

Cinnamon Street Early Education & Childcare Center Family Handbook

Our Mission

Our mission at Cinnamon Street is to provide families in and around Sullivan County with developmentally appropriate early education and childcare by well-trained early childhood professionals in an atmosphere that is positive and nurturing for children of diverse backgrounds and abilities between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years. We encourage and rely on family and community involvement in our center. We are committed to providing the guidance and resources needed to support the families we serve.

There is no discrimination as to sex, color, race, religion, ancestry, age, national origin, sex orientation, marital status, disability, political affiliations, or veteran status towards children, families or staff.

CSEEECC is a licensed early care and education program for children six weeks through twelve years of age. CSEEECC receives partial funding from state and federal agencies, and the United Way of Sullivan County. CSEEECC is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization.

Learning Through Play

We believe that young children learn and develop best in an environment where adults are attentive and responsive. Teachers view each child as an individual, endeavoring to understand their unique learning styles and temperaments. The teacher's role is to support children's growth by creating a learning environment that offers activities and materials that promote independent as well as teacher-directed exploration. Classroom curriculum is designed with each child's developmental stage in mind and focuses on the growth and development of the cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and creative domains.

As early childhood educators and observers of young children, teachers are in a position to assess children's development. They may observe that a child's development is different than his peers; in that case, after a family/teacher discussion, a referral for developmental screening or evaluation may be recommended. Children with special needs receive educational supports and therapies as a regular part of their classroom routine.

Cinnamon Street believes in and supports the principles and position statement on *Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Programs* as designed by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (Naeyc)¹.

Fostering a Sense of Security

CSEEECC teachers and families work together to foster children's sense of security. We encourage children to reach out to others, while at the same time gaining more understanding of themselves and the world. This emotional development occurs at individual rates unique to each child. Some children may require more time to adjust to separation from their family. In this case, a gradual transition into group care may be warranted. Special arrangements should be made with the Director and teachers. Cinnamon Street teachers are always happy to take "check-in" phone calls from a family member.

Children need consistency in their daily routines. It takes only a short time for a child to grow accustomed to a schedule that offers events in the same predictable order. This enables them to approach transitions with a degree of comfort, plan future activities, and look forward to special times of the day. Therefore, it is very important that your child's entrance into his/her classroom is at approximately the same time each day, with plenty of time for your child to comfortably transition into the classroom atmosphere.

¹ Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs 1997 p.3

Respect for Diversity among Staff and Enrolled Families

Cinnamon Street works hard to promote a learning environment in which every child has many opportunities to participate. Given our mission to offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum, the Center does not promote any one religion, culture, or holiday celebration over another. Cinnamon Street does not incorporate specific holidays into its curriculum. However, children are welcome to discuss their holiday traditions or talk about the activities going on in their home. Teachers will continue with their planned learning activities without including holiday decorations, music, or parties into their daily schedules. Cinnamon Street welcomes children of all types of backgrounds where the fulfillment of their emotional and educational needs are the primary goals of the curriculum.

Children's birthdays may be celebrated according to a pre-arranged agreement between the child's teacher and his family.

Center Operating Schedule

CSEEECC operates year-round, Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 6:00 pm.

Families are expected to arrive at the Center in plenty of time to collect their child's belongings, sign out and exit the building before closing time. There is a charge of \$20.00 per each late pick-up occurrence.

The Center is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day.

We are also closed for two days reserved for staff development; one in the spring, for the teachers to attend the annual Naeyc conference, and one in late summer, usually the last Friday before the Newport public school sessions resume.

CSEEECC is open for operation except in cases of extreme conditions (i.e. power outage, extremely hazardous driving conditions). The decision to close the Center is made at the discretion of the President of the Executive Board and the Director after thoroughly assessing the situation.

Cinnamon Street is a Family Cooperative

Cinnamon Street Early Education & Childcare Center is organized as a tax-exempt, not-for-profit family cooperative and is overseen by an Executive Board elected by the membership. A majority of the Board are parents of children enrolled at CSEEECC. The Board authorizes various committees to carry out the business of the corporation. Committees include: Building, Finance, Fundraising, Program, Public Relations, Annual Campaign, and Staff Support.

