



Family Matters Child Care Center, Inc.

Policies for Parents

Helping Build Stronger and Healthier Families

Family Matters Child Care Center, Inc.

Parent Handbook

**5452 14th Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95820**

Days and hour of Operation

**Monday -Friday
6:30 am - 6:00 pm**

**(916) 457-4067 Office
(916) 453-9941 Fax**

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Our Philosophy Statement

Family Matters Child Care Center, Inc., (FMCCC) believe children can learn through play if the curriculum is flexible enough to allow for individual growth, with enough structure to nurture their social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development; enhancing their self-confidence; and foster a positive attitude about learning.

FMCCC was created to render services to children and their parents, as well as to serve as an outreach for the community. Children need an environment that is safe and conducive to promote good mental and physical health. Your questions, comments, and input are important so that we can work as a team to achieve the very best experiences for your child.

Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.
Proverb 22:6

Admission Policy

Enrollment is open to any child 6 weeks of age through 6th grade, without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, national and ethnic origination, disability, or creed, provided the child will benefit from the program offered, and not poses a threat to the health and safety of other children enrolled or to the staff. Enrollment priority is generally given to siblings of current children.

A number of other factors are considered and determine enrollment of individual children, including: date of application and philosophic compatibility of parents with our program.

Vacancies that are reserved more than two weeks in advance of actual enrollment require a non-refundable payment of the first month's tuition upon reservation.

A child is initially placed in a classroom according to age appropriateness. As the year progresses, he/she may be moved to another classroom based on individual needs, the teacher's evaluation, administrative observations and the parent's permission.

Children with Special Needs

Family Matters Child Care Center welcomes the opportunity to enroll children with a range of developmental delays, disabilities and medical conditions. Factors for enrollment consideration include, but may not be limited to, how well each child's individual needs will be met in the context of the program's philosophy, group size, teacher-child ratio, staff expertise, and the number of other children with specialized needs within any group.

The Center also works with the Quality Collaborative and the Special Education Department of the Sacramento school districts.

Regretfully, Family Matters is not able to provide therapeutic companions or individual aids. If you would like more information on our program's inclusion of children with unique and special needs, please contact the program director.

Enrollment Procedure and Annual Enrollment

In addition to the application for admission, a packet of enrollment forms must be filled out and signed before the child enters the program.

Upon confirmation of enrollment, a Director schedules time, if necessary, with parents to review all forms and requirements.

A \$75.00 annual enrollment fee is due at the time of enrollment, and is assessed each October as an annual fee to cover the administration of enrollment on an annual basis.

The Health Forms and Immunization Records are required by the State of California for school entry. The parents of all newly enrolling children must turn in this health information and all reenrolling children must have up to date records. Please refer to your child's individual program instructions for information regarding your child's immunization requirements.

The State Immunization Project contacts us shortly after school begins to check that all enrolled children have up-to-date records on file. They will not allow children to attend school until these records are received. If you do not immunize your child, there is an exemption section on the back of the California Immunization Form for you to sign.

Parents Comments

As a partner in the care of your child, we are always interested in your comments regarding the care and education that your child receives at Family Matters Child Care Center.

Family Matters is interested in facilitating a positive relationship between parents and staff. We have many avenues to open the communication cycle. Some of the opportunities available to you include: daily conversations during drop-off and pick-up time, establishing regular phone conversation time, initiating parent conferences and reading monthly newsletters. If you are finding that these particular methods are not working for you, please feel free to approach any of the teaching or administrative staff to discuss your needs with them.

Hours of Operation

Family Matters is open year round. Monday through Friday. Hours of operation are also printed on the inside front cover of this handbook.

Contract Hours

Children will only be accepted after 9:00am if your contract states. For example if your contract states 10:00am – 2:00pm Monday – Friday, you are allowed to bring your child(ren). If your contract states 8:00am -2:00pm please do not bring your child(ren) in at 11:00am. We do not like to turn you away, however we will.

