Staff Handbook

School Policies and Procedures

Introduction

Welcome to Children of Joy Preschool (COJ!). We believe that employees are the key to our success and achievement. Your ideas, energy, dedication and loyalty are an integral part of our ministry to the children and families at Children of Joy. We are a non-profit private preschool that provides quality childcare for the community. Children of Joy is a ministry of Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church.

Children of Joy is licensed by the state of Texas and regulated by the licensing rules and regulatory visits by Texas Health and Human Services. Children of Joy is accredited by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs of the Association of Early Learning Leaders (AELL). This accreditation acknowledges that Children of Joy has met exemplary standards for a program providing early care and education for young children with noted strengths in interactions and language promotion. Children of Joy provides a high-quality program for children, professional development opportunities for staff, and an environment for children that is conducive for their individual growth and development that exceeds state licensing requirements.

Please take time to read the handbook thoroughly. This handbook has been divided into five sections. The first section outlines the values, beliefs and goals of COJ!.. The second section outlines COJ! Program Admission. the training and requirements for every employee. The third section outlines employee policies including employee hiring, work hours, and compensation. The fourth section outlines employee guidelines; personnel policies and procedures and a general guide of policies in effect for staff. The fifth section outlines the responsibilities required for all COJ! Staff members. All sections are important and align with Texas State Minimum Standards and the Association of Early Learning Leaders requirements. If situations arise that are not addressed in the handbook, they should be brought to the attention of the Children of Joy Director, or if necessary, the Pastor of Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church.

This handbook and all similar documents are advisory in nature. They do not include everything, but are a general statement of policy, to be modified and applied by the Children of Joy Administration at their discretion. All items described are in full effect while the employee is engaged in their employment duties, whether on Children of Joy grounds or off the premises.

Neither this handbook nor any statement of policy, procedure or benefits is meant to be an expressed or implied contract of employment or limit the rights of Children of Joy or its employees to terminate the employee relationship at any time, with or without cause.

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About Children of Joy!

PURPOSE OF CHILDREN OF JOY!

Children of Joy! Preschool is a private, Christian school for preschool age children established in 2002 existing under the authority of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church of The Woodlands, Texas. The Preschool operates within the Church as a ministry of the Church. Children of Joy is a nationally accredited school by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs of the Association of Early Learning Leaders (AELL). Children of Joy provides a high-quality program for children, professional development opportunities for staff, and an environment for children that is conducive for their individual growth and development that exceeds state licensing requirements. As a part of the education and faith formation ministry of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church, the ministry of Children of Joy! is creating a *Joy!-filled, faith-growing, life-changing* learning community.

VALUES OF CHILDREN OF JOY!

Core Beliefs
Faith formation at Children of Joy! is broadly inclusive and seeks to include and affirm Christians from a wide variety of traditions. These are the deep roots of who we are as a community of faith, which shape how we teach faith in our preschool ministry.

> We worship the God of creation who delivered Israel through the Sea; the same God who became flesh in Jesus Christ in order to share the power of God's Kingdom; the same God who moves through our lives as a powerful, inspiring Spirit.
>
> We are saved by grace – at the heart of our faith, our lives, and our community is the gift of God toward us and the world.
>
> The Christian life and community are marked by the gifts of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to be, as a ministry of Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, a warm, loving, healthy and safe Christian environment for our community. We teach and model positive self-image, individuality, independence and respect for one another in a loving play-based environment. Children will be offered the opportunity to grow and develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

PHILOSOPHY

- We seek to create a community that encourages young children to become lifelong, enthusiastic learners.
- We believe that experiential learning and a nurturing Christian community helps children to develop the skills and character they need to grow and mature.
- Our approach to learning is based on a growing body of research that affirms that children learn most effectively through a concrete, play-oriented approach to early childhood education.

GOVERNANCE

As a ministry of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church (SOJ), Children of Joy! Preschool is governed by the constitution, bylaws, continuing resolutions, and policies of SOJ.

- The regularly called Pastor of Spirit of Joy! functions as the head of staff. Direct oversite of Children of Joy! teachers and staff may be delegated to the Preschool Director.
- As a ministry of Spirit of Joy!, Preschool budgeting and governance shall be reviewed and overseen by the Congregations Council of SOJ. Specific duties may be delegated to the Preschool Director and Administrative Team.
- The Preschool Director shall establish an Administrative Team to assist in the carrying out of the regular work of the school – including staff management, budgeting and fiscal responsibility, curriculum, and Administration.
- The Preschool Director shall establish a Preschool Team – consisting of parents, congregational members, and the Administrative Team – to provide programming support, solicit feedback on the school curriculum and policies, lead fundraising efforts and support of the teachers and staff. As good stewards of our resources, the Preschool shall seek to operate budget neutral, inclusive of the cost of facilities expenses, staffing, supplies and any other costs of the educational program.
- In addition to tuition and fees, regular fundraising may be used to help offset the expenses of this ministry.

These guidelines function as an operational policy of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church.

GOALS OF CHILDREN OF JOY! PRESCHOOL

Social/Emotional Goals

- To experience a sense of self-esteem
- To express feelings appropriately
- To exhibit a positive attitude toward learning
- To develop independence, express choices and solve problems
- To develop cooperative, pro-social behavior
- To learn to deal with social conflict
- To develop responsibility and self-regulation

Cognitive Goals

- To acquire concepts and information about the world
- To expand logical thinking skills
- To expand verbal communication skills
- To develop language arts concepts and skills
- To develop math and science concepts and skills
- To foster discovery, exploration, and curiosity

Physical Goals

- To enhance gross motor skills
- To enhance fine motor skills
- To develop the use of all senses as modes of learning
- To promote healthy physical development
- To encourage development of creative thinking skills
- To use many different media to explore creativity in the arts

Spiritual Goals

- To establish a loving Christian atmosphere
- To present Christian holidays, events, and concepts in developmentally appropriate ways
- To strengthen character development through example and curricula
- To provide support for the whole family in their spiritual journey

Academic Goals

- To prepare children for kindergarten through reading readiness, writing, numbers, and math
- To learn letter and number writing using Learning Without Tears curriculum
- To create a love of learning

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

The Director of Children of Joy! is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school with the objective of fulfilling the purpose of the Preschool as stated in this document. In addition, all Children of Joy! teachers and staff shall report directly to the Preschool Director. The Preschool Director reports directly to the Pastor of Spirit of Joy! and the Congregational Council. A Preschool Administration Team may assist in the carrying out of these duties. The Director of the School shall be responsible for overseeing the school's compliance with minimum standards and accreditation standards. Please see Appendix A for more detailed responsibilities of the Director.

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR

Purpose: To communicate the Preschool's objectives and to establish standards for the financial operation of the Preschool.

The reliability which the Preschool can place upon its financial records is dependent upon the effectiveness of the procedures and controls which are adopted to ensure that the results of transaction processing are reflected accurately, consistently, and completely in those records. Controls must also ensure that assets are not exposed to unauthorized access and use. Management has the responsibility to establish and maintain an adequate system of internal control and to furnish the Preschool Team and Church Council with reliable financial information on a timely basis. An adequate system of internal control is necessary for management to discharge these responsibilities. Please see Appendix B for Financial and Internal Control Policies.

PRESCHOOL TEAM

The primary work of the Preschool Team is to assist and support the ministry of the Preschool Director, teachers, and staff. This shall include leading fundraising for the school, giving feedback on school curriculum and policies and supporting the work of teachers and staff.

The Team shall include the SOJ Pastor(s), the Preschool Administrative Team, and at least one teacher. The Preschool Director may invite up to 7 other members to this team, the majority of which shall be both members of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church and/or parents of a child enrolled in the preschool. Detailed team member roles are outlined in Appendix C.

The Preschool Team may divide its work among the non-staff Team members as they deem appropriate.

Each member of the Team shall be invited to serve for a minimum term of (1) year commencing on June 1st of each succeeding year. With mutual agreement of the Administrative Team and Preschool Team member, each Team member may renew their service for a maximum of five (5) years.

Any member of the Team may resign at any given time by submitting written notice. Such resignation shall be effective upon delivery.

Any member of the Team may be removed from his or her position for failure to participate in the shared work of the Team, by decision of the Administrative Team in conversation with the Preschool Team.

Any vacancies of the Team arising from any cause may be filled by invitation from the Administrative Team in conversation with the Preschool Team.

Team members agree to keep all matters that are discussed in official Team meetings confidential. Discussion of sensitive matters outside of meetings may be considered a conflict of interest and grounds for removal from the Team.

In addition to leading fundraising, supporting the teachers and staff, and seeking to provide opportunities for fellowship and community, the Preschool Team shall be invited to participate in the Administration of this ministry by:

- Making recommendations to the Congregational Council regarding the hiring of a Preschool Director.
- Recommending an annual ministry spending plan to the Congregational Council, including possible changes to tuition and fees.
- Providing feedback on the program of this ministry, including hours, curriculum, accreditation, and the goals and purposes of the ministry.
- From time to time, and the invitation of the Congregational Council and/or the Administrative Team, the Preschool Team may be invited to participate in evaluation and assessment of the Preschool Ministry of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church.

COJ! Program Admission

School Operating Hours

Children of Joy! operates Monday through Friday from August through May each year. Staff members' contracts begin August 1st and end on May 31st. Children will attend school August through May following a school calendar that is updated yearly. Children have the option of attending school MWF, TTh, M-Th or M-F depending on their age and class availability.

Staff hours are 8:30 am – 2:30 pm
Children school hours are 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Admission/Eligibility

All the children in the community are eligible for admission to the preschool based on the availability of space in the class applied for, in accordance with opportunity for the individual child to profit from this group experience. The Director reserves the right to request withdrawal of any child who fails to demonstrate the appropriate adjustments to the program of the school. In the event insufficient space is available, names will be placed on a waiting list for each class based on the following priority status:

a. Children currently attending the school.
b. Siblings of children currently attending the school.
c. Church members' children not presently enrolled.
d. Alumni children of the school.
e. Community members.

Registration and Enrollment

- The Administration Team shall annually set registration for the following school year. Registration amounts will be voted on and approved by the Preschool Team.
- The priorities for enrollment are as follows:
    - Children currently attending the school.
    - Siblings of children currently attending the school.
    - Church members' children are not presently enrolled.
    - Alumni children of the school.
    - Community members.
- A registration fee is set by the Children of Joy! Team to accompany each application unless the child is placed on the waiting list for enrollment. This amount shall be refunded if:

    - The child is not accepted by the school.
    - A sibling of a currently enrolled child is not accepted due to space availability.
- Should a child be accepted and then withdrawn from the program, the registration fee shall not be refunded.
- If any child withdraws from the school for any reason, the Director shall fill the class from the waiting list for the current year. At that time, the registration fee will be due to secure the child's enrollment. Parents will be notified by the Director when a space is available.

Class placement shall be at the discretion of the Director.

Tuition Assistance

Families in need of tuition assistance for their child will be considered on a case-by-case basis based upon the availability of funds by the school. Families are required to complete a Tuition Assistance application. Applications are reviewed by the Administration Team. Tuition Assistance Policies and Procedures for the Tuition Assistance Committee are listed in Appendix D.

