



THE APPLE ORCHARD  
FAMILY CHILD CARE

# PARENT HANDBOOK

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## **INTRODUCTION**

As a working parent, you face the difficult challenge of balancing the demands of work with the needs of your family. Finding high quality childcare that is flexible to your work schedule is one of the most difficult tasks you will face.

## **PURPOSE AND GOALS**

My goal is to provide a safe and secure environment where love abounds and where children can explore and learn from the world around them.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF LEARNING**

My philosophy is that a warm and nurturing environment is made rich by hands on, play-learn opportunities. Children learn about themselves and their environment through their surroundings. From birth, babies are marvelous learners; immediately investigating the sights, sounds and feel of the world. Long before walking and talking, they are exploring their own bodily powers and what the world has to offer. Though much of a very young child's play, learning is self-motivated and self-directed. It is still necessary for caregivers to stimulate the child through individualized play-learning experiences in an enriched environment.

Children of all ages are given opportunities to learn through experiences with stories, songs, art, science, dramatic play, sensory materials and math activities. A preschool program designed for Family Childcare will also be provided for children age 2+.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The Apple Orchard offers a variety of extracurricular activities to enhance their experience which in my care:

\*Preschool Program: We offer two preschool classes; for our 2's and 3's our Seedlings Class is a great way for our youngest learners to dip their toes into the wonderful world of structured learning. These children will be introduced to letters, numbers, shapes and colors in a hands on atmosphere. This is a 2 day per week class.

Our children aged 4 and 5 will experience our Sprouts Class. This 3 day per week class helps prepare our older learners to make independent choices, work with their peers

and ultimately prepare them for kindergarten. For both of these classes, we use the 123LearnCurriculum designed for Family Childcare as well as resources from TeachersPayTeachers and Scholastic. The cost for both of these class is \$10 per month.

- \*Soccer Shots: The Apple Orchard has had a long-standing relationship with this amazing program. A certified Soccer Shots coach will come to my home and teach your children. This has always been a very positive experience for all. Please visit Soccer Shots website for pricing information.
- \*Music Program: A Keys for Success music therapist comes to The Apple Orchard twice per month and teaches the children many things from songs, finger plays, a variety of instruments and so much more. The cost of this class is based on the number of children enrolled in the class. The average monthly cost is \$21.
- \*Cooking Class: Chef Sam is starting her second year at The Apple Orchard teaching our little ones the world of the culinary arts! The children usually create two recipes per class. Chef Sam comes to us through Liberty Farm Market and this class meets once per month for children age 3 and up.

All extracurricular activities are paid for by the parents/guardians and are absolutely not mandatory. It is my goal to provide your children with learning opportunities during their daycare day in the hopes that your evenings are free for family time and recharging your batteries!

### **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Occasionally I will invite parents to some special events each year such as their child's birthday party or special holiday parties. Additionally, you may participate by helping with a field trip or in any way you like. I'm always open to your suggestions and ideas.

### **AGES SERVED AND OPERATING HOURS**

My childcare program is a year-round, full-day program serving children from 6 weeks of age through kindergarten. I care for children on a fulltime basis only.

My operating hours are: Monday - Thursday from 7am to 5:30pm  
Friday from 7am to 5:00pm

Children **MUST** be picked up by their contracted time. A late pick-up fee of \$1 per minute after 5:30pm (5pm on Friday) will be assessed. All late fees must be paid in cash at the time of occurrence.

### **HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES**

The Apple Orchard Family Childcare will observe the following holidays: the daycare will be closed and tuition will be required:

- \*New Year's Day
- \*National Family Childcare Providers Day (The Friday before Mother's Day)
- \*Memorial Day
- \*Independence Day
- \*Labor Day
- \*Thanksgiving Day
- \*Friday after Thanksgiving
- \*Christmas Eve
- \*Christmas Day
- \*New Year's Eve Day (Hours will be 7:00-Noon)

Holidays that fall on Saturday will be celebrated the Friday before. Holidays that fall on Sunday will be celebrated the Monday after. If there is any change in this schedule, written notification will be given in advance.

Regular tuition fees apply regardless of the observed holiday.