Volunteering in the Center's operations is strongly encouraged, using whatever talents, time, or resources you have available. Examples are: joining a committee, chaperoning, assisting in classroom activities, cooking, fundraising, attending the monthly Executive Board meetings. Opportunities for service also include staffing fundraising events, and providing cleaning and maintenance services for the school building.

Each new family is required to attend a New Family Orientation, which is scheduled quarterly.

Payment of Deposit, Registration fee, Tuition

High quality early education/full-day childcare is expensive, yet perhaps the most valuable investment a family and society can make. Family involvement is the primary mechanism by which we endeavor to keep rates affordable. Your participation saves you money.

A two-week deposit is due upon registration. There is an option to extend this payment over a six-week period. However, balances owed after the sixth week will be surcharged at a rate of 12%.

There is a one-time registration fee of \$25.00 due upon enrollment.

Tuition is charged according to the program in which your child is enrolled. Families with more than one child enrolled will be charged the full rate for the youngest child and at a discounted rate of 90% for each additional child. [This discount applies to the infant/toddler and preschool classrooms only]

The charge for a drop-in day for an enrolled child is 30% of their current tuition.

Tuition payments are due in full each Monday for that week. There is a \$15.00 late fee assessed after twelve o'clock PM Tuesday. If the Center happens to be closed on a Monday, the late fee will be assessed after twelve o'clock PM on Wednesday.

Every week is a full tuition week whether or not your child was in attendance. The Center's expenses do not decrease in relation to attendance.

Checks or money orders should be made out to CSEEECC. There is a fee of \$20.00 for returned checks.

A two-week written notice is required when a child is being withdrawn. The two-week deposit will be refunded within thirty days after any open balances are paid. In the event that two weeks written notice is not given; there will be no refund.

Communication, Conferences

We believe that a strong partnership between teachers and families is essential as your child embarks on his or her learning career. An important component of Center/family communication is regular conferences. Conferences are available at any time upon request, and are a formally scheduled event at least once a year.

Other modes of communication include: your family mailbox where you will find information from the Office Administrator, the Director, or the Executive Board, your classroom's bulletin board, the Family Information bulletin board, and also "StreetTalk", a monthly newsletter produced by the staff and Public Relations committee.

When You Have a Concern

As an enrolled family, your concerns are given serious consideration. Please approach your child's Lead Teacher with these concerns. After consulting with the Lead Teacher, if you, and/or the teacher, feel that further assistance is needed, an arrangement should be made to speak with the Director. A member of the Executive Board may also be called on if further support becomes necessary.

At the recommendation of the CSEEECC Director and with the Executive Board's approval, any threatening, intimidating, or inappropriate treatment of Cinnamon Street staff by a family member may be grounds for termination of the enrollment contract.

Procedures that Ensure Safety

Park in the public parking lot. Per order of the Newport Fire Department, DO NOT park directly in front of the building in the lane reserved for emergency vehicles.

All children should be holding an adult's hand or, if of an appropriately responsible age, at least within an adult's reach.

Children must be accompanied into and out of their classrooms, the responsible adult signing them in and out on the posted sheet.

Obey the State of NH seat belt laws. In the event of field trips, only children having the required car/booster seats will be transported in the Cinnamon Street van.²

Procedures for Handling Injuries, Emergencies

The safety of your child is of primary importance to us. Children are closely supervised at all times. Despite our best efforts, injuries may occur. If your child is injured, an "ouch report" will be filled out by the staff member who witnessed the injury and will be signed by the Director. You will be asked to read and sign the form when you pick up your child. Should the injury require emergency treatment, Newport Ambulance will be called and your child will be transported to the hospital you have designated on your registration form. If the ambulance is called, his or her teacher will accompany your child in the ambulance, and you will be asked to meet them at the hospital.

Please be sure that at least one of the emergency contact people designated on your child's registration form is available at all times. If you are going to be out of town, please leave a number where you can be reached. **Whenever there are any changes regarding your address, home phone, work address, phone, emergency contact people, or phone numbers, please notify the office immediately and update your registration form.**

CSEEECC regularly conducts evacuation drills during which the teachers and children practice exiting the building, crossing the parking lot and meeting at the flagpole. In the case of an actual emergency the whole Center will continue on to the Country Kitchen restaurant next to LaValley's Building Supply where the Director will begin contacting families with information and further instructions.