Admission Documents

Before a child's first day of attendance, the following must be on file with the Preschool Office:

- Registration form
- Admission application (including parent and physician signatures, and Parent's Rights form)
    - Parents' Rights Form 2987 included in Appendix E.
- Immunization Records (TB tests are not required. A copy of the complete list of vaccines is found in our admission packet).
- Statement of allergies and Food Allergy Emergency Care Plan
- Tuition Agreement
- Automatic Draft form for Preschool Tuition

Enrollment information, which conforms to Licensing and Minimum Standards, shall be obtained by the Director for each child prior to their first day of attendance.

Immunization records shall conform to Licensing and Minimum Standards and shall be filed at the school for two years after the child's termination of attendance.

Enrollment is considered ongoing unless a parent or guardian notifies the Preschool Office. The admission application will only be completed once unless notified by the Director.

Employee Policies

Staff Job Descriptions

Teachers will direct their classrooms by following their daily schedules, the basic guidelines of COJ! teachers, and by following the program and goals of COJ! Preschool as listed in the COJ! Parent Handbook. Lesson plans are to be posted in each classroom and turned in to the office. Each teacher is responsible for being familiar with and following all state guidelines, as well as establishing a working knowledge of AELL criteria.

Staff must provide care that is consistent with the child's habits, interests, strengths, and any special needs, including any special supervision needs or care and set appropriate behavior expectations based on the child's current stage of development.

Basic care for pre-kindergarten age children must include:

- Routines such as diapering or toileting, eating, napping or resting, indoor activity times, and outdoor activity times.
- Individual attention given to each pre-kindergarten age child.
- Interactions that encourage children to communicate and express feelings in appropriate ways

Specific job descriptions are available in the Staff Handbook.

Lead/Co-Lead Teacher- A person in charge of creating and executing weekly lesson planning, completing student assessments, and is the primary communication person for their classroom parents through newsletters, conferences, and daily messages. This person will be the main instructor in the classroom and responsible for making sure the curriculum is covered during the school year. Other duties and responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the Director or Administration Team.

Extra-Curricular Lead Teacher- A person in charge of creating and executing weekly lesson plans for Music and Movement, Chapel, or Spanish classes. This person will send monthly communication/newsletters to families detailing lessons taught throughout the month. They will not be responsible for completing assessments but may assist in the completion of them if requested. Other duties and responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the Director or Administration Team.

Assistant Teacher- A person in charge of assisting the lead teacher in any duties that need to be completed in the classroom. This person may help with instruction during

the day, assessments, and communication. Other duties and responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the Director or Administration Team.

Teacher Support Specialist- A person in charge of creating a planning schedule to allow lead/co-lead teachers break time throughout the day. They may also assist in daily classroom duties. This person will also help with kitchen work and daily playground set-up/cleanup. They are not responsible for creating lesson plans, completing assessments, or daily parent communication. Other duties and responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the Director or Administration Team.

Shadow- A person in charge of one student in need of assistance beyond what the classroom teaches can provide on a daily basis. This person will create and execute a plan to meet the individual needs of the student. They are not responsible for lesson planning but may complete assessments for their assigned child. They will also be responsible for daily communication with the child's parents. Other duties and responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the Director or Administration Team.

Substitute Teacher- A person who is hired for a specific time and for a specific job. This person works in a classroom on a temporary basis filling the position for an absent staff member in the building. This person is responsible for following and executing lesson plans created by the lead/co-lead teacher. They are not responsible for completing assessments. They will communicate with families on an as needed basis. Substitute status can change based on the duration of time the position needs to be covered. Other duties and responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the Director or Administration Team.

Additional Staff Responsibilities

In addition to teaching responsibilities, teachers must hold or attend parent conferences, open houses, and staff meetings in accordance with school policies. They also must attend the Christmas program. Staff will be paid for attending/working the Spring Fundraiser. Evaluations of children will be ongoing and done through portfolio assessment and informal observation. Parent conferences will be held in the spring.

If a parent voices concerns, teachers should make it clear that their child will not be discussed at the door or in carline in front of other children or parents. If a special circumstance exists, a phone conversation, note or scheduled appointment will be needed. Any major concerns should be discussed with the Director first.

The school is responsible for supplies that can be purchased in bulk. Each teacher will receive a pre-determined monthly budget, based upon the number of children enrolled, which may be used for additional supplies. A tax-exempt form **MUST** be used.

Teachers are asked to keep rooms and storage areas tidy and to be mindful of shared space with other teachers. Teachers sharing a room will need to decide how to share cabinet space, bulletin boards, etc.

In addition to your regular classroom duties, we will have assigned "shared duties." These consist of locking/unlocking doors, open/closing playground, bathroom check (soap/towels), assisting with snack, library, sanitizing spray bottles, etc.

Hiring

The COJ! Preschool Director hires staff members that meet the requirements established by the COJ! Preschool Team and the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS). COJ! Preschool is an equal opportunity employer. Children of Joy! does not discriminate against any race, gender, ethnic background, creed, veteran status, age, disability, or religion.

When hired, employees must read and sign all COJ! Preschool personnel policies and contract.

Licensing requires that all new staff members without two years of prior experience in a preschool setting, or documentation of at least 25 clock hours of training from another preschool, must complete 24 hours of pre-service training. Staff should complete 8 hours of training prior to being in a classroom, with the remaining 16 hours completed within 90 days of employment.

Licensing Standards

All staff members are required by law to be familiar with and follow the "Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers" as provided by the Health and Human Services Commission. All staff must also complete Child Abuse and Neglect training yearly. SIDS, Shaken Baby, and Brain Development training must also be completed yearly by all 2 year old, 3 year old, Specials teachers, and substitutes.

Each teacher must complete a criminal background and an FBI fingerprinting check prior to working in a classroom. A college transcript/Degree (or a high school diploma) must also be on file with the office. Each teacher is to be certified in First Aid and CPR. The Preschool will make training arrangements once yearly. If the staff member cannot attend, it is up to the individual to attend training elsewhere, but it must be in person. Online trainings for First Aid/CPR will not be accepted. Each staff member is also required to attend a minimum of 25 hours of in-service training per year from the hire date, in addition to First Aid and CPR. TDPRS also requires that all staff without 2 years or more of prior licensed childcare experience or formal child development education training receive 24 hours of pre-service training in addition to the 25 hours of annual

training required. If the employee does not attend the training hours paid for by COJ!, the employee will reimburse the preschool for the cost of the class.

Work Schedule

COJ! Preschool will closely follow Conroe ISD calendar apart from starting and ending dates. The teachers' work schedule will be from 8:30 am - 2:30 pm. This is to allow time to set up and clean up the classroom. All teachers should be ready with centers and plans when the children arrive to use class time to facilitate and interact with the children. When possible, at least one teacher in the classroom should be eating with the children at lunchtime for interaction. Teachers are required to attend all regularly scheduled staff meetings, parent meetings, open houses, and other special events relating to the responsibilities of a COJ! Preschool teacher.

Teachers must sign in and out each day using ProCare as per licensing requirements.

Breaks

Break time will be either during outside time, during specials, or rest time with teachers alternating duty. At all other times, teachers are expected to be in the classroom. While outside time is a good opportunity to take a short restroom break, teachers are to remember it is an important time of interaction and management of the children, and their safety is extremely important. It is important to be extremely attentive and involved with the children when outside. Avoid cell phone usage during preschool hours.

Illnesses

COJ! Preschool staff are encouraged to remain at home if ill. If a staff member has fever over 100, diarrhea or vomiting, or other contagious symptoms, that staff member should remain home. They may not return to school until they are fever free and symptom free for 24 hours.

If a staff member is diagnosed with a contagious disease, the Director will notify the classroom families of the staff member with the contagious disease via email. The classroom teachers will clean and sanitize toys, objects, and surfaces daily and when soiled to help prevent the spread. The staff member will return to school once the disease is no longer contagious with a physician's note.

COJ! Preschool will encourage the use of protective medical equipment such as gloves, masks and hand sanitizer to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible disease.

Employee Vaccines

Getting vaccinated is one of the safest ways for you to protect your health. Vaccines help prevent getting and spreading serious diseases that could result in poor health, missed work, medical bills, and not being able to care for family.

COJ! employees are recommended to stay up to date with their vaccines including, but not limited to, influenza, Tdap and Hepatitis B. COJ! will not discriminate or take any retaliatory action against any employee who chooses not to receive vaccinations because of medical conditions or reasons of conscience. All employees, regardless of vaccination status, must protect children in their care from exposure to disease by using protective medical equipment, including masks and gloves, based on the level of risk the employee presents to the children. Failure to follow safety protocols may result in disciplinary action.

There is no statewide requirement for teachers or other school employees to have a tuberculin skin test or TB blood test. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DSHS discourage the use of tuberculin skin testing or IGRA blood test for persons who have no risk factors for TB exposure.

Substitutes

Illnesses and medical emergencies occur with staff and staff family members. If you know you are going to need to take off ahead of time, please complete an "Employee Absence" form with your substitutes name on it and turn it in to the Preschool Office. In the event it is an unplanned absence, please complete the "Employee Absence" form when you return to school. Please see the "Work Section" schedule on page 9 to review how many paid days off you receive each year.

The office maintains a list of approved substitutes, which is periodically updated. Whenever possible, Children of Joy! teachers are used as substitutes on their regularly scheduled days off. All teachers should secure their own substitutes. If this is not possible, due to last-minute illness, etc., the Director or designated staff member will call a substitute. Teachers should have a class list, class daily schedule, and a copy of their weekly lesson plan in their substitute folder kept in the classroom.

Employees are expected to find a substitute and notify the Director of their absence and substitute. Employees who are unable to report to work (sick or other unplanned absence) must notify the Director as soon as possible, but no later than an hour before their starting time. Each employee should give the reason for their absence and the expected length of absence on the Absence Form. If the employee has been denied time off, but is able to find a substitute, the employee must first present the plan to the Director for approval.

Sick/Personal Days

Sick/personal days used will be determined by the number of days worked: 3 days for a 2-day per week teacher, 4 days for a 3-day per week teacher, 5 days for a 4-day per week teacher and 6 days for a 5-day per week teacher. Any additional days taken will result in a prorated pay deduction.

COJ! staff may carry forward up to one-year worth of sick/personal time to the next year. All other time will be forfeited. Staff members also have the opportunity to donate unused sick/personal time to the Staff Bank. This time will be used for staff members with prolonged absences due to unforeseen circumstances.

Any planned vacations that require one or more weeks requested time off must be submitted at least one month prior to the planned vacation and approved by the Director. An assigned substitute must be in place prior to submitting the Absence Form for approval.

Any excessive days missed will require a conference with the Director. Excessive absences and habitual tardiness are causes for dismissal or non-renewal of contracts at the year's end.

Sick Leave

Employees who are ill and unable to perform their duties or pose a threat to others due to the contagious nature of their illness should follow the procedures listed above. At times, the Director may require a physician's explanation for illness or injury of the employee.

Disability Leave

A leave of more than five days, which may be necessary due to accident or illness, requires the submission of a doctor's statement. This must be submitted to the Director indicating the expected date of return.

In the case of a high-risk pregnancy. A doctor's note will be required for the employee to return to work.

Bereavement

Children of Joy! recognizes that bereavement is a difficult time for an employee. At the discretion of the Director and Preschool Team, employees who suffer the loss of a family member will be afforded reasonable time off. Every effort will be made to ensure that the employee is able to attend to necessary family matters without loss of earnings.

An employee may request up to **three** days off with pay. This request is granted at the discretion of the Director. Unusual circumstances, such as extended travel or complications, may warrant additional time off at the discretion of the Director. The immediate family member is considered to include the employee's spouse, children, parents, parents in law, grandparents, siblings or grandchildren.