I also have two (2) paid sick days per year to use in the event I become ill. These will be used only in extreme situation and may not be used at all. I will use my absolute best judgment in the use of these days. These days also will not be carried over from year to year.

### **TUITION/REGISTRATION FEE**

Full-time tuition: \$155-\$165/week

Kindergartners: \$20/day for after school care. \$30/day for full day care.

A Registration Fee equal to one week's tuition will be required at the time of enrollment. This fee may **ONLY** be applied to your child's first week of care. If for **ANY REASON**

your child does not attend The Apple Orchard, this fee is forfeited. The fee is used to secure your child's spot at The Apple Orchard.

The tuition prices listed above are for children in care 10 hours of LESS per day! If your child is in care for OVER 10 hours, an additional \$5/day will be added to your tuition. This will be discussed at the time of enrollment or if schedule changes need to be made for existing clients.

If paying tuition via cash or check, said tuition is due on Friday by 10am. Tuition being paid via Venmo is due by noon on Thursday. Tuition will be considered late if not received by 10am on Friday for cash/check payments or by noon on Thursday via Venmo. Childcare will not be provided if tuition has not been paid in full and/or mutual arrangements have not been made between the parents and the provider. If tuition is not paid on time, a late fee of \$15 will be assessed for each day payment is not received. Payment may be made weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Your method of payment will be determined at the time of enrollment. If you decide to change your method of payment for any reason, I must have AT LEAST two week's written notification. Tuition may be paid with check money order, cashier's check, cash or Venmo. If I have a payment not process for any reason, I will charge \$15 plus all my bank fees for the returned payment. The payment must be replaced immediately.

### **DISENROLLMENT**

Children may continue in my care as long as their presence remains a positive experience for themselves and the rest of the group. If a child is not adjusting to group care, a meeting will be called. At that time, concerns will be addressed with the parents and a plan to solve them will be sought. If no workable plan is possible, I will have to ask for the child to be removed.

If a parent continually goes against my policies, shows disrespect to myself, other caregivers and other families or if we have a situation where we simply cannot meet eye to eye, it may be necessary to terminate childcare services at that time. The nature of the situation will determine whether immediate termination is necessary at that time.

A three-week written notice is required if you decide to withdraw your child from my care for any reason. Three weeks tuition may be paid in lieu of notice.

## **FREE DAYS**

Each family will be given five (5) Free Days to be used for vacation days or days your child will not be in attendance. AT LEAST two week's written notice must be given if you plan to use any Free Days. Free Days WILL NOT be used when a child is not in attendance due to illness.

A child must be enrolled in my daycare for at least 90 days before any Free Days may be used unless discussed with me in advance.

Only one family may use Free Days on any given day. All requests for the use of Free Days must be made in writing (or email) and will be honored on a first come/first serve basis. Free Days may not be used when the provider has scheduled vacation, nor may they be used on the day of the provider's paid holiday. Paid holidays are listed above.

Provider will receive 14 Free Days (paid vacation) each calendar year.

## **DISCIPLINE**

During the early childhood years, children are learning to be in charge of themselves. I believe in establishing consistent, understandable limits and responding to inappropriate behavior with insight, sensitivity and skill. When clear, consistent and age-appropriate limits are present, children increasingly become responsible for themselves. When out-of-bounds behaviors do occur, I believe it is important for children to understand why the behavior is inappropriate and how to modify it. The methods I use to offer discipline and guidance to your children are as follows:

\*First, I try to prepare an interesting and loving environment with plenty of developmentally appropriate activities, preventing many unacceptable behaviors from ever developing since children are actively engaged in constructive learning.

\*Second, I try to model positive interactions and communication between myself and the children. I show the children what to do as well as tell them. Example: "Roll the ball on the follow, Billy, like this".

\*Third, I use verbal and non-verbal methods to reinforce positive behavior, I try to phrase suggestions and instructions positively. Example: "Keep the sand in the sandbox" not "don't throw sand". Then I praise the child for success.

Fourth: I redirect children to appropriate behaviors. I give simple directions focusing on what the child can do. Example: "I can't let you throw the blocks. You can throw the Nerf balls instead".

