

Forest Hill Child Care Center

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Parent Handbook 2025 – 2026

Welcome!

Forest Hill Child Care Center (FHCCC) is staffed by caring, responsible, and educated professionals who are passionate about supporting every child's growth and development. We work closely with families to set goals that help each child thrive.

Our policies and procedures are designed to create a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment where children can grow and learn. We ask everyone in our community, including staff, families, and visitors, to help us uphold these standards.

We take our responsibility seriously and are committed to meeting the needs of every child in our care. We also value open communication and welcome input from families as we work together to provide the best experience for your child.

Mission

FHCCC exists to nurture a love of learning in children, to prepare them for a transition into school, and to build relationships with families in the community.

Vision

Our vision is to create a vibrant community where every child discovers their unique potential, every family feels supported, and a lifelong love of learning begins in a nurturing and inspiring environment.

Governance

FHCCC is governed by our Board of Directors.

Insurance

FHCCC is insured by Brotherhood Mutual. The policy limits meet all required statuses.

Parent's Rights and Responsibilities

At FHCCC, we believe parents are our partners, and you have the right to know what is happening in your child's day. You are always welcome to visit and observe the center at any time while your child is on site. No notice is required!

We ask that all parents stay informed by reading all communication from us, whether it comes through email or through ProCare messages. To help your child have the best start each day, please arrive on time and prepared for the day's activities. We ask that you pick your child up on time every day and bring any concerns and/or suggestions to your child's teacher or to the Director.

Children's Rights and Responsibilities

Every child at FHCCC has the right to feel safe, nurtured, and respected. We are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment where all children are treated fairly, and discrimination of any kind is never tolerated.

We believe children's voices matter and encourage them to express themselves in positive and respectful ways. In return, we expect all children to treat their classmates, teachers, and classroom materials with kindness and care. Verbal or physical aggression is not acceptable, and we work closely with families to address any challenges that arise.

Our goal is to help every child feel comfortable and supported as they adjust to their classroom. We make every effort to ease transitions and foster a sense of belonging. In rare cases, if a child is unable to successfully adjust despite these efforts, the family or the center may decide together to discontinue enrollment in the best interest of the child.

Day to Day Operations

Lines of Authority for Staff

Center Director: Responsible for all operations, and reports to the Board of Directors.

Lead Teacher: Supervises children and assistant teachers in their classroom, and reports to the center Director.

Assistant Teacher: Assists in supervising and teaching children, and reports to the lead teacher in their classroom.

Hours/Days of Operation

We open on weekdays at 7:30am. Staff arrive earlier to prepare for the arrival of children. Please do not drop off earlier than 7:30am. We close daily at 5:30pm.

Holidays and Closings

FHCCC closes for the following holidays in 2026:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Spring Holiday (Easter Monday)
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Thanksgiving
- Winter Holiday (Christmas Eve and Day)

In addition, the center will be closed for:

- Professional Development Days
- Election Days

Parents will be notified in advance of any unexpected closings due to circumstances such as illness or inclement weather.

Parental Involvement

At FHCCC, we value strong partnerships with families and believe that open communication is essential to your child's success. We encourage parents to take an active role in their child's early learning experience and in our center community.

Behavior and Support

If persistent behavioral challenges arise, our staff will promptly notify parents. We will share the steps we've taken in response and work closely with you to develop strategies that support your child's growth and well-being.

Opportunities to Get Involved

We welcome and encourage parents to participate in center activities throughout the year, including:

- Routine field trips.
- Holiday celebrations and events.
- Teacher appreciation activities.
- Sharing special skills or presenting to classrooms.
- Serving on the FHCCC Parent Committee or Board of Directors.

Communication with Families

We are committed to keeping parents informed and involved in their child's daily experiences and development:

- Daily Updates: Through our childcare app, parents receive updates on meals, naps, bathroom breaks, activities, and more.
- Teacher Feedback: Teachers are available to discuss daily activities, physical well-being, and developmental milestones.
- Progress Reports: Provided twice a year to highlight your child's developmental growth and achievements.
- Parent Conferences: Parents may schedule conferences at any time to address questions, concerns, or goals.
- Annual Updates: Each year, we request updated parent information to ensure your child's records are accurate.

Developmental Records

For each child, FHCCC maintains a detailed daily record accessible to parents and staff, which may include:

- Nap times and duration.
- Meals and feeding times.

- Bowel movements and diaper changes.
- Developmental milestones.
- For infants unable to roll over: time spent on their stomachs.