Jury Duty

An employee is eligible for up to 6 hours of regular pay for time spent away from work due to jury duty. On the day the employee reports to jury duty, he or she is expected to come to work before or after reporting to jury duty if practicable.

Compensation

Compensation will be set at the time of employment. An individual's pay will be based on the teacher's qualifications, including years of experience, educational background, in-service training and professional growth, level of interest and enthusiasm, and responsibility assumed.

It is the intent of the Director and the COJ! Preschool Team to continually evaluate pay scales. Our goal is to do the most possible to hire and retain quality staff. Contracts and pay will be evaluated annually.

Payday is the 15th and 31st of each month. Paychecks are directly deposited unless otherwise specified.

All tuition and fees for the children of staff members will be automatically deducted from their paychecks.

Staff Benefits

COJ! Preschool staff are part-time employees of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church. Benefits offered to COJ! staff include:

- Staff employed 1 day or as a long-term substitute will receive a discount in the amount of 15% of their child's regularly priced tuition.
- Staff employed 2 or more days with the preschool will receive a discount in the amount of 30% of their child's regularly priced tuition for all children enrolled at the preschool. The multi-child discount does not apply to employees.
- Changes to the staff discount policy are at the discretion of Children of Joy! Preschool Team in conjunction with the Preschool Director.
- Enrollment priority.
- COJ! will pay for the cost of training up to 25 hours annually.

- COJ! will pay for staff to attend training outside of COJ! at Texas State Minimum wage for up to 10 hours.
- COJ! will compensate teachers for an extra work hour at the end of each month for planning and prep time.
- Personal/Sick days as outlined in contract and under Work Schedule information on pages 11-12.
- Five paid holidays annually.
    - New Year's Day
    - Memorial Day
    - Labor Day
    - Thanksgiving Day
    - Christmas Day

Contracts are negotiated in the spring. At that time, the current staff's needs are determined, as to number of days and age groups taught for the following school year. Current staff receive priority and their desires for the next school year are accommodated whenever possible.

Grievances

Employees who have complaints concerning other staff members or parents are to report such complaints to the Administration Team. If this is not appropriate, complaints can be brought to the church Pastor or COJ! Preschool Team. All complaints will be properly investigated. Employees must be aware that actions resulting from such complaints may not necessarily be made public.

Employee Discipline

All employees are required to follow all Children of Joy! School Policies and Procedures. When an employee disregards the guidelines and policies established by Children of Joy! or conducts herself/himself in a manner which is deemed unacceptable, the first approach (when practical) will be that of guidance. Counseling by the Administration or Program Director is intended to assist you in the correction of your conduct. All disciplinary procedures will be done in private.

1. The first infraction will lead to a conversation with the Administration/Program Director. This be willing a "verbal warning" that the behavior is not appropriate and corrective action may be taken. The conversation will be documented and signed by all people in attendance and placed in the employee's file.
2. The second infraction will lead to a "written warning" with a possible improvement plan put in place. If needed, additional classroom observations will be conducted. The discipline form will be signed by all people in attendance and placed in the employee's file. A copy will also be given to the employee.

3. The third infraction will lead to an additional warning and time off without pay. The Administration/Program Director will submit in writing a description of the behavior and the corrective disciplinary action needed.
4. The fourth infraction will result in termination of the employee. In the case of termination, notice will be in writing and signed by the Administration/Program Director and the employee.

These steps are meant to establish consistent guidelines to consider in conjunction with the severity of the offenses and the employee's personnel and performance records when administering discipline. We are not required to go through the entire four step process and discipline may begin or continue at any step depending on the severity of the infraction. The nature and severity of any violation can be of such a degree as determined by management to eliminate all steps and terminate immediately. An employee may be subject to appropriate discipline, including termination, rests solely in the discretion of the employer and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. All steps are documented in writing regardless of the phase of the process.

Problem Resolution

If there is a situation causing concern between staff and parents, staff and staff, or staff and Director, the following procedures should be followed.

1. Staff should schedule a conference with the other party to address their concern.
2. If the situation is still unresolved, schedule a meeting with both parties and the Director at which time a problem resolution form will be completed.
3. If the situation remains unresolved, the staff member(s) and Director will present the form to the Team leader.
4. If a resolution is not found, the conflict will be taken to the Pastor and SOJ! Church Council.

At any time in the process, the Pastor or a Team Member may be asked to accompany staff or parent into the conference.

Probation Period

The first 90 days of employment are probationary. During this time, the employee will be evaluated by the Director and complete a 90 Day Review to decide whether to continue employment, extend the probationary period, or terminate the employee.

Contracts, Termination and Resignation

The employment relationship is based on mutual consent of the employee and COJ!. COJ! Preschool staff are under contract for the school year, August through May. Either party may terminate that contract at will with written notice. However, there are

several situations that will result in immediate termination. Any physical, emotional or verbal abuse of a child or other staff member; neglect of a child and insubordination will all be grounds for immediate termination.

If an employee resigns/quits within 90 days of training, they will be required to repay any training fees back to COJ!.

Voluntary Termination

We recognize employees may choose to terminate employment at COJ!. If possible, employees are expected to make every effort to give two weeks' notice. At the discretion of COJ!, an employee may be asked to leave before the expiration of the notice.

Involuntary Termination

Involuntary termination is termination of the employment at-will relationship between the employee and COJ!. COJ! reserves the right to discharge or release any employee at any time, with or without cause. "Cause" means any act such as breach of professional ethics, dishonesty, negligence, sexual harassment, or any other unacceptable behavior which COJ!, as its discretion, seems harmful to the business.

Any staff member who is terminated or resigns from the Preschool must have Director approval for any items taken from the building. All staff owned items in the classroom must be clearly labeled with the staff member's name. Otherwise, all items not clearly labeled are assumed to be the property of COJ! Preschool and must be surrendered upon termination.

Children of Joy! is a non-profit religious organization and does NOT pay unemployment.

Employee Guidelines

Professional Practices

As a professional, you must strive to elevate the teaching profession. This is done every time you make a phone call to a parent or write a note home, every time you see a child at the grocery store or talk to parents at a school event.

The teaching profession is elevated every time you make a complimentary comment to a child. The profession is elevated when you promote the preschool rather than point out its faults. The profession is elevated when, although you may disagree with another teacher or the Director, your disagreement does not go beyond the preschool itself.

Children of Joy! preschool staff should treat each child and family record and all written information with confidentiality. Family information (including behavior and attitudes) is not to be discussed with other parents or non-staff in any manner, including on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter. The names, address, or phone numbers of enrolled families are to be used for Children of Joy! Preschool purposes only.

Children of Joy! staff are encouraged to establish and maintain a positive and professional level of communication with each parent.

Staff is not to discuss parents or staff in a negative manner with other parents or staff; any problems with parents or staff are to be discussed with the Director in order to resolve any difficulties. If a parent has a concern regarding the Preschool or a staff member, he or she is to be referred to the Director.

Background Check

After being hired, but prior to working with children, a Background Check must be completed by the Director. This is submitted through Texas Health and Human Services. This process includes providing specific information including your social security number and possibly having your fingerprints taken. Continued employment is contingent upon the results of the completed background check.

Staff Orientation and Evaluations

All employees will have an orientation before their first day of work. They will meet with the Director and review all Texas State Minimum Standards, AELL requirements, school policies, routines, and guidelines, as well as job descriptions and responsibilities. New employees will also be given a detailed tour of the building and training on the copy

machine and daily sign in/out procedures. Orientation checklists will be signed by the Director and the employee and kept in their personnel file.

New employees will also be assigned a mentor to work with during their first year of employment.

All employees will be observed by the Director at least one time per school year, and each classroom will be observed a minimum of two times per school year. The Director and classroom teacher will meet and review the observation together to discuss the observation and any changes that need to be made. All employees will receive a formal evaluation and conference with the Director at least once a year. Employees or the Director may request additional conferences at any time during the year and are encouraged to do so.

According to the evaluation and conference results, pay increase, rehiring or termination will be decided.

In-service Guidelines, Training & Workshops

1. In-service at COJ! means reading, attending workshops and conferences, etc., to gain information to use in the classroom. If you attend a workshop, it must be documented. Certificates are usually given for workshops attended. The original certificate remains in your training file. Please hand in all certificates to the Director as soon as possible.

2. COJ! will pay all usual and customary expenses for employee training hours up to the required amount of 25 hours. Employees are only paid for training, not for their hourly wage. If an employee is unable to attend a training, he/she has previously registered for, advance notice must be given in order to obtain a substitute attendee. If advance notice is not given, employees will be asked to reimburse COJ! for the cost of the training.

3. Variety: 25 hours must consist of at least 2 different methods of training
    a. Educational and professional magazines (Young Children, Dimensions, Texas Child Care) are available in the office. These journals have a variety of ideas for class time enrichment.
    b. Professional development and reference books are also available for checkout many of which have short tests you complete and send in to receive a certificate of training. This time is considered "self-instructional training", and you may count a maximum of 12 hours of in any one year.
    c. In-house in-service opportunities.
    d. Workshops at all educational conferences like TWELC and PTAC are excellent opportunities for professional growth.

e. Online educational resources like EdWeb are excellent opportunities for staff training.
f. 25 hours are required yearly from each employee's hire date. No exceptions are made. This is a licensing requirement.
g. New teachers who do not have two years' prior experience in childcare or education will be required to attend 25 hours of pre-service training in addition to the 24 hours of in-service the first year.
h. All staff members in charge of a group of children must have First Aid and CPR certification which needs to be renewed every two years.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are held throughout the year and are mandatory. In case of illness or emergency, the employee must give notification to the Director. Staff meetings provide an opportunity for disseminating information, sharing ideas, and giving support. They will be announced in a timely manner and any issue(s) a teacher wants to address can be put on the agenda at the discretion of the Director. All employees will be paid for attendance.

Cell Phones and 2-Way Radios

It is important that every staff member's attention always remains on the children. Any distraction could result in a serious injury that could have been prevented with appropriate supervision. Therefore, cell phones are not permitted anywhere that children may be. Cell phones are placed in silent mode, out of sight in the classroom (purse, cabinet, closet, etc.) or in the designated "phone holder," located in the Administrative Office. It is never appropriate to use your cell phone to make personal calls, send and/or receive text messages, check voicemail or emails, take photos, etc. while in the presence of children.

Staff members have access to their phones when they are not supervising children or have children in the classroom. You may check your phone throughout the day you see fit. You may use your phone in the office areas, outside front porch areas, or in an empty classroom with the door closed at your discretion. You may NOT use your cell phone in the hallways or classrooms while children are present. If you are experiencing a situation that may require immediate attention, you may leave your phone with an Administrator, and we will notify you of any incoming calls that may require your attention. If you need us to step into your class, we are happy to do so.

Please ensure anyone who may need to reach you has the phone number of the Preschool (936.242.1826). Should the office receive any phone calls throughout the day, you will be notified immediately and if needed, someone will step into your classroom until you are able to return.

*During field trips, staff members may take their cell phones for emergency purposes, but the phones must be kept in the red pouch inside the Emergency "Go" Bags (see below) and kept silent or turned off.

Fit Bits and other tracking devices may be worn if you do not send or receive phone calls or text messages.

Smart Watches (such as Apple Watches) must be in airplane mode. These devices may be worn for tracking purposes only and should not be used to send/receive phone calls and/or text messages.

