and spiritually appropriate environment.

-Plan challenging learning activities that include the rotation of manipulatives, learning materials, equipment, and natural materials.

-Set up five to six interest areas (Toddler 1 and up).

-Develop written plans on a weekly basis. The plans must reflect the PA Early Learning Standards.

-Use a wide range of teaching approaches.

-Develop an appropriate schedule that meets the needs of the age group they are assigned.

-Plan for large and small group instruction as well as teacher and child directed learning times.

-Develop age appropriate guidelines that are consistently enforced.

-Have a variety of transitional activities ready to use throughout the day. In the course of a day, young children change from one activity to another rather frequently. Some young children experience difficulty in this area. So, Teachers need to know how to provide prompts, cues, warnings and other activities to assist with these transitions.

-Understand the importance of modeling a Christ-like life style.

Children learn by the adult role models in their life. Teacher/Child interaction is also an important component to the learning program. Literacy skills are developed throughout the entire day, not just at story time. Teachers must be ready to ask open ended questions and provide conversation starters whenever they see an open window.

-Create ways to interact and communicate with families.

-Manage the learning environment. Create a system to record and maintain files and portfolios for every child.

-Observe and document progress using the Creative Curriculum Assessment Forms.

-Arrange for environmental accommodations for children with special needs.

In conclusion, our teachers and support staff provide ongoing observation and assessment. With the information they receive from you and your child, they develop a plan to provide learning opportunities to meet the needs of every child.

Family Connection

Parents are the child's first and most important teacher. In order for our program to benefit the children, it is imperative that we connect with every family. We offer a "Get to Know You" survey at enrollment and we encourage our families to complete the survey and return it immediately. We

also offer a 45 day conference and evaluation so you can be informed about your child's transition to the center. This is also a time for you and your child's teacher to discuss any concerns or parenting struggles that you might have.

In closing, we look forward to partnering with the families of the children entrusted to us. The administration and staff of RCELC take our work very seriously. Although we can not guarantee a perfect environment, we can assure you that we will do our very best and continue to pursue excellence. If you ever have a need or concern, we ask that you talk with your child's teacher, (for classroom concerns, and the office, (for program concerns). We value and welcome your comments, concerns and ideas.

Methods Used to Relay Children's Progress to Families

Daily Progress Sheets: These forms are provided to parents in the infant/toddler rooms and relay information about your child's day. Items covered include, but are not limited to; meals, toileting, behavior, and activity level.

Weekly Progress Sheets: These forms are provided to parents in the preschool and pre-k rooms and relay information about your child's week. Items covered include: participation, behavior, accomplishments, meals and other pertinent information.

Weekly Lesson Plans (I & PT Monthly): Each teacher is required to complete lesson plans for their classroom. These plans are posted on the parent board. They reflect the PA Early Learning Standards. Please see the curriculum section for more information.

Classroom Newsletter/Highlight Sheet: Every teacher will have their own form of communication with families to help you stay well informed.

Conferences: Parents will receive an *It's Time For A Chat* Form, twice a year, (within 45 days of enrollment or placement into a new room and mid year). You will then have the option to meet with your child's teacher or decline the meeting. Please fill out the form and return it to your child's teacher. We must keep this on file at all times. If you feel that a conference is needed at any other time, just ask your child's teacher and arrangements will be made.

Base Line Assessment: An initial screening will be completed for every child within the first month of entrance into a new classroom. The results of this as well as teacher observations will be shared with the family at the 45-Day Conference. You will also receive a progress sheet at that time. If you choose to not meet with your child's teacher, you will still receive the progress sheet.

Observations: All teachers are required to do written observations for every child in attendance at RCELC. These observations are used to help teachers focus on individual needs of children, develop lesson plans and complete end of the year assessments.

Mid-Year and End of the Year Assessments: These tools will help you to see your child's developmental progress and accomplishments as well as any areas that need strengthening.

Take Home Folder: Every child will be given a take home folder to be used to provide written information from teacher to family. This folder should be returned to the classroom daily.

Mandated Reporting

*We are a mandated reporting center. The State of PA defines this as follows: A person who, in the course of employment, occupation or practice of a profession, has reasonable cause to suspect, on the basis of medical professional or other training and experience, that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of that person or of an agency, institution, organization or other entity with which that person is affiliated is a victim of child abuse, including child abuse by an individual who is not a perpetrator.

*Child abuse is defined as serious recent physical injury which is non-accidental, mental injury, sexual abuse or serious physical neglect of children under the age of 18, caused by the acts or omissions of a perpetrator.

*Staff must report any suspicions to one of the Directors of RCELC. These individuals will then observe the child and may discuss the situation with the family. Administration may also discuss their findings with the Pastor of Calvary Church of the Nazarene. If a final consensus determines that child abuse is suspected, the Administrator or Director of RCELC will contact Childline or Children and Youth Services.

Miscellaneous Information

*Because we are a non-profit center, we will occasionally provide our families with the opportunity to participate in a variety of fundraisers. Please understand that your participation is very much appreciated, however, optional.

*Once a year, usually during the fall, RCELC invites a school photographer to capture the smiling faces of our children (infants to Pre-kindergarten). No one is under any obligation to purchase school photographs.

*Any family who contributes to the enrollment of a new family to RCELC will receive \$25.00 off of 1 week's tuition.

*We encourage families to get to know each other and we try to provide opportunities to promote social interaction among our families. We have an open house once a year. Our Open House usually includes an art show and a family dinner.

*Birthdays are special events in the life of a young child. Teachers are very willing to work with you if you choose to celebrate your child's birthday here at school. We have found that cookies and Rice Krispie treats work best. Please speak with your child's teacher in advance to confirm your plans.

*RCELC maintains a central file for each child in our center. Important documents are kept in this file including registration forms, agreements, medical information, observations and assessments. RCELC can transfer these documents to another center at the written request of the parent/guardian. Forms are available in the office.

*RCELC generates a yearly calendar which is available on the website (riverviewchristianelc.com). This calendar contains all special events and closures for the entire year. If we ever need to deviate from established dates, you will be notified in writing.

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