\*If these measures do not work in a specific situation, then time-out will be used. The length of time served is determined by one minute for every year of the age of the child. It may be served in a chair or a place on the floor, depending on the age of the child and the activities in which the rest of the group is currently involved.

I do not believe that spanking should be administered by anyone other than the children's parent; therefore, that form of discipline will not be used in my daycare.

All children enrolled at The Apple Orchard Family Childcare will be taught respect for others, respect for property, respect for authority figures and respect for themselves. The rules of our home will be always enforced to all who enter; the children enrolled in my care, the siblings of these children, the parents of these children and any other visitors of these children.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

MEDICAL FORMS will always be on file. Whenever a change is made regarding your child's health, I must have written documentation for your child's file.

HEALTH PRACTICES at The Apple Orchard are designed to minimize illness. They include many specific procedures regarding sanitation, hand washing, exclusion of sick children, etc. The Apple Orchard Family Childcare is a WELL-CHILD daycare home ~ very minimal exceptions will be exercised in the care of ill children. Please read through these policies very carefully and understand that working together to keep The Apple Orchard a healthy environment is paramount! Not communicating illness with the provider or being untruthful in ANY WAY regarding your child's health (including medication being given to your child before bringing the child to daycare without the provider's knowledge) will not be tolerated in any way and will result in immediate termination of childcare services.

Children do become ill, often at unpredictable and inconvenient times. Working parents often feel stressed when children are ill. But, as we work together, we can minimize illnesses and stress levels. While none of us like to think about children becoming ill, now is the time to make arrangements for sick childcare knowing that sickness will

develop until your child's immunity is built up. Information regarding a child's health or medication condition will be kept confidential. The exception to this rule would be in the event of a serious communicable illness being spread through the daycare home.

If symptoms of illness are present, you should NOT bring your child to daycare. If symptoms develop after you leave your child in my care, I will use my best judgment whether or not to continue care for the child. Any child who is suspected of being ill or becomes ill shall be immediately isolated from the group and shall be removed from daycare within one hour. In the event you cannot pick up your child in this time frame, I will call the names listed on the Enrollment Form of persons who have agreed to assume this responsibility for you.

MILDLY ILL CHILDREN who can participate normally in the activities of my daycare do not need to be routinely excluded. This could include children with MILD colds or teething.

In order to prevent the spread of illness, children may be excluded from care until the symptoms or conditions listed below are resolved.

A note from your physician may be helpful however will NOT be the final determination of your child's attendance in daycare. At the end of the day, Julie Rose and/or a representative of The Apple Orchard Family Childcare will have the final determination whether or not your child should be included in childcare for medical reasons. Exclusion from childcare may be:

\*Fever with a change in behavior (irritable, restless, listless) and/or symptoms of an illness.

\*Loose stools with two or more episodes.

\*Vomiting with two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours.

\*Conjunctivitis or pink eye with discharge OR yellow/green discharge from the eyes.

\*Undiagnosed rash.

\*Evidence of severe illness such as lethargy, unusual sleepiness, prolonged crying, obvious discomfort, difficulty breathing, uncontrollable coughing or wheezing.



\*Yellow or green discharge from the nose for more than three days.

\*A specific contagious infection such as whooping cough, strep throat, head lice, scabies, chickenpox, impetigo, mumps, measles, ringworm, etc.

\*EAR INFECTIONS ~ while an ear infection itself is not contagious, the bacteria that causes the infection is. Therefore, children must be on antibiotics for treatment of an ear infection for AT LEAST 24 hours before returning to childcare, regardless of if a fever is present.

\*FEVER FREE FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS WITHOUT THE USE OF PAIN RELIEVER OR FEVER REDUCER BEFORE RETURNING TO CHILDCARE!

Many illnesses require exclusion for AT LEAST 24 hours after treatment has begun. Others may require a longer time of exclusion. I reserve the right to refuse care for a child who I feel will put others at risk of illness.

Please notify me when your child is ill so I can be alert to similar symptoms in other children. I will notify you of illnesses that may be present as well.