Each classroom will have an Emergency "Go" Bag, which will include a first aid kit, flashlight, door stop, whistle, crisis manual, emergency contact information for their class families and a school cell phone, which has been preprogrammed with the school, church and Administrative phone numbers. These bags will be carried with you as you travel throughout the school each day (playground, gym, Spanish/Chapel, etc.). An updated copy of your class roster may be added to the backpack.

2-Way radios are supplied to each classroom and should be carried at all times with the volume turned up loud enough to be heard over the children or other sounds. These devices will be used to announce school drills, emergency communication as well as communication with other staff members. Please be respectful at all times and remember, you are being heard throughout the building when you speak.

2-Way radios charging stations are located in the classrooms and it is the responsibility of the teachers to ensure their device is charged each day. In the event your device malfunctions, we do have extra 2-Way radios located in the office. Please ask an Administrator before checking them out.

Communication and Confidentiality

COJ! staff is to maintain a professional attitude toward each other, the parents, and children. The respect and integrity of each person is critical, and a part of the atmosphere desired in the church and school.

If a teacher has a valid concern about another staff member, parent, or child, it is imperative that a conference be held with the Director. When a concern is expressed, the Director will hold that information in confidence and handle the necessary changes or communication with a high level of professionalism.

Staff are expected to maintain confidentiality with regards to school issues and family information during the time they are employed at COJ! and after their employment tenure has ended. All records, files, conversations and conferences are kept

confidential, except as necessary to meet our obligations under the law for external reviews, such as through (AELL) Association of Early Learning Leaders Accreditation.

In handling team teaching situations, if conflict arises, first teachers need to try to work out issues together. Be honest about feelings and concerns. Try solutions that will be helpful to both parties. If the situation becomes uncomfortable, schedule a time with the Director to mediate and help with problem solving.

Any parent who has a question or concern about COJ! policies and procedures should contact the Director to schedule a meeting.

Custody Arrangements

In the event of a current or ongoing custody situation, any custody agreements or court documents detailing the custodial arrangements for children at the Preschool must be on file in the Director's Office. These documents change often; the Preschool must have the most recent copy on file. A parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled at Children of Joy! who is not the child's residential parent shall be permitted unlimited access to the school and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent unless a protective order is on file. In the event that the school has not met the parent, he/she will be asked to provide identification prior to visiting or picking up the child.

Texas Health & Human Services, the agency responsible for overseeing the licensing of childcare centers, has determined that it is the facility's position to enforce a Court Order.

Upon receipt of a valid court order signed by a judge that prohibits a parent from removing the named child or children from the child-care center, the child-care center must:

- Comply with the court order immediately and until
    - Receipt of a subsequent court order that revokes the primary order; OR
    - The court order expires as defined in the document.
- Maintain a copy of the court order in the child's file.

If the situation arises, Children of Joy! will immediately contact the local police through the non-emergency line and advise them of the situation.

Social Media

COJ! respects the right of employees to use social media during non-working hours. However, because the nature of these sites is essentially public, certain guidelines apply:

- COJ! employees are personally responsible for the content that they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish on a social media network, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. is viewed not only by the intended recipient but any and all individuals who have access to that individual's account.
- Remember your association and responsibility with COJ! in online social environments. If you identify yourself as a COJ! employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents and students. Even if you do not specifically identify yourself as an employee of COJ!, remember that those viewing your online postings may already know that you are a COJ! employee.
- When contributing online, never post confidential student information such as names, school names, addresses or phone numbers.
- When uploading digital photos to your social media sites, be sure that you do not post photos of your students and do not post photos of other staff members without their express approval.
- Concerns that you may have with the policies of COJ! should not be aired publicly on social networking sites.

Any violations of the aforementioned social networking policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, formal written notice or termination of employment.

Babysitting/Nannying

Parents may request and employ COJ! staff to independently perform childcare services on their own time. Both parties (family and staff) must understand COJ! bears absolutely no legal or professional responsibility for such private, independent "babysitting" arrangements.

COJ! does not approve or give references for any COJ! staff member to do private child care for families who are part of COJ!.

Dress Code

Just as we encourage the children to dress appropriately for play activities at school, we expect teachers to also dress appropriately. Teachers are encouraged to dress comfortably yet professionally. You need to be able to get down on the floor and interact with children or engage in not-so-neat activities, yet still portray the professional appearance of a teacher. As a representative of Children of Joy! Preschool and Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church, you should dress accordingly.

- Inappropriate attire includes:
    - Tank tops or tops with spaghetti straps
    - Warm-up suits and wind suits

    - See-through blouses
    - Pajamas (except on special days)
    - Any underwear/undergarments showing
    - Short shorts
    - Any other clothing deemed inappropriate by the Director or Administration Team
- Appropriate shoes will be worn. Staff will be on the playground each day and will want to keep that in mind regarding what shoes are worn.
- If your attire interferes with the instruction, performance, or safety of the students the Director will intervene at his/her discretion.
- All employees will limit their use of perfume/cologne out of respect for others.

Gang Free Zone

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of Children of Joy!! Preschool.

Like the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

Drug Free Zone

Children of Joy!/Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church are alcohol-free, tobacco-free, drug-free zones. These substances are prohibited in the school building and on school grounds (including parking lots).

- Staff are prohibited from abusing prescription medications or being in any manner under the influence of a chemical that impairs or could impair the individual's ability to provide services or care while they are directly responsible for the children.
- No smoking, vaping, or e-cigarettes are allowed in the Spirit of Joy/Children of Joy! facility and on the grounds.

Gun Free Zone

Texas Minimum Standards and Texas Penal Code state that firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises.

Handwashing Procedures

All staff members should wash their hands several times a day. Washing your hands, and the children's hands, regularly with soap and water can protect everyone from many illnesses caused by viruses and bacteria.

All staff are required to wash your hands at these times:

- Every day when entering the classroom
- Before making or serving food or giving medication. Also wear food service gloves when serving food.
- After handling bodily fluids (i.e., nose blowing, coughing in hand, touching mucus, blood or vomit, tending sores, wiping noses, mouths or bottoms)
- After using the bathroom or assisting a child in the bathroom
- After playing outdoors
- After taking out garbage or soiled diapers
- After changing a child's soiled/wet diaper or clothing
- After eating or drinking
- After handling any raw food products
- After using any cleaners or toxic chemicals
- After removing gloves

Teaching children to properly wash their hands will be included in every classroom's curriculum. The staff will assist children with handwashing as needed. Hand sanitizer may only be used on children 24 months or older. However, soap and water is the preferred method for handwashing.

Food and Meal Service Practices

COJ! does not provide snacks or meals. Families will provide a nut free snack and lunch daily. When assisting with handling or opening food, please wash your hands before putting on food service gloves and again when gloves are removed. Please follow all handwashing procedures as listed above.

Health Checks, Illnesses and Contagious Diseases

If a child comes to school ill, or showing signs of illness, they will be brought to the Preschool Office for a temperature and symptom check. If there is a fever over 100, then the child will remain in the office and the parents/guardians will be notified to come and pick them up. They may not return to school until they are fever free, without the use of fever reducing medicine, for 24 hours.

If a child is diagnosed with a contagious disease, the Director will notify the classroom families of the child or staff member with the contagious disease via email. The classroom teachers will clean and sanitize toys, objects, and surfaces daily and when

soiled to help prevent the spread. The child will return to school once the disease is no longer contagious with a physician's note.

Pesticides

Pesticides are applied quarterly after school hours. There are no pesticides applied while the children are in attendance. If you notice any unwanted pests inside, or on the playground, please notify the Preschool Office so the Pest Control Company can be contacted to come out and complete a service.

Accidents and Medical

Any accident concerning a teacher, child, or visitor must be reported immediately to the Director. Accident reports should be filled out and filed in the office for any accident that requires anything more than tender loving care. If a child receives an injury to the head, the Director will immediately notify the parent, regardless of severity.
We will Administration medication on a limited basis. Some examples are breathing treatments, inhalers, epi pens, Benadryl, or other maintenance medications. All medications must be signed into the office. If a parent requests that the child receive medication, please refer them to the Director.

Epi pens will be Administered by a staff member when an emergency anaphylaxis reaction occurs if they have a medically prescribed epi pen. All children with epi pens must always have one in the building and are kept in a locked box in the child's classroom. They must not be expired and disposed of properly if used or out of date. We do not have unassigned epi pens in the building.

Professional Development Plan

Staff IPDP (Professional Development Plans) are created by each employee based on their strengths, weaknesses, or areas of improvement. This plan is approved by the Director and will be completed yearly. This written plan will incorporate goals, training completed to reach goals, and review checks with the Director. Employees are responsible for their own training, ensuring it aligns with their professional development goals. These hours may be counted in the 25 yearly required training hours.

Employee Responsibilities

The goal of Children of Joy! is to allow each teacher the freedom to operate her classroom successfully within the guidelines set by COJ!, the State of Texas and AELL. Hopefully, each room will project the personality and creativity of each teacher.

Our guiding premise at COJ! is that children first and foremost need to feel love and trust in our setting. We will maintain a loving Christian atmosphere with each other, the families, and children. We are respectful and inclusive of all religious philosophies, yet we remain a Christian school as we are a ministry of Spirit of Joy! Lutheran Church.

Our educational philosophy is that young children learn the most and best through play. We provide age-appropriate activities and toys to promote active learning for children. To support our program and philosophy, please note the following guidelines:

1. Communication and Continuity
    a. Teacher to Teacher – planning and day to day sharing
    b. Director to Teacher
    c. Teacher to Director
    d. Teacher to Parent – notes, handouts, evaluations, day to day
    e. Teacher to Child

2. Room arrangement – 6 basic centers (dramatic play, blocks, art, manipulatives, library, discovery/science) and a sensory bin. Three and four-year-old classes are strongly encouraged to incorporate math into the manipulative center and set up an age-appropriate writing center.

3. Active learning – hands on activities instead of teacher lectures or patterns, handouts, or worksheets. Worksheets should be limited to 1 per day for the Pre-K and Transition classes only. Coloring sheets are not to be used!! Children need to touch, taste, feel, smell and experience learning. We need to always be more concerned with the process rather than the product (i.e., avoid something cute that the parent can recognize but that the teacher largely made).

4. Developmentally appropriate
    a. Lesson plans
        i. Turned in at least 2 weeks prior to Director
        ii. Detailed enough for a substitute to follow and includes cognitive, social/emotional, physical, language and fine motor skills
        iii. Includes goals, adaptations/accommodations and for each child in the classroom, in addition to evaluation of weekly plans.
        iv. Positive self-concept is always a priority.

v. Use TEA criteria and developmental guidelines.
vi. Art – process orientated. Do not use look alike art. It should be the children's creation. We need to always be more interested in the process and what the children are learning. Always ask," What are the children learning or enjoying about this activity?"
vii. There are resources available in the main preschool office.

5. If you have questions about classroom management, art, literature, small group experiences, or centers please ask.

6. Bulletin boards are to reflect the creativity of the children and the philosophy of COJ!

MOST OF ALL LOVE CHILDREN AND HAVE FUN!!!

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on developmentally appropriate practices while integrating Christian principles and values. Child-directed, child initiated, teacher supported play-based hands-on learning is an essential part of the Children of Joy! program. The children will enjoy a classroom setting rich with exploration and involvement with adults and other children.