Late Pick Up Penalty Fees

Children may not be left at the child care center until the opening time and must be picked up by the closing time. (Please refer to admission agreement)

The Center reserves the right to impose a penalty for picking your child(ren) up after his or her schedule ends. The charge is \$15.00 for each 1 to 15 minute period you are late. These fees must be paid at the time of late pick up to the staff member who is with your child.

Tuition Payment/Modification

All tuition is due in advance. Monthly tuition is due by the last day of each month, in advance for the following month. The annual tuition is computed to allow for periods when the program is closed. This total amount has been divided into equal monthly payments, due on the FIRST OF EACH MONTH. This means that the total amount is payable each month regardless of your child's attendance or times when the program is closed. Late charges will be assessed if tuition is not received on time, (see your monthly enrollment agreement form for amount). No cash is accepted at the center. All payments must be made by check, money order, or cashier's check. Any account over 30 days past due may be referred to a collection agency, in which a \$40.00 service charge will be added.

Thirty days notice will be given prior to any rate changes.

Trial Period/Termination of Services/Refund

The first two weeks of enrollment are considered probationary for everyone; care may be terminated anytime during the first two-week period. After the probationary period, either party may terminate this agreement by giving written notice. Please keep in mind the contract is not considered terminated until either party gives written notice.

Refunds will be honored during trail period with a written notice to the centers director. For example if you are not happy with our services or we feel your child is not going to benefit from our services your money will be refunded to you as long as it is during the trial period.

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes a two week prior written notice is required in order to make any changes in your child's schedule. This also includes if your child's school schedule changes (*for example, off track, Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Break, and/or etc.*) If your work schedule changes and you need to change your hours of care (*for example*

from 8:00 am to 6:30 am) approved will be based on the space availability. With this schedule change a new enrollment agreement must be signed.

Unscheduled Days

Family Matters does not allow children to come to the center on unscheduled days without prior approval by the center director.

Withdrawal from the Center

A two week prior written notice is required in order to withdraw your child from the center without any penalties. Withdrawal of your child prior to the two week written notice will constitute a two week tuition penalty.

It is important for your child to be given an opportunity to say good-bye and have a sense of closure when he or she leaves the program. Please let your child and classroom staff know in advance of your child's last day, so that the transition can be a positive experience for your child, his or her friends, and teachers.

Termination of Enrollment

Enrollment will be considered terminated if

- Payment is delinquent.
- Parent fails to comply with this Agreement or any other rules of the Center.
- The Center is unable to meet the needs of the child or it is not in the best interest of the Center or other children enrolled to have the child continue in attendance.

Permission Form

Permission form, allows your child the use of all play equipment, go on field trips by way of walks and/or transported in the center vehicle, photos to be taken of child in association with the center programs and possibly used of publicity and emergency medical care if needed.

When transporting your children by car, your child will be placed in proper child safety seats and/or seat belt.

Meals at Family Matters Child Care Center

Two meals and two snacks are provided. If a child attends care in the morning he/she will have breakfast, morning/afternoon snack, and lunch. *Breakfast is served at 8:00am and over at 8:30am.* All meals and snacks will be in compliance with the nutritional standards set by Child and Adult Care Food Program.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. 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, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C.

20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Nutrition at Family Matters Child Care Center

Our developmental philosophy recognizes mind and body as an interactive system. As such, pressures put upon any one part of the system affect the total functioning of the child, mentally, emotionally, and physically. Likewise, nourishment of any part enhances functioning at all levels.

Food is one way we can nourish ourselves. With this in mind, we use nutritious foods for snacks and meals to further facilitate optimal mental, emotional, and physical functioning of the children, and encourage parents to do the same. These include whole grain products, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, and proteins.