We also provide semiannual written updates on each child's development, behavior, and needs, as well as opportunities for parents to give feedback about our program.

Key Cards

Each parent will be assigned a keycard and pin number that is unique to them and should not be shared unless someone from your "Authorized Pick Up" list is picking up your child on a specific day, *and* advanced notice is provided to the Director or teacher. Parent keycards will only be active during our operating hours. Replacement key cards are \$25.

Arrival/Departure of Children

Parents must accompany children into the center during arrival and departure. Children should use sidewalks, and parents must use caution with vehicles in the parking lot during arrival and departure times. Parents must sign children in and out each day using the ProCare application. Children will be released to authorized persons only. A child may not leave the classroom or school premises until they have been released by the teacher to a responsible adult, and that student has been logged out by the teacher or parent. All children are to be logged in and out each day.

Verifying Authorized Persons

If a person other than the parent or guardian is picking up the child, the parent must inform the school beforehand. This person's name must be on the "Authorized Pick Up" list found on the child's enrollment form. A list of authorized persons is kept in the child's file. Staff members will check IDs to confirm the person is authorized to pick up the child.

Non-Custodial Parents' Rights to be Admitted

A non-custodial parent will be admitted to drop-off or pick-up their child. This right of admission only applies while the child is present. (§ 22.1-289 of the Code of Virginia). The center reserves the right to ask disgruntled or upset parents to leave the building with their child.

Late Pickup

Late fees will be applied for all late pickups. A fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. After the third late pickup in a 30-day period, the fee will increase to \$2.00 per minute. If we have not heard from you and are unable to reach you after 5:30pm, the emergency contact person on file will be called to pick up your child. Prior arrangements may be made with the Director to avoid a late fee. Late fees are invoiced at the time of occurrence and will be due with the next tuition invoice.

Clothing

Please send your child to school in play clothes, socks, and shoes. Children ages two and three are encouraged to wear pants or shorts with elastic waistbands to assist with bathroom routines. Hats may be sent to school for outdoor play activities. Please do not send children in open-toed or backless shoes. Dangling earrings and breakable jewelry are not permitted. Each child needs an extra change of clothing to be kept at school. Parents should periodically check the extra clothing to ensure it is the right size and seasonally appropriate. Please label all extra clothes, jackets, hats, and bedding.

Cubbies and Backpacks

Each child will have an individual cubby to store extra clothes, as well as a sheet and blanket for naptime. Please send your child's backpack daily so that we may return wet clothing or bedding. Check with your child's teacher regularly for communication and artwork.

Rest Time

All children enrolled in our program rest on individual cribs, mats, or cots each afternoon. Each child needs a crib sized blanket and fitted sheet and may also have a small stuffed animal. Bedding needs to be laundered weekly and is the responsibility of parents. Even if the child does not sleep, they are required to rest quietly on their mat for 30 minutes and may not disturb the other children.

Cribs are used for children under 12 months of age and for children over 12 months of age who are not developmentally ready to sleep on a cot. Cribs meet the following requirements:

- They meet the consumer Product Safety Commission Standards at the time they are manufactured.
- They have not been recalled.
- There is no more than six centimeters of space between slats.
- There is no more than one inch between the mattress and the crib.
- End panel cut-outs in cribs are of a size not to cause head entrapment.
- Cribs are placed where objects outside the crib, such as cords from blinds and curtains, are not within reach of infants or toddlers.

Crib sheets will be laundered daily by infant care staff unless otherwise requested by parents.

Birthdays

We are happy to acknowledge each student's birthday! If you would like to send in a special treat, you may do so. Please check with your child's teacher in advance for any food allergies. Suggestions include popsicles, cookies, small pastries, or non-food items such as a pencil. A new classroom book is always welcome. If you are having a party for your child and wish to invite school friends, please coordinate with the teacher. Invitations should be distributed and opened at home.

Media Publications

FHCCC occasionally uses photographs, videos, and audio recordings of students, staff, and events in its publications in the local press, on its website, and on its social media pages. Parents must complete a publication release form included with enrollment materials and annual update forms to indicate their preferences for media use. No photos or videos will be published without written parental consent.

Termination

Each child is accepted into the program on a probationary basis for the first month. During this time, if it is determined that the child is not ready to continue, parents will be notified of dismissal. Any unused prepaid tuition fees will be refunded within 30 days. Thereafter, FHCCC will give a two-week notice of dismissal, unless the child is deemed a threat to the welfare of themselves or others.