We strive to meet the needs of all children in a variety of learning environments. The children will be given learning opportunities using individual, parallel, and cooperative play experiences. By using a variety of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities, the children are actively engaged in gross and fine motor activities, teacher and child led learning experiences, process art, dramatic play, building, constructing, problem solving, discovery, social interaction, and language development daily.

Fine motor development is the foundation of handwriting. Children of every age at Children of Joy! practice fine motor skills daily to foster and grow the muscles necessary for handwriting in various ways such as lacing, beading, manipulating playdough, using tweezers, etc. These activities build on the development of our handwriting program, Learning Without Tears. This program is introduced at age Three and carried on through our Transition program to teach child upper and lower case letter and number recognition, sound, and formation.

Our small class sizes allow for children to receive one on one time with the classroom teachers and develop relationships with them and their classmates while working towards meeting their individual learning needs. Teachers build unique lesson plans and classroom layouts based on developmentally appropriate practices to meet the needs of all children and their different learning styles.

Detailed curriculum and assessments for each age group can be requested at any time in the Preschool Office.

Attendance

Teachers are to check attendance daily. Using the ProCare app, teachers will check students in and out daily on their classroom iPads.

Lesson Planning

The preschool has a working curriculum plan that includes goals, objectives and examples of concepts and activities. These guidelines and the developmental needs of the child provide the basis for lesson plans.

Lesson plans will be done weekly with plans turned in two weeks in advance. The plans must be complete, neatly written, and appropriate for the intended classroom. One copy of the week's plan should be posted in the classroom, one in the additional class binder in the back office, and one copy should be turned in to the Director. The Director will check lesson plans weekly. Lesson plans should also include goals, adaptations and accommodations for each child in the classroom. These should be updated monthly as well as evaluations. An activity plan will also be posted in each classroom.

Lesson plans will be made available to families on a weekly basis.

Daily Schedule and Active Play

A daily schedule is to be posted for each classroom, one copy will be given to the Director, and one copy given to each parent. The daily schedule must be approved by the Director before posting. All efforts must be made to adhere as closely as possible to the daily schedule. However, keep in mind that if children are enjoying an activity and it is appropriate and doesn't interfere with another class's schedule, flexibility is appropriate.

Outdoor play provides greater freedom and flexibility, fuller expression through loud talk, and greater range of active movement. Outdoor play extends opportunities for large muscle development, social-emotional development, and small muscle development by offering variety, challenge, and complexity in ways that are not attainable in a confined indoor space. We will provide a balance of active and quiet play that incorporates groups and individual activities, both indoors and outdoors with a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity for toddlers, and 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity for pre-kindergarten age children. Physical activity may be in a structured environment such as Music & Movement or Circle Time, or in an unstructured environment such as Playground Time or Centers. During days of

inclement or extreme weather, active play must occur in an indoor setting. This space can be in the classroom, gathering space or gymnasium. Please encourage children to wear closed-toe shoes and play clothes to allow them to participate freely and safely in all physical activities.

Transition Planning

Children can transition to a new classroom (age up) at the beginning of the school calendar year. Children will remain in the same aged classroom during the school calendar year, unless otherwise approved by the Director. During registration in January/February, families can choose to enroll in the new classroom for the next school year.

Ages for classes are as follows:
Toddlers/Twos: 18 months by September 1st
Threes: Age 3 by November 15th
PreK- Age 4 by November 15th
Transition: Age 5 by November 15th

Screenings

Hearing, vision, speech and language screenings are mandatory for all PreK students. Webster Therapy will conduct all hearing and vision screenings, and Yvonne Avocato will conduct speech and language screenings in the fall. Any child that fails a hearing or vision screening will have to follow up with their child's physician. For failed speech and language screenings, a follow-up or recheck will be recommended to the parent.

iPad Policies and Procedures

The following policies will go into effect immediately regarding the use of iPads within the classroom.

1. All iPads are to be stored in the office each day and may be checked-out each day for classroom use.
2. All iPads are to be used on COJ! campus only. They may not be removed from the school for any reason.
3. Teachers are responsible for keeping the iPad secure and in working condition. Take every precaution to prevent loss, theft or damage.
4. In the event you lose, misplace or have the iPad stolen while in your possession and signed out to you, please notify the Director immediately. Find My iPhone will be used to help recover the device. Teachers will be responsible for paying the $500 replacement for any iPad that is lost or stolen while signed out to them.

5. iPads are intended for use within the classroom and are for educational/teacher purposes only. Please do not load games or apps that have not been approved through the Director. (i.e., Facebook, games, etc.)
6. Children under 2 years of age may not use the iPad.
7. When used as a center, iPads should have a time limit for each child depending on the activity and the age of the child. No more than one hour of screen time is permitted per day.
8. Any videos being presented to the children need to be viewed in their entirety for content, language, etc. prior to showing to the children. No exceptions!
9. You may take photos and videos of your classroom, but please keep in mind any students who do not have photo consent on file.

Should you have questions or concerns regarding the iPads, or their uses, please feel free to bring it to our attention at any time.

Discipline and Guidance

Discipline and guidance should be consistent and based on an understanding of the child's needs and development. Discipline means to teach. It is our goal to teach children responsible and appropriate behavior. We consider ourselves partners with parents in this job.

Discipline at COJ! is done in a way that promotes self-discipline and positive self-esteem. We want to help children learn to make healthy choices. There will be no cruel, harsh or unusual punishment, and no child shall ever receive corporal punishment. Parents may provide guidance to their own children while they are in care, however, they must adhere to all state licensing guidelines.

The methods of dealing with inappropriate behavior at school are to:

- First make sure all children are safe.
- Teachers need to try problem solving with children to find solutions. Other techniques include giving choices, providing an adequate variety of materials and activities for the children to choose from, or redirecting children to other areas.
- With unmanageable or difficult behavior, in which a child will not respond to normal classroom guidance, a brief supervised time away from the group with a teacher or the Director may be necessary.
- Should further guidance be needed, the parent may be asked to cooperate with the school in letting the child go home for the remainder of that day, at the time of the child's inappropriate behavior.

If positive guidance techniques are not successful, based on teacher and Director discretion, a child may be asked to leave the program. Any suspension or expulsion

from the program will be a last resort after all other discipline and guidance options are exhausted.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited.

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Grabbing or pulling a child
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet
- Placing a child in a restrictive device for time out
- Withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out that is consistent with §746.2803(4)(D) of this subchapter (relating to What methods of discipline and guidance may a caregiver use?)
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age

Parent Communication

ProCare is our main method of communication with families. Daily messages, photos, and incident reports are to be sent through ProCare.

All teachers should send home occasional notes describing something the child has done, experienced, and/or enjoyed. These notes should be positive in nature. Toddlers/Twos teachers will send home daily reports. Three's Teachers will utilize a daily report from August through December. Beginning in January Three's teachers may change to a weekly report. PreK and transition teachers will send home weekly reports. Parents appreciate knowing what songs, books, and activities you are utilizing. At the beginning of each month, teachers will send home a classroom newsletter, lesson plan outline or bullet points, calendar of events, and the school newsletter. Classroom awards will be used at the discretion of each teacher.

Materials and Resources

1. Books and puzzles are to be changed out often to provide new and interesting items for the children. Return all items back to their appropriate place on the bookshelves when finished.

2. Classroom toys are available in the closets in the hall. Teachers are also welcome to exchange items between classrooms. Items were purchased for the preschool in general and not a particular classroom. Before exchanging toys, however, make sure that the toys you are getting are age appropriate. Soft plastic toys should be PVC free. All toys should be lead free, this includes toys made in other countries such as Mexico and China.

3. Art supplies are located in the closets in the hall. Please take only what you will be using for the day or week. Do not hoard supplies. If we need more, we will order more. Children of Joy! will not purchase art or craft materials containing hazardous materials including solvents, inks and lead.

4. A supply list will be kept, and periodic orders will be made. If you need special items plan so these items can be ordered. Please try to use items in the supply cabinets when planning for the month. It is up to each teacher to look to see if we have the supplies before requesting to have it purchased.

All classroom supply items will be purchased by the classroom teacher and reimbursed (minus the tax) by the school each month.

Furnishing, Equipment and Materials Safety

All classroom furniture and equipment should be inspected daily upon arrival in the classroom. Any furniture, equipment or materials that are cracked or broken should be removed from the classroom. Please inform the Director of any safety hazards or broken furniture immediately. All chemicals and personal electronic devices must be stored out of sight and reach of the children. Any cabinets at a child's level must have child locks installed on them.

Water Table Policy

Children must wash their hands before and after they play at the water table. Require the children to wash with soap and water at the sink. Do this from the beginning of the year so that a routine is established.

Room Check List

- Paint supplies (brushes, containers, smocks, easels) need to be clean and put away…not left in sink.

- The sink in the classroom needs to be scrubbed and the cabinet wiped at the end of each art or cooking activity.

- Blocks are to be placed in an orderly fashion on the block shelf.

- Dramatic play items are to be put up neatly and rotated neatly.
- Chairs need to be stacked at the end of the day – never while children are in the classroom.
- Cubbies are to be cleared each Friday.
- Tables are to be sanitized, clear and clean of trash and sticky residue.
- Dishes and utensils are to be thoroughly washed and returned to the proper place in the kitchen.
- Be mindful of how you attach decorations to the walls so that not too much damage is done. Any damage to the walls will be repaired before leaving for summer break. Please use sticky tack opposed to staples on the walls.
- Sand and water tables are to be left free of debris on Fridays.
- Hallways are to be left clear of debris, clothing and schoolwork each day.
- Outdated notes are to be removed from bulletin boards.
- Classrooms are to be vacuumed at the end of the day if they have an excess of debris. All playdough and paint should be removed from the carpet.
- Closets and cabinets are to be left clean, organized, and neat.
- Classroom doors are to be closed and lights are to be turned off at the end of the day.

Field Trips

PreK and Transition classes are encouraged to take walking fields during the school year. Field trips can include parks and local businesses within walking distance. Field trips must have prior approval by the Director. All children must have a signed consent form and a field trip shirt to participate in field trips. There must also be 1 adult for every 2 children attending the field trip. Teachers will take their "Go bags," medical information for each child, and a first aid kit on all field trips. One member of the Administration team will also accompany the class on field trips.

Classroom Parties/Room Moms/Parent Participation

Each classroom will have at least one designated Room Mom for the school year. The Room Mom(s) will oversee planning classroom parties and special activities. Other parents may participate on our Preschool Team, or by bringing in special treats, or reading to the class. Parents may never be left unattended with the children in the classroom.

Clothing and Toilet Training

Children should be dressed comfortably for messy, active play. For safety purposes, it is necessary that your child wear athletic-type shoes. Children will be playing outside daily; therefore, closed-toed athletic-type shoes would be the most appropriate. All outdoor clothing must be clearly marked with the child's name. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing.

All children should have a complete change of clothes in case of accidents. Clothing should be comfortable, easy for the child to manage (buttons in front, elastic waist bands, etc.). Remind families to please dress children who are not toilet trained in clothing that will easily accommodate diaper changing, and to send in disposable diapers/pull-ups and a supply of wipes for their child.

Classroom teachers will assist families in the toilet training process during the school day and encourage children in the Three-Year-old classrooms who are not toilet trained to use the toilet during changing times.

All children enrolled in the Pre-K or Transition program must be toilet trained before the start of the school year. Children who are not toilet trained by PreK will be considered on a case by case basis.