Please ensure that your child always has appropriate footwear in the event of an evacuation.

Cinnamon Street staff wear protective (non latex) gloves whenever encountering another's body fluids.

Promoting Good Health

New Hampshire State law requires that all children enrolled in a childcare program must have had a physical examination before entering the program and every year through their fifth birthday. Each family must provide verification of up-to-date immunization records (unless he/she has state exemption for religious reasons) before their child can attend the program. As your child receives updates on immunizations, his/her health form must be updated. Any screening pertinent to the care and education of the child must be on file at the Center.

It is the policy of CSEEECC to emphasize good health practices. Everyone: staff, children, and visitors are encouraged to practice frequent hand washing. Also cooking areas, restrooms, and play areas are disinfected on a daily basis.

Please label all of your child's clothing and belongings to prevent accidental wearing or use by others.

Recognizing Signs of Illness

Staff will assess, on a daily basis, the health of each child upon arrival at the Center and throughout the day. Illness spreads quickly in-group care situations. If your child has a fever of 101° F, and/or diarrhea, uncontrollable coughing, sore throat, vomiting, or any other symptoms that would impair or prohibit his

² RSA 265:107

participation in the regular early learning program, your child should not attend Cinnamon Street that day. If any of these symptoms develop while your child is in attendance, you will be contacted to make arrangements for alternate care. A doctor's visit may be required at the Director's discretion. Children must be free of illness and fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the Center. We use the following guidelines for return to school from these common illnesses: (For a more comprehensive list or clarification see the Director.)³

Chicken Pox	When all the pox are scabbed over [usually about 6 days]
Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever	24 hours after medication is started, no fever for 24 hours
Impetigo	24 hours after medication is started
Conjunctivitis	24 hours after medication is started
Lice	After completion of treatment- no live eggs

Policy on Administering Medication

Medications may be dispensed to children upon completion of an Authorization to Administer Medication form. This form records the name of the child, name of the medication, dosage, dates to be administered, and the signature of the child's guardian authorizing Cinnamon Street staff to dispense the medication. Each time the medication is dispensed, the teacher will note the name of the medication, time dispensed, dose, and initials of the staff member administering. NH State law requires that all medication be in the original container and that the directions on the container be followed, and that over-the-counter medicines must have the dosage for young children on the label otherwise a physician's prescription is necessary.

Nutritious Meals and Snacks

CSEEECC is eligible to receive Federal reimbursement for meals based on household income. This assists us in providing a nutritious breakfast and an afternoon snack each day. Breakfast is made up of a whole grain, fresh or canned fruit or vegetable and low fat milk, [whole milk for children 2 and under]. The afternoon snack has two components; ie yogurt and banana. Fresh water is often offered with the afternoon snack as well as throughout the day. A monthly menu is posted on your child's classroom bulletin board.

"In accordance with Federal law and the US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA Director of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or Call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY) USDA us an equal opportunity provider and employer."

When preparing your child's lunch, please include a cold pack and any utensils needed. CS does not serve candy or soda, if these items are in your child's lunch box they will be left there for home consumption. Microwaves are available to heat up leftovers, etc.

When There is a Food Allergy

A physician must diagnose food allergies. Children who are allergic to milk, milk products, grains etc, must have a Meal Prescription form on file at Cinnamon Street identifying the allergy and signed by a practitioner in order to be exempted from eating these foods. In the event that a child must refrain from certain foods, a substitute from the same food group will be offered. All efforts will be made to prevent accidental

³ NH Childcare Program Licensing Rules He-C 4000 p.45, Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards 2002

consumption of the allergy-causing food. The child's name and allergy will be posted conspicuously in all food preparation and serving areas.

A Time for Resting

An important component of your child's busy day is the built-in time for rest. This "down time" is a NH state regulation for all children attending a full-day childcare program. Your child is provided with a mat on which to relax for at least 30 minutes. NH state law requires the mats to be covered. Please send in a sleeping bag or a sheet and blanket for use throughout the week. Sleeping items will be sent home at the end of each week for washing; all mats and crib mattresses are sanitized weekly.