After observing the children's eating habits, we have come up with a few suggestions for home:

- Keep portions small unless your child has a large appetite -- a whole sandwich is usually too much. Usually the filling is enough (children often throw away the bread).
- Keep the sweets and starches to a minimum -- we suggest, at most, once a week. Children who have sweets or chips in their lunch want to eat them first and don't have an appetite for the rest of their food. Again, keep the portions small.
- We urge caution for some foods for children under five, to avoid incidents of choking. Grapes, hot dogs, carrots and other foods should be cut up avoiding the "coin" style cut, instead cutting in quarters or strips.

Suggested foods:

- Proteins: pieces of meat, yogurt, cheese (w/ crackers), eggs, chicken, cottage cheese, tuna, almond butter. (*The Center restricts peanuts and peanut butter due to allergies.*)
- Fruit: any fresh fruit, unsweetened applesauce.
- Vegetables: carrots, peas, cherry tomatoes, raw broccoli or cauliflower, or other fresh vegetables.
- Carbohydrates: whole wheat bread, whole grain crackers.

Peanut and Peanut Butter Restriction

The Family Matters Child Care Center implements a program wide practice that expressly prohibits peanuts and peanut butter from the infant/toddler, preschool and school-age program. Family Matters Child Care Center will not be purchasing or serving any food or snacks with peanuts or peanut butter. In order to facilitate this practice, we request the cooperation of all the parents in these programs to help us achieve this goal.

This particular practice has been implemented to address the needs of children who have a life-threatening allergy to peanuts. Simple contact with peanuts or their oils could be potentially fatal to these children. Even though the program restricts peanuts and peanut butter, it is critical that you notify a director of any food allergy, including an allergy to peanuts.

Signing in and out of children

Signing your child in and out is a state licensing requirement. You are required to sign your child in and out each day. You must sign in and out using a black or blue pen. You must sign in and out using your first initial and full last name.

If someone other than the parent or guardian is picking up a child, the program must be notified in writing. This person must also sign your child in and out. Your child will not be released to someone unfamiliar to us without notification and a photo I.D. Please see a director if you have any questions regarding this policy.

Signing in and out during a school day

Children may only leave during a school day for doctor appointments. Aside from doctor appointments, once a child is signed out they are finished with our program for the remainder of the day. Please see a director if you have any questions regarding this policy.

Earthquake and Fire Drills

We practice disaster preparedness procedures with the children twice a month; once for fire and once for earthquake. See your child's classroom for posted evacuation procedures and maps. If parents or caregivers are on our campus during a fire drill, they will be asked to follow our evacuation procedures along with our students and teachers.

Curriculum

The early years in a child's life set the tone for future learning. Our goal at FMCCC is to stay current on research in child development so that we are able to build a foundation for each child that last a lifetime. Our curriculum is designed with specific objectives for each age level and child; however, the following goals are incorporated into every classroom:

- Prayer
- Developing safe and healthy habits in young children
- Fostering positive self-esteem
- Providing opportunities for creative expression
- Supporting the development of social skills
- Stimulating cognitive problem-solving skills
- Strengthening communications skills necessary for listening, reading, writing, and speaking
- Enhancing fine motor and gross motor skills
- Assessing the individual needs of each child

Anti-Bias Curriculum

Family Matters Child Care center views anti-bias curriculum as a daily way of life. Our goal is to provide the educational conditions in which all children are able to value who they are and also promote each child's comfort with and respect for differences in others. We foster each child's ability to think critically about bias in all of its forms (ethnicity, race, gender, class, abilities, etc.); and to cultivate each child's ability to stand up for

her/himself and for others in the face of bias and to act as change makers in our society. In each classroom the anti-bias curriculum emerges in concert with the children's development.

Parent Participation

Family Matters Child Care Center requires contributions of money and time from a variety of sources outside of program fees to sustain the service that it provides. We rely upon our population of parents to provide our basic foundation of support. This year there is a mandatory requirement for all Infant, Toddler and Preschool parents to provide service to the organization. The benefits of this involvement include:

- An increased awareness of and positive involvement in the program utilization of skills of parents with specific talents which would otherwise be unobtainable or expensive to acquire.
- Increased satisfaction on the part of parents because of their involvement .A reduction in program costs and thus tuition rate increases
- A strengthening of the community of the program through a fostering of mutual knowledge and appreciation among our Families.