Diapering

Staff who work in rooms with children who are in diapers or pull-ups must be trained in the proper diapering procedures. They must show an understanding of the diapering policy and be able to properly change diapers.

1. Wash your hands before and after you change diapers.
2. Change diapers in the restrooms with toilets available.
3. Get down to the child's level. You may sit in a chair or on a step stool or on the floor.
4. Wear gloves when removing the soiled diaper.

5. Have the child stand in front of you during the diaper change. Have the child hold-up their shirt to involve them in the process. As their skills improve, you may also ask them to pull down their pants/shorts.

6. Once the diaper is off, use wipes to clean them thoroughly. This process may take several wipes to ensure they are completely clean. (If a child has had a BM, you may choose to lay them down on a changing pad to make sure they are completely clean).

7. Once the child is clean, you may throw away the diapers and wipes. (Have a bag with you to put diapers/wipes/gloves in; throw away bag when finished).

8. Before putting on the clean diaper, offer to have the child use the toilet. If they choose not to, then move to the next step. If they choose to sit only, give them a few minutes to get used to the toilet. You may encourage them to use the bathroom, but do not require them to do so. If they do use the bathroom, a natural reward system should be used – such as being able to flush the potty. Encourage them to wipe themselves when they are done and help them to make sure they are clean. Once the child is clean, you may remove your gloves.

9. With clean hands, you may open the new diaper and put it on the child with them standing up. Remember to have them hold up their shirt. As their skills improve, you may have them pull their pants/shorts up by themselves.

10. Once finished, ask the child to wash their hands and help them if necessary.

11. If a mat was used, you will need to sanitize it with DSD or Nu-Quat.

12. Please dispose of all diapers, wipes and gloves in a covered trash can.

Sanitation, Health, Safety and Recycling

1. All teachers must keep gloves in the classroom. DO NOT TOUCH BLOOD OR OTHER BODILY FLUIDS WITH BARE HANDS. In case of an incident that involves bodily fluids, the teacher should follow universal precautions to protect themselves and other children. All hazardous waste must be disposed of.

2. All teachers must carry "Go Bags" whenever they leave the classroom. These bags must include:

    - Children's emergency information and roster
    - Go Phone
    - Flashlight
    - Insect Repellant (Cutters Skinsations Insect Repellant)
        - Only apply on clothes when outside unless otherwise directed by the parent
        - Parents may provide their own brand to be used. Please label the bottle and keep in "Go Bag"

- Sunscreen (Banana Boat Kids Sport)
    - Apply as needed when outside
    - Parents may provide their own brand to be used. Please label the bottle and keep in "Go Bag"
- First Aid Kit
- Copy of the Crisis Management Plan

3. Wash toys and equipment using our Nu-Quat and D-S-D Disinfectant system. Nu-Quat is used for general daily sanitizing and cleaning of tables, chairs, sinks, etc. It kills all cold/flu viruses. DSD is used to clean all toys and items that might go into children's mouths. DSD will kill all blood-borne pathogens. Each classroom has a spray bottle for each solution and can use the machine in the kitchen to fill their bottles with the pre-mixed solution. When sanitizing large quantities of toys, you will fill the sink with DSD and dip the toys and then allow them to air dry. Do not use aerosol cleaners.

4. Wipe tables with Nu-Quat spray each morning upon arrival, before and after snack and lunch, and at the end of each day.

5. Classrooms must be kept reasonably clean. Floors should be swept or vacuumed, and toys picked up after use.

6. All cleaners should be stored in their original labeled bottle and kept in locked cabinets out of the reach of the children.

7. If you use stuffed animals, use only ones you can wash and wash them weekly.

8. Wash dramatic play dishes, play food and dress up clothes on a weekly basis.

9. Our complete first aid kit is kept in the laundry room with a list of included supplies. Bandages, cotton balls and disinfectant spray are kept in the playground bag and refilled as needed.

10. An allergy list will be distributed to each teacher. It should be posted in the classroom in a place where it can easily be seen. A copy must be kept in the substitute teacher's folder.

11. Windows must remain locked and closed throughout the day.

12. Each classroom is equipped with a trash can and recycling bin. Please recycle appropriate materials in the classroom, work area, and kitchen.

Portfolios

Portfolio records will be kept on each child in the classroom to document development. It is the teachers' responsibility to design, implement, and maintain the portfolios . Some items that may go in the portfolio include artwork, anecdotal records and developmental assessments. Folders, file boxes, etc. will be provided by the COJ! office. Portfolios are to be kept in the classroom.

Observations and Assessments

Observations are vital to understanding the progress your students are making each day. Teachers are required to keep formal and informal observation notes of each of their students in the classroom during the school year. These observations are used to collect data for assessments.

There are times when teachers notice children struggling in the classroom. If you notice a child is struggling, please inform the Director to get some adaptations. If the adaptations are not working after two weeks, the Director will come in and formally observe the child. After the observation, the teachers and Director will come up with a plan to help the child be more successful. In some cases, a parent conference may be needed. These observations are kept in the child's file.

Each child will have a formal assessment completed twice a year (fall and spring). Data for the assessments should be collected over time and not always done on a one-to-one interaction, or by using "flash cards" to check for understanding. All assessments should be typed and reviewed and signed by the Director before being sent home. Fall assessments will be sent home and it will be at the Parent's discretion if a conference is needed. Spring assessments will be accompanied by a Parent/Teacher conference.

Building Security and Safety

Employees are the first line of security for the children at COJ!. You are expected to stop anyone who is at the school that you do not know and ask for identification and how you can help them. It is our responsibility to ensure the safest environment for all children and staff.

All doors are locked at 8:45 and will be unlocked at 1:45. Visitors may only enter using the door under the covered walkway during school hours. A member of the Administration team will allow parents to enter the building. Teachers are not permitted to open doors for parents or visitors. This allows the Administration team to always know who is in the building.

Parents and visitors are also required to sign in upon entering the building. If you see a parent or visitor at the side door, please direct them to the covered entrance, do not let them in the building.

During afternoon dismissal, a staff member will be stationed at the side entrance for additional security. Any person who is unknown must be asked to show identification before entering the building to pick up a child.

Emergency Procedures

Employees must be familiar with the primary and alternate evacuation routes. Each classroom will have a map posted. In the case of a fire or fire drill, follow designated paths as posted in your classroom. Each month we will conduct a school-wide fire drill. "Code Red" will be announced, and all children will be evacuated from the building calmly and quickly to designated safe areas. Children are to be counted before and after exiting the building. Teachers must take a class list and emergency contact information when exiting the classroom.

Employees must have knowledge of the proper operation of a fire extinguisher.

Tornado drills will be conducted every three months. Children will move to the inner hallway and duck and cover. In addition, we will perform a "prepare to evacuate" drill twice yearly.

Each classroom is equipped with a working flashlight for use during fire drills and power outages.

Fire drill and disaster drill procedures should be discussed with the children frequently so they will not be fearful of the procedure.

Staff should be familiar with the COJ! Crisis Management Plan and Color-Coded System. A full copy of this plan is located in your Classroom Binder.

All emergency plans and procedures are posted in the classroom and any area used by staff or children. Please see drill codes below that are posted in each classroom. Drill codes are as follows:

- Code Red- Fire (practiced through monthly drills)
- Code Green- Weather Emergency (practiced through quarterly drills)
- Code Orange- Shelter in Place (only used when needed)
- Code Yellow- Lock Down (practiced through quarterly drills)
- Code Black- Evacuation Due to Intruder (Practiced through annual drills)
- Code Blue- Medical Emergency (only used when needed)

Children of Joy! Preschool also has a *Crisis Management Plan* that has been evaluated by the Montgomery County Fire Battalion Chief which gives detailed instructions for handling the following types of emergencies: intruders, shelter-in-place, evacuation to alternate locations, fire, bomb threats, severe weather alerts, chemical spills, power outages, threatening and/or violent behavior, civil disturbances, medical emergencies, accidents, injuries or deaths, suspicious packages, and school closings. A copy of the plan may be obtained from the Preschool Office.

Procedure for Reporting Abuse and Neglect

According to Texas law: "Reporting abuse and neglect: Texas law requires caregivers to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation directly to the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline. Department of Family and Protective Services or law enforcement. Call 1-800-252-5400 to make confidential reports. An employee may not delegate the responsibility to make a report, and you may require an employee to seek approval to file a report or notify you that a report was made. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime. Employers are prohibited from retaliating against caregivers who make reports in good faith." Reports and information are located at www.hhsc.state.tx.us. This information is required to always be posted in the school. It can also be found in your staff binders.

Parents may also access the Texas Minimum Standards at any time online at https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf

DO NOT LEAVE ANY CHILD UNATTENDED IN A CAR FOR ANY AMOUNT OF TIME; IT IS AGAINST THE LAW.

Procedure for Staff Allegation Concerning Abuse and Neglect

All COJ! staff need to be aware of the risks associated with working with young children on a one-to-one basis. Whenever possible, staff members should conduct their classes to avoid being alone with a child during toileting and other times, in order to protect the staff from any accusations of abuse or neglect. When this is not possible, staff members should take any measure practical in order to protect themselves, such as leaving the classroom or bathroom door open, asking another staff member to accompany them, etc. However, the privacy of young children should also be respected and maintained. Staff members who work in rooms without another staff person present should remain as visible as possible according to their particular room configuration.

Should a staff member receive an allegation concerning abuse or neglect from a parent, they are to immediately report this to the Director. In addition, if the Director receives a report on staff, the matter will be fully investigated. The Director will

interview all parties and will consult with the Children of Joy! Preschool Team in order to have a fair and open investigation. If necessary, outside investigation will be welcomed.

Liability

Lawsuits are common. Protect yourself from liability:

- **NEVER** leave your class without supervision.
- Do not allow yourself to be visiting with other staff and not watching the children!
- During outside play time, never leave the class without a teacher. Always station yourself where you can see all the kids and watch them. If they are spread out on the playground, move about, and monitor them carefully.
- When you are angry, think before you touch a child.
- If you see a hazard, or a potential hazard, bring it to the attention of the Director.
- Cell phones and personal electronic devices should never be used while you are teaching, caring for, and supervising children.

If a situation occurs where suspicion of an employee is warranted, formal drug testing may be required of the employee. Positive results may result in termination of employment.

Supervision

All children must always be under an employee's supervision. All children, toddlers and preschool age must always be supervised by sight and sound. No staff member may ever leave a group of children without supervision. If both staff members need to leave the classroom, then they must request another staff member to supervise his/her class. A staff member may not cover a room for another staff member when he/she is already responsible for one class. Teacher/child ratios must be always maintained. Teachers are responsible for how many children are always in their care.

Reporting Accidents/Incidents

Accidents/Incidents that directly involve a child, such as serious injury, and those that have the potential to affect a child, must be reported using the Licensing *Incident/Illness Report* Form 7239. This form must be signed by the Director immediately, and the parent/guardian of the child within 48 hours of the incident. Recorded accidents/incidents include:

- An injury to a child in care that required medical treatment by a health-care professional or hospitalization.