If your child becomes acutely ill and requires immediate attention, I will call for paramedic help. Your signature on the Medical Authorization Form gives the hospital permission to care for your child. You will be notified as the paramedics take over care of your child unless it is safe to do so sooner.

GI (gastrointestinal) related illnesses such as diarrhea and/or vomiting tend to spread like wildfire. To help prevent such a horrific spread, children must stay out of daycare for at least 48-hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea. Since GI illness can present in different forms, siblings of ill children are required to also be excluded from childcare during these specific outbreaks.

## **MEDICATION**

Whenever possible, medication should be administered by the parents. When this is not possible, I will give medication according to the following guidelines:

\*I will have a medication sign-in sheet that is required by 4C-Cincinnati for me to administer any type of medication to your child.

\*The medicine is for a particular occurrence of illness. A prescription filled for a previous illness will not be administered if it is not current.

\*Prescription medication must be in the original container. Bearing the prescription number, name of the medication, the date of the prescription was filled, the physician's name, the child's name and the directions for administration. I will not administer after the expiration date.

\*Non-prescriptive medication must be labeled with the child's name. It must be brought in the original container. I will administer the medication according to the label directions unless otherwise directed **IN WRITING** by the parent or a physician.

\*I will not administer any medication without authorization from a parent. A dosage spoon, syringe or cup must accompany any medication brought into the daycare home.

\*It is **MANDATORY** that you please notify me at drop-off time or via ChildPilot if your child is on **ANY** type of medication and what your child is on the medication for.

### **CHOW TIME AT THE APPLE ORCHARD**

Parents provide all meals and snacks for their children. Please place items in a lunch box. We are happy to heat up items for you however we will not cook food for you so please be sure it's been cooked before packing it. Pinterest is an awesome source for kid-friendly lunch ideas!

Parents also provide their children's snacks. Please label each one: "Child's Name AM" and "Child's Name PM".

### **DROP OFF AND PICK UP TIMES**

On your Childcare Contract you will note your drop off and pick up times. Additionally, you will be doing so on ChildPilot each morning. If you need to drop your child off at a different time other than noted on your Childcare Contract, please message on ChildPilot during daycare hours and during non-daycare hours, please email Ms. Julie at [julierose327@icloud.com](mailto:julierose327@icloud.com). Pick up times can be flexible unless you need to pick up during naptime or lunchtime in which case it would be a good idea to let me know. Of course, after-hours pick up **MUST** be prearranged.

If you pick up after 5:30pm Monday through Thursday, you will be required to pay \$1/minute past 5:30pm. The fee is due the day of occurrence. On Friday if you pick

up after 5:00pm, you will be required to pay \$1/minute past 5:00pm. The fee is due the day of occurrence. There will be a \$5/per day fee if these fees are not paid.

-10-

### **NAPTIME/COMFORT ITEMS**

All children under the age of 6 will have naptime. Children under the age of 18-months must sleep in a pack 'n play provided by the parents. Children over the age of 18-months will nap on child-sized nap mats with a built in pillow and blanket which will be provided by the parents.

I welcome all comfort items to make a child's transition from home to childcare a smooth one. However, these items (pacifiers, blankets, snugglies, stuff animals, etc) will be placed in a child's cubbie BEFORE they are allowed to come into the daycare area and play with toys. I will work with all children until this becomes routine to them. Often times parents can help in this transition by only allowing these items during naptime/bedtime at home.

## **SUPPLIES**

It is my desire to keep childcare costs at a reasonable level. It has been several years since I have had a tuition increase. However, like everything in our society, the cost to run my business is ever increasing. Each year I conduct a survey among my daycare families, asking if they'd prefer a tuition increase or bring supplies to the daycare. The response has always been the same.....provide supplies!

Each month it will be necessary to bring supplies for the sole use of The Apple Orchard. At this time, the supplies are: baby wipes, Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, waterless hand sanitizer, paper towels and tissues. It will not be necessary to bring all of these items each month; usually two of these items is what is required.

If you fail to bring supplies for any month, I will purchase those supplies for you and provide you with a receipt for reimbursement along with an invoice for a \$10 convenience fee which must be paid immediately.