Parent participation is required of all parents enrolled at Family Matters Child Care Center. Any family may “buy out” of their participation by paying on the scale for hours they wish to purchase. Guidelines for participation are as follows:

Hourly requirement per family is 15 hours per year per full time schedule and 8 hours per year for part time schedules.

Additional guidelines and participation opportunities for parents are described separately, and included in the enrollment packet.

Fundraising

Family Matters Child Care Center has a few fundraising projects we participate in each year. We participate in cartridge recycling through Cartridges for Kids We also have a Shopping link on our website with Amazon.com. Family Matters receives a percentage of every purchase.

Parents are expected to contribute to fundraising for the Center by participating in fundraising projects and events.

Support Services for Parents

In our efforts here at the center to support the family structure, we continue to look for ways to meet parent needs as well as children's.

Services currently available to parents are:

- Individual counseling and/or referral.
- Parent meetings to discuss child rearing issues.

- Informal parent discussion groups to discuss parenting issues.
- A section in our monthly newsletters to facilitate sharing of resources among families.
- Lending library of books on child rearing and child development.
- Social events with other families.

Rights of the Licensing Agency/Inspection Authority

The State of California Department of Social Services has the right to enter and inspect our center at any time, for any reason, without advance notice. They have the authority to interview any child and staff member and inspect all records without prior consent. The Department of Social Services has the authority to observe the physical condition of any child and may have a licensed, medical professional physically examine any child.

Child Guidance Policy

Clear and consistent age appropriate limits on behavior are set at Family Matters Child Care Center. The environment is arranged to minimize the necessity of limits, and children are allowed to participate in the decision making process. Family Matters Child Care Center staff approach discipline in a positive rather than punitive manner. Teachers model appropriate behavior and provide positive reinforcement, praising children for exhibiting those behaviors. Additionally, the teachers provide reminders and cues as to acceptable behavior, as well as facilitate problem solving amongst the children.

When unacceptable behavior occurs, the first course of action is positive redirection, with the understanding that the child may return to an area or activity when they are able to use proper behavior. Toddlers and two-year-old children are given many messages and reminders from teachers regarding what is appropriate and safe.

FMCCC Discipline Guidelines for Children:

- You may not hurt anyone in the school
- You may not hurt any animal in the school
- You may not hurt property in the school

If a child exhibits continually disruptive and unsafe behavior that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the teachers will discuss the situation with a director and parent to develop an action plan. All reasonable attempts will be made to work with the child and the family to resolve the behavior problem.

Staff will keep parents informed of the progress made. Referrals to community resources or an outside evaluation may be suggested. If a parent refuses to work with the staff in resolving the problem and/or the behavior problem persists resulting in a chronic situation requiring greater need for care than FMCCC teachers can provide, then the child's enrollment is subject to termination.

At no time will a child be struck, roughly handled, verbally abused, or demeaned. Bullying will not be tolerated. This behavior is categorically prohibited. This rule applies to all adults and children on the Family Matters Child Care Center premises.

Developmental Assessments and Conferences

In lieu of traditional report cards, developmental assessments for each child are written every spring for our infant, toddler and preschool program. The reports are typically given to the parents during the end of the year parent-teacher conference.

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled a minimum of one time per year, but additional conferences can be requested by parents or teachers.

Ratios

Our experience has confirmed that one of the most significant factors in providing a quality environment for children in a group setting is the number of professional staff available with whom the children can interact and relate. More staff provide better supervision and care, they also provide a greater variety of personality types for a child to experience and increases the probability that your child will find a "special someone" to bond with.