- An illness that required the hospitalization of a child in care.
- An incident where a child in care had an emergency anaphylaxis reaction that required administration of an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector.
- An incident of a child in care or employee contracting a communicable disease deemed notifiable by the Texas Department of State Health Services.
- Any other non-routine situation that placed, or may have placed, a child at risk for injury or harm, such as forgetting a child in a center vehicle or not preventing a child from wandering away from the child-care center unsupervised.
    - Many factors determine whether a situation places or may place a child at risk for injury or harm, including the age of the child, proximity of caregivers, surrounding environment, etc. In addition to the examples provided in the rule, other situations may include:
        - Leaving a child unattended in a classroom;
        - Allowing a child to access hazardous materials; and
        - Allowing a child unsupervised access to a body of water

Playground Safety and Supervision

Physical activity/playground time is essential to a child's body and brain development. The children will have outdoor playground time every day for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. In the event of inclement weather or poor air quality (see outdoor air quality index in Appendix F), playground time will be moved indoors to our Gymnasium and schedules will be altered to ensure every class has playground time. You will also use the Child Care Weather Watch form (see Appendix G) when considering outdoor activity during extreme weather.

Classes will also have a minimum of 15 minutes of gross motor activities in their classroom daily. Activity plans are posted in each classroom.

Constant adult supervision of the children on the playground equipment is imperative. A teacher should always be stationed next to the equipment. Teachers need to station themselves throughout the playground area to maintain proper supervision. There should be no more than two classes using each playground at the same time. More than one teacher at a time sitting down while outside is discouraged unless the teachers are involved in an activity or interacting with the children.

Playground safety is always a concern. To ensure the quickest response time possible in an emergency, 2-Way radios are used on the playground daily. While outside, one person should always have the 2-Way radios on their person. The other 2-Way radios will be located with the Director or her designee. Should you need assistance for any reason, please use the 2-Way radios to contact the office as quickly as possible.

First aid supplies should be taken when the class goes to the playground. Teachers also need to be aware of the possibility of snakes due to the location of the playground

next to a wooded area. One teacher should scan the playground for hazards before children are allowed into the fenced area or on the equipment. Some general playground rules include:

1. All equipment will be used appropriately.
2. Only teachers may open and close gates.
3. Each classroom is responsible for putting away any toys used while outside, with the last class making sure the sandboxes are covered and that all loose toys are put away.
4. Actively watch the children at play; visit with the children not the adults.
5. Children are required to wash their hands after playing on the playground.
6. Only two classrooms are to be on the playground at the same time.

Playground Keys

Two playground keys are located inside the white cabinets by the back door. One of these keys needs to be taken outside anytime a class exits the back door to ensure they can re-enter. The keys should always stay with a teacher on the playground. The key MAY NOT be left in the door lock at any time. When you come back into the building, hang the key back on the hook inside the white cabinet for the next class to use. Both keys may be used at the same time and must be returned to the cabinets at the end of the day.

Drop off and Pick Up

Drop-off begins at 9:00 am. Due to licensing standards, we are not able to accept children until 9:00 am. In the morning, parents will use carline to drop off their child(ren) under the porta cache and a classroom teacher will walk them to their classroom and sign them in.

If you arrive after 9:10 am, parents will walk their child to the door under the porta cache and ring the doorbell. Only members of the Administration team will allow parents in the building. All parents must sign in and accompany their child to the classroom. Children may not be dropped off at the entrance of the building, sent into the building alone, or by a sibling under the age of 16 years. Administration must be made aware of your child's presence upon arrival and before departure. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child before and after pickup.

Pick-up in the afternoon can be done by coming into the building or by using carline. Begin preparing the children to go home at 1:50 pm. If a child is in diapers, please change them into a clean diaper before sending them home. Children who are potty-trained should use the restroom before dismissal. Teachers may bring children who are not picked up by 2:10 to the Preschool Office and will need to notify the parent. Late pick up fees will be charged for habitual offenses.

Carline

During morning carline, one staff member from each class will go to the bottom of the covered walkway immediately following Morning Circle to greet the children and walk them to their classrooms. Please take groups of children as they arrive. For everyone's safety, parents are not permitted to use the side door during morning carline.

For the convenience of parents and caregivers, we offer an afternoon carline. One staff member from each classroom will come to the carline area and we will begin dismissal. Children are taken in the order they are called, and teachers are to wait for the parents at the bottom of the covered walkway. Staff members will not buckle children in cars. Parents also have the option to walk in and pick up children using the side entrance during afternoon carline. A staff member will be stationed at the door to greet parents. Teachers in the classroom will help any parents needing assistance with their child leaving for the day. Classrooms can be cleaned and sanitized after the last child has left your classroom, not during or before carline.

Release Policies

To ensure our children's safety, we can only release children to persons listed as authorized pick-up/emergency contacts on the enrollment form filed in the Preschool Office. Any change in drop-off or pick-up must be accompanied by a signed note from a parent and the Preschool Office must be notified. A photo of their Driver's License will be required for all first-time emergency contacts. Contacts may be added at any time throughout the year.

Transportation

All transportation will be provided by the parent/guardian or caregiver for the child enrolled that is on the authorized pick up/emergency contact list. Children of Joy! employees are not permitted to transport any children. All field trips will be walking field trips.

Children with Special Care Needs and Inclusive Care

Children of Joy! accommodates children with special needs. If a child requires a unique care plan, with parent/guardian involvement, a plan will be developed with appropriate COJ! staff members. Staff will be provided with training opportunities on how to care for the child according to the plan. Under Licensing standard 746.1203, we must provide care that is consistent with the child's habits, interests, strengths, and any special needs, including any special supervision needs or care. We must also set appropriate behavior expectations based on the child's current stage of development.

Special Care Needs is defined by Licensing as: a children with special care needs is a child who has: (A) A chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition or a disability and who also requires assistance beyond that required by a child generally to perform tasks that are within in the typical chronological range of development, including the movement of large or small muscles, learning, talking, communicating, comprehension, emotional regulation, self-help, social skills, emotional well-being, seeing, hearing, and breathing; or (B) A limitation due to an injury, illness or allergy.

If the special care is ordered by a physician, due to the need of special medication condition, staff will be trained in the needed procedure and any medicine that needs to be administered will be done by the Administration in the Preschool Office.

Any child with special care needs or inclusive care must include the following information from the parent/guardian:

- Any limitations or restrictions on the child's activities.
- Special care the children require, including;
    - Any reasonable modifications or accommodations
    - Any adaptive equipment provided for the child, including instructions for how to use the equipment; and
    - Symptoms or indications of potential complications related to a physical, cognitive, or mental condition that may warrant prevention or intervention while the child is in care and
- Any medications prescribed for continuous, long-term use.

When planning activities for a child with special care needs you must provide a child with the accommodations recommended by a healthcare professional; or a qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early childhood intervention program. You must also ensure that a child who receives any outside services can receive these services at school, with parental requests and approval, activities integrate children with and without special care needs, equipment is adapted, and procedures and methods vary to ensure you care for a child with special care needs in a natural environment.

Before and After School Programs & Camps

All staff who run before and after school programs and camps will not be paid for their time to set up/cleanup for their program. Hours spent on before/after school programs and camps will not be included in the monthly payroll. This time will be spent beyond the 6-hour workday (8:30am - 2:30pm).

Reimbursement forms for before/after school programs and camps will need to be completed monthly. Checks will be issued within one week of receiving the reimbursement form.

All before/after school programs and camps will need to abide by all COJ! policies and procedures as stated in this document and Extracurricular program contract.

All programs and camps will be charged a 5% fee for the use of building materials and supplies. This is in addition to the building rental fee that is charged by Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church.

All set up can be done no earlier than 1 day prior to the beginning of the camp and clean-up must be completed the same as the completion of the camp. If camp begins on a Monday, set up must begin after 1:00 pm on Sunday. All furniture and materials must be returned to the proper classroom/area and decorations removed from the walls. Floors will also need to be picked up and paint and playdough will need to be removed.

Appendix A

Preschool Director Roles and Responsibilities

The Director of the child-care center plays a crucial role in ensuring a smooth day-to-day operation of the child-care center by balancing concerns with what's good for children and by providing leadership and direction to the caregivers responsible for providing safe and healthy care for the children.

The Child-Care Center Director must ensure:

1. The child-care center's daily operation is Administered in compliance with minimum standards.
2. All employees must comply with the minimum standards.
3. All employees have assignments that match their skills, abilities, and training.
4. All employees are supervised. Supervision includes, but is not limited to, knowing what the employees are doing and ensuring that they fulfill their assignments and responsibilities.
5. Qualified substitutes are called as necessary to meet minimum standards.

As a permit holder the Director's responsibilities include:

1. Developing and implementing your child-care center's operational policies, which must comply with or exceed the minimum standards.
2. Develop written personnel policies, including job descriptions, job responsibilities, and requirements.
3. Making provisions for training that comply with the minimum standards.
4. Reporting and ensuring all employees and volunteers report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation directly to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services without delegating this responsibility.
5. Ensuring all information related to background checks is kept confidential as required by the Human Resources Code.
6. Ensuring parents can visit the child-care center any time during the child-care center's hours of operation to observe their child, program activities, the building, the grounds, and the equipment without having to secure prior arrival.
7. Complying with the liability insurance requirements.
8. Complying with the child-care licensing law of the Human Resources Code, the applicable minimum standards, and other applicable rules in the Texas Administrative Code.

Appendix B

Children of Joy! Preschool

Financial Policy and Internal Control Policies

1. GENERAL POLICY:
The Financial Administrator, as Chief Accounting Officer, has the fiduciary responsibility for the accounting records of the Preschool and the ultimate responsibility for the adequacy and effectiveness of the overall system of internal control. Therefore, the Financial Administrator is required to:

   A. Construct and maintain books, records, and accounts which, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflect transactions and dispositions of assets.
   B. Establish and maintain an adequate system of internal accounting control sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that:
      1. Transactions are recorded as necessary (a) to permit the preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and (b) to maintain accountability for Preschool assets.
      2. Access to assets is permitted only in accordance with management's general or specific authorization; and
      3. The recorded accountability for assets is compared with existing assets at reasonable intervals and appropriate action is taken with respect to any differences.

2. INTERNAL CONTROL POLICIES:
Some of the characteristics of a good internal control system include proper authorization of transactions and activities, adequate segregation of duties, adequate documentation and records, adequate safeguards over use and access and independent checks over performance.

   A. The Financial Administrator and the Director shall have signing authority for any Preschool bank assets. All Preschool disbursements will be approved as follows:
      a. All checks will be prepared by the Financial Administrator and signed by the Director.
      b. Payroll disbursements will be prepared by the Financial Administrator and reviewed and signed by the Director.
      c. A list of all monthly purchases using the Preschool debit card will be prepared by the Financial Administrator and reviewed and signed by the Director.

B. Bank Reconciliations shall be prepared monthly and will be reviewed and approved by the Preschool Director or the Preschool Team Treasurer.

C. All checks will be restrictively endorsed. Deposits will be made by the Financial Administrator and reviewed and signed by the Preschool Director.

D. The Preschool Team will review the Financial Statements monthly. The Preschool Team Treasurer will review bank reconciliations, disbursements, and deposits monthly.

E. The Financial Administrator shall prepare a yearly budget as directed by the Preschool Director and the Preschool Team. The budget will be approved by the Director, the Preschool Team and ultimately, the Church Council. Such a budget shall be closely followed, and all discrepancies must be resolved and explained to the Preschool Team and the Preschool Director. Monthly financial statements will monitor the actual daily operations in relation to the approved budget.

F. The Financial Administrator will keep detailed records of all accounts payable, accounts receivable, disbursements, and dispositions. The records will be kept in the Preschool Office and made available to the Director and Preschool Team, at any time requested.