If parents withdraw during the probationary period, all tuition and fees are non-refundable. A two-week written notice is required for the withdrawal of a student. If no notice is given, the parent remains responsible for the tuition for the two-week period.

Communicating with Parents in an Emergency Response

FHCCC has a written emergency preparedness plan that addresses staff responsibilities and facility readiness for emergency evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown. The plan covers the most likely emergency scenarios, including fire, severe storms, loss of utilities, natural disasters, chemical spills, intruders, violence at or near the center, terrorism specific to the locality, and other situations, including facility damage requiring evacuation, lockdown, or shelter-in-place.

Parents are informed of the center's emergency preparedness plan. Parents will be notified immediately if a child is lost, requires emergency medical treatment, or sustains a serious injury. Minor injuries will be communicated to parents by the end of the day.

A parent will also be notified immediately of any confirmed or suspected allergic reaction or contact with food listed in the child's written care plan, even if no reaction occurs.

When a Child is not Picked Up for an Emergency Response

A staff member will attempt to contact all of the emergency contacts listed in the child's file. If no one can be reached, local law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS) will be contacted to take temporary custody of the child.

Food Policies

Lunch

Lunch is provided by the center. Meals include healthy, child-friendly options, and staff will communicate with parents about individual food preferences as needed. Staff prepare appropriate servings of fruits and vegetables, proteins, and healthy grains. Food from home may only be provided for:

- Special diets for medical or religious reasons.

- Lunches for school-age children.
- Lunches for picnics or field trips.
- Nutritious snacks for holidays, special activities, or birthday celebrations.

A physician's note is required for the file in case of medical needs such as allergies. Birthday treats may be served as an afternoon snack. Food brought to the center must be in its original container and properly sealed. Special diet food must be labeled with the child's name. Unused portions will be returned or discarded at the end of the day. Parents must provide staff with instructions on refrigeration or storage. The center will provide food to a child when their food is lost or inadequate. FHCCC is a peanut-free school. Please do not send any food containing peanuts.

Snacks

We provide a variety of nutritious snacks such as pancakes, toast, fruit, crackers, cheese, vegetables, milk, or juice twice per day. Parents must indicate any allergies or food sensitivities on the enrollment health history form. Children will be encouraged to eat snacks but are not required to do so. Morning snacks are served between 7:30am and 9:00am, and afternoon snacks are served after the rest period.

Special Feeding Needs / Infant Feeding Policy

Infant carrier seats or feeding tables are used for children under 12 months who are not held while being fed. Children using infant seats are supervised during snacks and meals. When a child is placed in an infant seat or highchair, the protective belt must be fastened securely. Bottle-fed infants who cannot hold their bottles will be held while fed. Bottles must not be propped or used while the child is in a crib or sleeping space. Each child's feeding record must include the formula brand and feeding schedule. Infants are fed on demand or in accordance with parental instructions. Prepared infant formula must be refrigerated, dated, and labeled with the child's name. Heated formula and baby food must be stirred or shaken and tested for temperature before serving. Milk, formula, or breastmilk may not be microwaved directly. Water used for warming may be microwaved. Prepared baby food not consumed during a feeding may be used later on the same day only if not served directly from the jar, dated, and refrigerated; otherwise, it will be discarded or returned to the parent. Formula or breastmilk may not remain unrefrigerated for more than two hours and must not be reheated.

Transportation Policy

Field Trips

If field trips occur, these procedures must be followed:

- Parents sign a general field trip permission slip upon enrollment. Separate forms are required for special or extended trips.
- A maximum of four children per adult is allowed.
- Parents are encouraged to drive whenever possible.
- Children must be seat-belted, and car doors locked.

- Staff transporting children must be 18 years of age.

During trips, staff and chaperones must follow all posted speed limits, slow down for caution lights, lock all car doors, keep windows up, and always maintain possession of the ignition key. Seatbelts must remain in use, children must use quiet voices, body parts must remain inside the vehicle, and food and drink must not be consumed in the vehicle.

Requirements for Transporting Students

At this time, FHCCC does not provide transportation for students. In the future, we hope to obtain a van or bus to take children on field trips. We will continue to engage in walking field trips. Teachers and parents must have a valid Virginia State Driver's License, a vehicle in safe operating condition with current inspection, a sticker and valid insurance, check gas, oil, windows, tire pressure, and clear any obstructive debris from floor or seats.