Volunteers

Family Matters Child Care Centers encourages and supports the participation of volunteer aides, from a diversity of backgrounds, in the classroom. The purpose of volunteers is to enrich the program by supporting the paid staff through performing whatever duties may be appropriate for them to do.

An underlying guideline to the use of volunteers is that they always contribute positively to the program and do not detract from it.

Holidays and In Service days

Family Matters Child Care Center observes the following Holidays and closed for staff training on:

<i>January</i>	New Year's Day	<i>January</i>	Martin Luther King, Jr.,
<i>February</i>	President's Day	<i>February</i>	In Service Day
<i>March/April</i>	Good Friday	<i>May</i>	Memorial Day
<i>July</i>	Independence Day	<i>September</i>	Labor Day
<i>October</i>	In Service Day	<i>November</i>	Veterans Day
<i>November</i>	Thanksgiving Day	<i>November</i>	Day after Thanksgiving
<i>December</i>	Christmas Eve	<i>December</i>	Christmas Day
<i>December</i>	New Year's Eve		

Special Instructions

Any special instruction or changes to existing instruction must be in writing and left with the director to insure proper follow up. Examples: change in your work number, change of guardian, pick up information, etc.

Enrollment Forms

Before your child may attend the Center, all paperwork must be completed in full and on file in the office. Enrollment Forms must be turned in no later than two working days prior to their scheduled first day.

FIRST DAY OF ATTENDANCE

On the first day of attendance, please provide your child with:

1. A complete change of clothes, labeled, with extra underpants.
2. A child size blanket and pillow, labeled (if napping).
3. If your child is not using the toilet routinely, you will need to provide diapers and other Supplies.

Extra Clothes

Each child must have one complete set of clothing labeled with their name. If your child is being potty trained, at least 2 complete sets of clothing are necessary, along with 5 pairs of training pants/plastic pants per day. Please update your child's clothing as the weather permits and as he/she grows.

All children must come to child care in clean clothes every day and in a clean dry diaper or underpants if potty training and ready for the day. If a child arrives in a wet or dirty diaper the parent will take time to change him/her before leaving for work. We change the children every 2 to 3 hours unless they are dirty. (Please make sure your child is dry we do not want him/her with a uncomfortable diaper rash)

Nap Time Supplies

Parents need to supply crib sheets and/or sheet for cots, blanket and lightweight towel. Personal items are to be taken home weekly for laundering.

Appropriate Dress

Children should be dressed comfortably for the day keeping weather and temperature in mind. Layers are best! As much as possible, children should wear **clothes that can get dirty** without it being a source of anxiety or frustration for your family. Children usually, but not always, wear paint smocks.

Shoes: Sneakers are best! In hot summer weather, sturdy sandals are acceptable. Active children need to wear supportive, soft-soled, flexible non-skid shoes. No flip-flops please, and no boots or shiny-soled "party" shoes.

Toys & Accessories

We discourage toys being brought from home, as they are subject to being lost or broken and can sometimes generate excessive conflict among the children.

Reporting to the Child Protective Service

Under California State Law Family Matters is mandated to report suspected child abuse/neglect to the child protective service.

Family Matters Child Care Center Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Policy is based on the assumption that it is the responsibility of the entire school community to do what it can, within the law, to protect all its children from any episode of child abuse originating from any source.

Parents should be aware that all suspected child abuse reports made from Family Matters Child Care Center go immediately to the Department of Child Protective Services. Their trained personnel decide whether evidence exists to continue an investigation or to drop it.

At the same time, Family Matters Child Care Center does train all its teachers in knowing what might or might not appear to be suspected abuse. In this way, only reasonable reporting of suspected abuse is made. It is the policy of the school and a state mandate that anyone who works directly with children and suspects abuse must file a report. Family Matters' policy is to adhere to the suspected child abuse reporting laws of the State of California.

All center employees must first be cleared through the State Department of Justice by submission of the following:

Staff Qualifications

Our staff consists of highly qualified educators trained in Early Childhood Education. Our high teacher/child ratios allow for the staff to plan and provide a high quality program in each of our classrooms.