Appendix C

Preschool Team Member Roles

Based on the skills of the Team Members and the current needs of the school, the members of the Preschool Team may divide their work as suggested below, or in another manner as they deem appropriate.

Preschool Team Parent Roles
The Preschool Team parents work closely with Children of Joy! Administration Team to help with school events and fundraising.

Roles include Secretary, Spring Fundraiser Chair/Co-chair(s), Special Event/Fundraising Coordinator, Room Mom Coordinator

Secretary
The Secretary handles team correspondence helps maintain communication among team members and takes minutes of Preschool Team meetings. Minutes will be typed and prepared within one week of meeting, and then distributed to team members prior to the next meeting. The Secretary may also submit a monthly write up to the Director for the monthly Children of Joy! newsletter.

Spring Fundraiser Chair and Co-Chair(s)
This team is comprised of a chair and co-chair(s) who oversee all the planning and execution of the Spring Fundraiser. They will solicit donations, advertise, and communicate the event to the parents and community, and delegate responsibilities to the Spring Fundraiser volunteers.

Special Event and Fundraising Coordinator
The Fundraising Coordinator organizes and plans fundraising events at Children of Joy! such as Spirit Nights, Spirit Wear sales, Scholastic Book Fair, Movie Nights, and other social events.

Room Mom Coordinator
The Room Mom Coordinator delegates the responsibilities to the Room Moms at Children of Joy!. This includes communications between Room Moms and Children of Joy! events.

Community Outreach Coordinator (Church Member)
The Community Outreach Coordinator organizes outreach opportunities for Spirit of Joy! church and Children of Joy!.

Children of Joy! Teacher Representative
The Representative will serve one year on the Preschool Team. They report staff requests or concerns, provide input for staff appreciation and related events.

Appendix D

Children of Joy! Preschool

Tuition Assistance Policies and Procedures for the Tuition Assistance Committee

The Tuition Assistance Committee is comprised of 5 members: Preschool Team member, COJ! Assistant Director and Spirit of Joy Pastor.

Goal: To assist families expressing a demonstrated need with partial tuition coverage and to assist families facing short-term emergencies.

Mission: Children of Joy! believes in providing a quality Christian and academic education for all children. Children of Joy! is committed to helping families achieve their educational and spiritual goals by providing tuition assistance for those with a demonstrated need or are experiencing a short-term emergency.

1. Applicants wishing to apply for tuition assistance must submit a COJ! enrollment packet and pay the enrollment fee for the upcoming school year before applying for tuition assistance. Additionally, any tuition assistance awarded will be applied to the 9 monthly installments for August through April. Families must pay the first tuition installment in full. The first tuition installment will be refunded if tuition assistance is not awarded, and the family chooses to withdraw from the school. Registration fees are not refundable. Tuition Assistance Applications are due no later than July 1st for the upcoming school year. All applications will be reviewed, and families will receive notice of assistance prior to August 1st.

2. Upon approval, the applicant will receive a Tuition Assistance Agreement outlining the conditions of the award and guidelines at which time the applicant can accept or reject the offer. The agreement must be signed and returned to Children of Joy! Preschool with the August installment payment.

3. Tuition assistance will be awarded on a case by case basis, based upon the availability of funds and at the discretion of the Tuition Assistance Committee.

4. Enrolled families seeking assistance after the application deadline and due to unexpected financial hardships will be considered on a first come, first served basis with primary consideration given to available funds. All families seeking tuition assistance must fill out all applications and submit them to the Tuition Assistance Committee before the end of the month to be considered at the following month's Preschool Team meeting. The applicant will be notified in

writing within one week of the Tuition Assistance Committee meeting and must sign their tuition agreement within two weeks of notification.

5. Tuition assistance will be awarded on the full amount of yearly tuition. Military and multi-child discounts will not be combined with tuition assistance awards. Registration and supply fees, as well as Fun Friday tuition and extra-curricular activity fees remain the responsibility of the applicant family and will not be covered by tuition assistance.

6. A new Tuition Assistance Application must be completed each school year. Tuition assistance may be reduced for families who choose to apply and are awarded assistance for more than one year.

7. The Tuition Assistance Committee will review all families receiving assistance in January. At this time, families may be required to resubmit financial information or other documents supporting their need for tuition assistance.

Appendix E

Parent's Rights- Form 2987

This form provides the required information per Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code (HRC) Section 42.04271.

Directions: Parents will review these rights upon enrolling their child.

A parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:

(1) enter and examine the child care facility during the facility's hours of operation without advanced notice;

(2) review the child care facility's publicly accessible records;

(3) receive inspection reports for the child care facility and information about how to access the facility's online compliance history;

(4) obtain a copy of the child care facility's policies and procedures;

(5) review, at the request of the parent or guardian, the facility's:

(A) staff training records; and

(B) any in-house staff training curriculum used by the facility;

(6) review the child care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;

(7) inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's or guardian's child, provided that:

(A) video recordings of the alleged incident are available;

(B) the parent or guardian of the child does not retain any part of the video recording depicting a child that is not their own; and

(C) the parent or guardian of any other child captured in the video recording receives written notice from the facility before allowing a parent to inspect a recording;

(8) have the child care facility comply with a court order preventing another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the parent's or guardian's child;

(9) be provided the contact information for the child care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;

(10) file a complaint against the child care facility by contacting the local Child Care Regulation office; and

(11) be free from any retaliatory action by the child care facility for exercising any of the parent's or guardian's rights.

I acknowledge I have received a written copy of my rights as a parent or guardian of a child enrolled at this facility.

_____ _____

Resources

Facility Information and Online Compliance History: http://txchildcaresearch.org

Child Care Regulation Contact Information: https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care/contact-child-care-regulation

Appendix F

Children of Joy! Preschool
Outdoor Air Quality Index

On school days when the air quality is predicted to be poor (level orange or red), the following procedure should be used for determining whether students can participate in outdoor activities, including but not limited to recess and outdoor field trips.

Level Yellow alert days indicate that the air quality is moderate. A very small number of people may experience a problem. On these days, the following is recommended:

- Reschedule high energy outdoor activities for the morning and avoid times when air quality is poorest (late afternoon).
- Spend less time in high-energy activities.
- Reduce the intensity of the activity.

Level Orange alert days indicate that the air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups. Students diagnosed with asthma or other respiratory conditions should be monitored closely. Students with severe asthma or respiratory conditions should be excluded from all outdoor activities.

Level Red alert days indicate that the air quality is unhealthy for everyone. Outdoor activity in the morning is allowable if all students are monitored closely. Students with respiratory problems such as asthma, other respiratory conditions or underlying health problems should be excluded from outdoor activities. Late afternoon activities are discouraged for all students.

Level Purple or Maroon alert days indicate that air quality is very unhealthy or hazardous. All outdoor activities should take place in an air-conditioned environment until outdoor air quality improves.

Any request from a parent that their child be excluded from outdoor activity due to air quality conditions will be honored.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) provides local information on local air quality. Information on the AQI can be assessed at http://weather.weatherbug.com/air-quality.html or sign up to receive email alerts at http://www.enrviroflash.info/signup.ofm.

Appendix F

Children of Joy! Preschool
Child Weather Watch Chart

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill

- 30°is ***chilly*** and generally uncomfortable
- 15°to 30° is ***cold***
- 0° to 15° is ***very cold***
- -20° to 0° is ***bitter cold*** with significant risk of ***frostbite***
- -20° to -60° is ***extreme cold*** and ***frostbite*** is likely
- -60° is ***frigid*** and exposed ***skin will freeze*** in 1 minute

Heat Index

- 80° or below is considered ***comfortable***
- 90° beginning to feel ***uncomfortable***
- 100° ***uncomfortable*** and may be ***hazardous***
- 110° considered ***dangerous***

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)

Air Temperature	Wind Speed in mph: Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43

Comfortable for out door play — Caution — Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)

Air Temperature (F)	Relative Humidity (Percent): 40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132
94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
100	109	114	118	124	129	130							
104	119	124	131	137									

2010

Watching the weather is part of a child care provider's job. Planning for playtime, field trips, or weather safety is part of the daily routine. The changes in weather require the child care provider to monitor the health and safety of children. What clothing, beverages, and protections are appropriate? **Clothe** children to maintain a comfortable body temperature (warmer months - lightweight cotton, colder months - wear layers of clothing). **Beverages** help the body maintain a comfortable temperature. Water or fruit juices are best. Avoid high-sugar content beverages and soda pop. **Sunscreen** may be used year around. Use a sunscreen labeled as SPF-15 or higher. Read and follow all label instructions for the sunscreen product. Look for sunscreen with UVB and UVA ray protection. **Shaded** play areas protect children from the sun.

Condition GREEN - Children may play outdoors and be comfortable. Watch for signs of children becoming uncomfortable while playing. Use precautions regarding clothing, sunscreen, and beverages for all child age groups.
INFANTS AND TODDLERS are unable to tell the child care provider if they are too hot or cold. Children become fussy when uncomfortable. Infants/toddlers will tolerate shorter periods of outdoor play. Dress infants/toddlers in lightweight cotton or cotton-like fabrics during the warmer months. In cooler or cold months dress infants in layers to keep them warm. Protect infants from the sun by limiting the amount of time outdoors and playing in shaded areas. Give beverages when playing outdoors.
YOUNG CHILDREN remind children to stop playing, drink a beverage, and apply more sunscreen.
OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens). They may resist applying sunscreen and drinking beverages while outdoors.

Condition YELLOW - use caution and closely observe the children for signs of being too hot or cold while outdoors. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of outdoor time.
INFANTS AND TODDLERS use precautions outlined in Condition Green. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of time for outdoor play.
YOUNG CHILDREN may insist they are not too hot or cold because they are enjoying playtime. Child care providers need to structure the length of time for outdoor play for the young child.
OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens), applying sunscreen and drinking liquids while playing outdoors.

Condition RED - most children should not play outdoors due to the health risk.
INFANTS/TODDLERS should play indoors and have ample space for large motor play.
YOUNG CHILDREN may ask to play outside and do not understand the potential danger of weather conditions.
OLDER CHILDREN may play outdoors for very short periods of time if they are properly dressed, have plenty of fluids. Child care providers must be vigilant about maximum protection of children.

The weather forecast may be confusing unless you know the meaning of the words.

Blizzard Warning: There will be snow and strong winds that produce a blinding snow, deep drifts, and life threatening wind chills. Seek shelter immediately.

Heat Index Warning: How hot it feels to the body when the air temperature (in Fahrenheit) and relative humidity are combined.

Relative Humidity: The percent of moisture in the air.

Temperature: The temperature of the air in degrees Fahrenheit.

Wind: The speed of the wind in miles per hour.

Wind Chill Warning: There will be sub-zero temperatures with moderate to strong winds expected which may cause hypothermia and great danger to people, pets and livestock.

Winter Weather Advisory: Weather conditions may cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If caution is exercised, these situations should not become life threatening.

Winter Storm Warning: Severe winter conditions have begun in your area.

Winter Storm Watch: Severe winter conditions, like heavy snow and ice are possible within the next day or two.

Child Care Weather Watch, Iowa Department Public Health, Healthy Child Care Iowa, Produced through federal grant (MCJ19T029 & MCJ19KCC7) funds from the US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration, Maternal & Child Health Bureau. Wind-Chill and Heat Index information is from the National Weather Service.