Daily Activities for Infants

There will be a flexible daily schedule for infants based on their individual needs. During the day, infants are provided with:

- Sleep as needed:
 - When an infant is placed in a crib, they must be placed on their back.
 - Once an infant can easily turn over from their back to their belly, they will continue to be placed on their back but may adopt their preferred position. This applies unless otherwise directed in writing by the child's physician.
 - If the side position is used, caregivers must move the dependent arm forward to reduce the likelihood of rolling into the belly position.
 - Resting or sleeping infants must be individually monitored at least every fifteen to twenty minutes.
 - If an infant falls asleep in a play space, they may remain there if they are comfortable and secure.
- Food as specified in the "Food Policies" section.
- Play spaces:
 - Includes cribs, infant seats, exercise chairs or saucers (not walkers), infant swings, highchairs, and floor space.
 - Play areas provide room for movement, diverse sensory and perceptual experiences, and toys that support both large and small motor development.
 - Staff provide frequent opportunities for infants to creep, crawl, toddle, and walk.
 - Infants do not share play spaces with older children.
 - Staff must change the play space of awake infants not on the floor at least every 30 minutes.
 - Staff must adjust the position of an awake infant on the floor and vary toys at least every 30 minutes, or more often based on the infant's needs.
 - Infants who cannot turn themselves and are awake are placed on their stomachs for a total of at least 30 minutes each day to promote upper body strength and prevent head flattening.

- Stimulation and language development activities, including reading, talking, showing pictures, naming objects, playing, and engaging in positive interactions (such as smiling, cuddling, and making eye contact).

Breastfeeding Support Policy

Because breastfeeding provides the healthiest start for babies, providing ideal nutrition and a multitude of health benefits for both infants and mothers, it is important for Forest Hill Child Care Center to support and encourage breastfeeding.

We will ensure that:

- We provide a breastfeeding-friendly environment. We invite mothers to come to the center and nurse their babies or express breastmilk at any time during the day, and there is a comfortable place for them to do so. We display culturally appropriate posters of mothers nursing their babies.
- All breastfeeding families are able to properly store and label milk for childcare center use. There is always refrigerator space available for daily storage of breastmilk. We do provider freezer storage for breastmilk. We have written guidelines that we share with our families, and all milk at our center is properly labeled.
- All new staff receive training in storage and handling of human milk, developmentally appropriate infant feeding practices, breastfeeding promotion and the support of exclusive breastfeeding.
- We inform women and families about the importance of breastfeeding. We provide families with culturally appropriate information about the risks/ benefits of different feeding choices and about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding (no infant formula, water, juice or solid food is served.) We discuss breastfeeding with potential families and share breastfeeding materials and resources with our families.
- We support breastfeeding employees. Employees have access to a clean, private location to nurse their babies or express milk and are able to break as needed to do so.
- We develop a feeding plan that supports best feeding practices with each family and share a daily breastfeeding/infant feeding plan with our families. We work with each family to encourage practices that will help maintain breastfeeding. This includes nursing on demand when with their babies, responding to feeding cues rather than feeding on a schedule, and the developmentally appropriate introduction of complementary foods.

Medication Policy and Medical Procedures

Updated Illness Policy

Forest Hill Childcare Center prioritizes creating a safe and enriching environment for children and staff. To that end, we have established a set of policy expectations for when to keep your child (or, in some cases, children) at home, and when a child who is exhibiting signs of illness will be sent home. **Parents and/or guardians are expected to pick up an ill child as soon as possible, but no later than one hour from time of notification.**

Too Sick For School Definition:

Children who are ill at home must remain at home in order to promote rest and recovery and to ensure a safe learning environment for classmates at school. Observe the following when evaluating whether your child is well enough to come to school.

- **Fever:** Your child is considered too sick for school if they have an **axillary (underarm) temperature of 99.4 degrees or higher or an oral temperature 100.0 degrees or higher.**
- **Vomiting or diarrhea:** *For children ages 2-5*, two or more incidents of diarrhea or vomiting in a 24 hour period means that your child is too sick for school. *For children under 2 years old*, three or more incidents of vomiting or diarrhea in the same period means that your child is too sick for school. A child may return to school 24 hours after being symptom-free.
- **Rash:** Any unexplained rash could indicate a contagious condition. A child may return to school 24 hours after resolution of a rash, or with a doctor's note.
- **Discharge from Eyes:** Discharge may indicate conjunctivitis (pink eye). A child may return to school 24 hours after symptoms resolve.
- If a child is lethargic, in pain, coughing excessively or struggling to breathe, they are considered too sick for school and should remain home until they are well enough to fully participate in classroom activities.