## **SAYING GOODBYE**

Saying goodbye can be difficult for both you and your child. I would suggest that as you drive to my home, you discuss with your child the fun activities and all the positive about coming to daycare: "oh today is Splash Day, that's going to be lots of fun"! Your body language and attitude about the daycare day may determine your child's attitude about starting their daycare day.

I recommend a speedy drop off and I have found that prolonging the goodbye not only makes it more difficult for your child, but can affect the other children in my care as well. I do not wish to rush your goodbye time with your child; you may need to go in another part of my home and privately say goodbye to your child if other children are being affected by your prolonged presence.

## **PICKUP TIME**

Pick up time can be equally as hectic as often times, several parents are picking their children up at the same time. Once you arrive in my home, you are responsible for your child, therefore, please see that your child respect the rules of my home. Running in and out of my home is a major NO NO! If you have other siblings with you, if possible, please try to keep those children in your vehicle as this can add to the confusion of

pickup time. If it is necessary to bring siblings into my home, please keep them close by you.

If it becomes a constant where you are dropping off or picking up at much different times than communicated, I will discuss perhaps a need to changes your times. It is important that I be available to families when they arrive and at the same time, there are routines that I must maintain (infant feedings, bus schedules, etc) that I try to not interrupt. Please just send a quick message if you're running late! Thank you for your understanding!

### **PARKING**

Please try to pull into the driveway and not park in the street. Please pull into one side or the other of the driveway and up as far as possible. Four large vehicles can easily fit in my driveway at once if this is done. Please be mindful of our neighbors and not block driveways or mailboxes.

### **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

The Apple Orchard Family Childcare has an Open Door Policy. This does not mean that my doors will remain unlocked for families (or others) to walk in and our freely. For the safety of all the children and my own family, doors will remain locked at all times. Additionally there is a keypad that only our daycare families have the code to. An Open Door Policy means that any parents of a child in my care may come to my home unannounced during daycare hours while your child is in my care. However I would ask that you please respect the routine and schedule I maintain for the children and not interrupt during particular times of our day such as preschool, lunch, naptime, etc.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

We do have two scheduled field trips per year; one being to a local farm in October and another to a local library and ice cream parlor in the summer. These trips can only be taken with the help of other parents! If you wish for your child to not attend, it will be your responsibility to find alternative care while we are on the field trip. All childcare tuition will be due if you wish for your child to not attend the field trip. Advanced notice will be given when field trips are planned.

## **SUBSTITUTE CAREGIVERS**

Occasionally it may be necessary to have a substitute caregiver if it is necessary for me to be away from the daycare. Please know that the people I have as back-up caregivers are people that I trust 100% with your children my home - my livelihood!!! All policies will be in place and enforced as if I were here. I will always TRY to introduce you to any substitute caregiver I may have or at least make that option available to you, if time permits. Otherwise I would hope that you would trust my judgment that I would only choose someone who is going to only give the very best of care!

## **RESPECT**

As a family childcare provider of 30 years, I have had many families come through my doors giving me the opportunity to care for their children. Through these years, I have found there are so many different personalities and parenting styles. The most important thing is that you have come to me to provide quality childcare for your children. If you have signed the Childcare Contract, that means you have read The Parent Handbook. Respectfully you don't have to agree with or like any of my policies; however if you signed the Childcare Contract that means you have agreed to abide by them. If there is a policy you have a question about, please feel free to RESPECTFULLY talk with me about said policy. You will always be treated with respect when coming into my home, however we are all human so if I ever make a mistake I am always happy to apologize for that mistake. There is no room in my home for disrespect toward myself, other caregivers, other children, other parents and my family.

## **OVERVIEW**

I am very thankful for the opportunity to care for your children! I am always look forward to getting to know your family and having a respectful and long lasting relationship. I will always be honest with you and treat you with respect and I know you will treat me in the same manner. Please know that my door is always open if you have anything you wish to discuss regarding your child's care in my home. We all want what is the very best for your children and I'm sure we can work together to make that possible!

~WELCOME TO THE APPLE ORCHARD FAMILY CHILDCARE~