Infants and young toddlers rest according to their individual biological clocks. Their caregivers work hard to understand each one's unique temperament and routine. Children will not be forced to sleep or stay awake.

Lots of Outdoor Play

Fresh air and large motor play are essential to children's health and development. Cinnamon Street teachers try to offer outside play every day (unless the weather is extreme). Please equip your child each day with all the appropriate clothing.

Sunscreen, insect repellent, and filled water bottles are required in season.

Guiding Children's Behavior

Young children are engaged in the task of learning about the world around them. It's understood that they may not have the language, experience, or social skills needed to interact effectively with others. Cinnamon St teachers work hard to redirect negative behaviors toward positive learning experiences. Children are offered reasonable choices reflecting their individual developmental stage and temperament. Through this practice, they learn to make successful decisions; which boosts their self-esteem, thus supporting their emotional growth.

Occasionally a problem may arise in which a child may be overly aggressive and/or frequently cause visible harm to other children and/or staff. In this case, every effort will be made to work with the child and his family to design and implement a behavior plan. At times it may be recommended that the family consult a behavior specialist. A reasonable time period in which to demonstrate improvement would be a necessary goal in the behavior plan. If the harmful behavior is not resolved, it may be deemed necessary for the family to seek an alternative setting for the child. This should not be seen as a punishment or a judgment of either the parents or the child, but rather a better match for the child's current needs. A future re-enrollment may be a possibility.

Transportation

As part of the Before & After Kindergarten program, Cinnamon Street provides one-way transportation to children attending Kindergarten at Richards Elementary School. In order to benefit from this transportation arrangement, your child must be enrolled in the morning Kindergarten program.

On rare occasions, transportation may not be provided, this could be because of a mechanical problem, or because the weather conditions have deteriorated to a point where using our van would not be safe. If this occurs, families and the respective schools will be notified. Families would then be responsible for arranging alternate transportation plans.

Cinnamon Street is a bus stop for enrolled children who attend the Newport public schools. The bus arrives at the stop at approximately 7:10 AM for the middle school students and 7:50 AM for the Kindergarten and elementary students.

The Kindergarteners take the morning public school bus, and are picked up at Richards School in the Cinnamon Street van, at the close of the morning session, approximately 11:00 AM.

Things to Bring (Please remember to label)

- Nutritious lunch with cold pack and necessary utensils
- At least one complete set of extra clothing appropriate to the season
- Outdoor clothing as the weather dictates
- Sleeping bag or sheet and blanket
- Appropriate shoes for outdoor play, (not sandals)
- Diapers or pull-ups, wipes
- Water bottle (seasonal)
- Sunscreen, insect repellent (seasonal)
- Hard-soled slippers or shoes for indoor wear that are suitable for an evacuation (seasonal).

Please do not bring in toys from home unless by pre-arrangement with your child's Lead Teacher.

Suggested Readings, Websites and Community Resources

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen, and Listen So Kids Will Talk. Faber, Adele Mazlish, Elaine.1980
Isbn-0-380-57000-9

Parents as Teachers - Tel. 542-4855 - parenting education, information for families of children birth to three yrs.

Good Beginnings - Tel. 542-1848 - provides financial, emotional support to families with babies and young children

SAU #43 Early Childhood Support Program - Tel. 863-4300 - provides developmental screenings and evaluations for children 3-5 years of age

Early Supports and Services -Tel. 542-8706 - provides developmental screenings and evaluations for children 0-3.

www.iamyourchild.org - information on brain research, strategies for parenting issues

www.zerotothree.org - many child development topics, strategies

www.nhptv.org/parents - educational resource

www.pbs.org - educational resource

www.earthskids.com - articles, resources for families, teachers, caregivers

www.aap.org - American Academy of Pediatrics, information on childhood illness and treatment

www.nichcy.org - National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, provides information on disabilities and related issues.

www.naeyc.org - National Association for the Education of Young Children, child development, educational resource

www.newport.lib.nh.us - Newport Richards Free Library

www.newport.k12.nh.us/ - Newport Public Schools