Notifying FHCCC: Any family/child/staff member who has tested positive or been diagnosed with a communicable disease (including flu, pink eye, norovirus (the stomach bug), COVID, hand-foot-mouth, etc) is expected to notify the center staff via Procure. If your child has an unidentified illness and will not be coming to school, we similarly request that you notify us via Procure.

Illness while at school:

Staff are trained to assess the health of each child upon arrival and additionally throughout the day. Parents will be contacted when their child has an axillary temperature of (99.4) degrees or higher (oral temperature > 100.0 degrees), or is vomiting, experiencing persistent diarrhea, or exhibiting symptoms of a communicable illness such as, but not limited to, a suspicious rash or red draining eyes. As above, the child must be picked up no later than one hour from time of notification. The child will remain in a designated quiet area until leaving. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the school has up-to-date emergency contact information. Because

of the significant potential impact to classmates and staff, repeat failure to adhere to this pickup policy may result in termination of services.

Parents who are ill: please do not come to the center until you are recovered.

Lice

While not officially classified as a communicable illness, lice infestations are common amongst children. If your child is suspected to have lice, parents will be notified and expected to pick up the child from school within an hour of notification. The child may return to school once they have been treated or with a doctor's note.

Recuperation Period

Children sent home ill from school must remain at home the entirety of the following day. Once children are symptom free without the assistance of any fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours, they may return to school.

Prescription medication, like antibiotics, must be administered at home for no less than 24 hours before the child returns to school AND symptoms have improved to the degree that the child is able to fully return to normal classroom activity levels.

The recuperation period may be extended under certain circumstances based on Virginia Department of Health guidance or during known cases of an illness circulating within the center's community. These practices ensure that the child is no longer contagious and has had adequate time to recover, and in order to foster a healthy and enriching learning environment at the center.

Preventing Illness Outbreaks

The center will comply with Richmond City Health District and Virginia Department of Health guidance in management of outbreaks. Additionally, the center reserves the right to enact certain public health measures to mitigate the spread of contagious illness during outbreaks of illness/disease within the center. Illnesses include, but are not limited to, influenza, strep, COVID, RSV, hand-foot-mouth disease and norovirus.

Approaches to mitigate spread may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Sibling exclusion policy: During an outbreak of contagious illness, the center may elect to require that when one child is sent home or stays at home due to illness, all other enrolled siblings must be picked up at the same time or remain at home. All enrolled children must remain at home until 24 hours after symptoms have resolved within the family unit.

Early closure of classrooms: During an outbreak of contagious illness impacting the center, the center may enact early closures to select or all classrooms, in order to minimize end-of-day mixed-age play time.

Selective closure of classrooms: During a known outbreak heavily impacting certain classrooms, the center may elect to selectively close affected classrooms. In these instances, a sibling exclusion policy may additionally be applied to the siblings of children in affected classrooms, at the center's discretion.

Enactment of any of these additional policies will be communicated to parents via Procure.

Reporting Responsibilities: The school is required to notify appropriate health authorities including the Richmond City Health District and Virginia Department of Health of communicable illness/disease outbreaks amongst students and staff and will comply with the authoritative guidance of management of illness/disease outbreaks. Notifications to families in a class or mixed-play group may also be sent out for awareness within the center's community. Names will be withheld to protect confidentiality.

Bottom Line

We strive to provide a healthy environment for your child(ren) each and every day that you have entrusted them to our care. If you have any questions or concerns about this Updated Illness Policy, please contact the Director or the Chair of the Board.

Immunizations

At registration, Virginia law requires children to be "up to date" on immunizations to attend. Since childhood diseases spread quickly, children must be protected before attending.

- Medical exemption: Parents must provide written documentation from a physician before attendance is permitted.
- Religious exemption: If a child is *already enrolled*, parents must provide a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption (Form CRE-1).

Medication

Medication will only be administered at noon and 3:00pm with written parental permission. Authorization is valid for 10 days unless otherwise prescribed. All medication must:

- Be labeled with the child's name, medication name, dosage, and times.
- Be in the original, dated container with the manufacturer or pharmacy's label.
- Be handed directly to the teacher or Director (not left in bags or cubbies).

This includes skin-care products such as lotion or diaper rash ointment. Medication left at the center beyond 10 days will be discarded.

Over-the-Counter Skin Products

All OTC medications and skin products must:

- Be used only according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Not to be kept or used beyond expiration.

Sunscreen

- Requires written parent authorization noting adverse reactions.
- It must be in the original container labeled with the child's name.
- Must be hypoallergenic, SPF 15 or higher if provided by the center.
- May be applied by untrained staff unless prescription based.

Diaper Ointment/Cream

- Requires written parent authorization.
- It must be in the original container labeled with the child's name.
- It does not need to be locked but must remain inaccessible to children.

Must be documented with the child's name, date, frequency, and any adverse reactions.

- May be applied by untrained staff unless prescription based.

Insect Repellent

- Requires written parent authorization.
- It must be in the original container labeled with the child's name.
- It does not need to be locked but must remain inaccessible to children.
- Must be documented with the child's name, date, frequency, and any adverse reactions.
- May be applied by untrained staff unless prescription based.
- The manufacturer's age and dosage guidelines must be followed.

Injury

If a child is injured at the center, an injury report must be completed by the staff involved, and parents will receive a copy with details through Procure. These reports cover minor injuries (e.g., scrapes and bruises). All staff members are CPR and First Aid certified. If the injury is more serious, parents will be notified without delay. The signed medical release section in the enrollment form gives the center permission to seek medical treatment if parents or designated emergency contacts are unavailable.

Health and safety are our top priority. Children should arrive properly dressed for the season and free from contagious infections, including active colds. Teachers receive ongoing training in child health screening.

FHCCC Discipline Policy

All children arrive at our program with unique backgrounds and experiences. Each child follows their own path for social and emotional development. At FHCCC, one goal is for children to learn to consider and respect others and the environment around them. Clear, consistent, age-

appropriate limits are established so children gradually learn appropriate behavior. Children are encouraged to solve problems independently with staff guidance. They are supported in using words to handle differences and coached on how to stop others from interfering with their activities. When a teacher intervenes, constructive, age-appropriate discipline methods are used, beginning with verbal intervention, redirection, and, if necessary, temporary removal from the situation.

Physical or emotional danger requires immediate teacher intervention.

Parents are included in the discipline process, so children see consistent reinforcement at home and school. Parents are notified verbally or in writing about disciplinary action to better support their child.

The Following Points Help Guide our Policies

- High-quality childcare lays the foundation for a child's educational career.
- Childcare is where children learn to self-regulate, make friends, communicate, and express needs while preparing for K-12 education.
- Children lacking behavior and social-emotion skills required for participation in childcare miss critical opportunities to grow and learn.
- Teachers and parents are the "first responders" to challenging behaviors and need knowledge, resources, and support to nurture positive development.

Behavior Guidance

Staff must provide guidance that helps each child develop positive self-concept and self-control. Guidance must always be constructive, positive, and age appropriate.

- To prevent unacceptable behavior, staff will:
 - Model appropriate behavior.
 - Arrange the environment to encourage positive choices.
 - Use descriptive phrases, e.g, "Look how high you are building the blocks! Let's count them."
- When unacceptable behavior occurs or is about to occur, staff will use:
 - Redirection: replace a negative activity with a positive one.
 - Distraction: shift the child's focus.
 - Active listening: identify the cause of the behavior.
 - Holding/rocking: used only when comfort is needed.

Removal from the group is only used as a last resort when less intrusive methods fail, and the behavior is dangerous. In such cases, the child is supported by a staff member until calm and ready to return.

FHCCC complies with all federal, state, and local laws prohibiting corporal or abusive punishment. Staff are strictly prohibited from corporal punishment, shaming, or any unproductive discipline methods.

Expulsion Policy

We believe all children benefit from high-quality, diverse, and inclusive early childhood education. In rare cases, exclusion for a set period or termination may be necessary. FHCCC will exhaust all options before asking a family to leave. Research shows that expulsion is harmful, depriving children of early education and often leaving mental-health needs unaddressed.

This policy is based on research from the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (March 2017 Policy Report: Information and Resources to Assist States in Developing Policy on Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion).

Mandated Reporting

All staff receive training to identify and report suspected child abuse or neglect. Childcare workers are mandated by law to immediately report any suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) or the Department of Social Services.

Acknowledgement of Policies

I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the Forest Hill Child Care Center Parent Handbook. By signing below, I agree to these policies and support the program's commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____