Family Matters Child Care Center is committed to maintaining a staff that is on the cutting edge of the Early Childhood Education field. Our teachers are provided with opportunities for professional growth. **All staff** participates in staff development opportunities and are required to take First Aid/CPR training. Staff are also required to have fingerprints, Child Abuse Index check, Criminal Records check and cleared.

Health Policies

The State of California requires exclusion of any child from the program who displays symptoms of illness. Parents are asked to make good judgment and keep children at home while they are sick.

If your child becomes ill at the center with any of the following conditions or symptoms, we will contact you to pick up your child from the Center (within a ½ hour) in order to prevent contagion of other children and staff as well as provide comfort to your child:

- Fever (temperature of 99F taken under the arm)
- Any rash unless determined to be noncontiguous

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea twice in one day or uncontrolled diarrhea (stools runs out of diaper or child unable to get to toilet on time)
- Uncontrolled productive cough (raising phlegm)
- Any skin rash, lesion or wound with bleeding or oozing of clear fluid or pus
- Conjunctivitis, also known as pink eye with white or yellow discharge
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Scabies, head lice or rash infestations
- Constant, uncontrolled nasal discharge of yellow/green mucous
- Headache or Head Pain
- Any condition preventing the child from participating comfortably in usual program activities
- Any illness or condition that requires one-on-one care
- Any contagious illness which is reportable to the Department of Public Health
- Behavior not normal for a child

Ill children must be excluded from the program a minimum of 24 hours or until they are no longer contagious. Please note that symptoms free for 24 hours is defined as 24 hours from the last incidence of the symptom or from time the child was sent home from the center.

If a child arrives at the center with symptoms of possible illness, they will not be allowed to stay. If symptoms begin after a child is at the center the child will be kept separate from the other children. The parent will be notified immediately and is required to pick up the child within ½ hour of phone call, by the parent or an authorized person from the pick up list.

If your child contracts a contagious illness, please notify us so we can pass on the information onto other parents, along with the consulting physician's recommendations.

Medicines

According to California law, medication will only be administered by staff if there are specific written instructions on the medicine chart each day that your child needs the medicine. If more than one medication is to be administered, each medication needs to be logged on a separate line.

All prescription medicines must be current, in the original container with the doctor's instructions on the label to include your child's name and the date. Medicines cannot be given to children in their bottles without the doctor's express written instructions.

We also are required by law to have a doctor's prescription (a photocopy is acceptable) for non-prescription medicines (including topical creams). These non-prescription medicines must be in the original container with the label readable and your child's name marked on it. The prescription must be dated and indicated a period of time during which the prescription is valid.

As with prescription medicines, non-prescription medicines will only be administered if we have written instruction from the parent to follow on the daily medication chart. Medication will be given by the child's teacher.

Services to be provided if a child has a medical or dental emergency. Family Matters will contact the parent/guardian or the person's authorized on the emergency form to inform him/her of the situation. If no one is available 911 will be contacted to take further action.

Please give medication directly to the office, do not leave them in the diaper bag.

Emergency Information

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the center in writing if there are any changes to the initial emergency form. It is mandatory to complete a Consent form for Medical Treatment.

In case of an emergency Family Matters will do the following:

- Attempt to contact a parent, guardian or other emergency contact
- Attempt to contact the child's physician

If FMCCC cannot contact you or the child's physician, we will do any or all the following;

- Call 911
- Call another physician or paramedic
- Have the child taken to an emergency hospital in the company of any staff member

Any expenses incurred in the above will be the ultimate responsibility of the child's family. Any eligible expenses will be covered by the center's insurance plan.

Prayer

Family Matters is directed, dedicated, and committed to excellence. We believe in the power of prayer, we believe God has blessed Family Matters with all that we are, and all that we are going to be. Prayer is a daily part of our curriculum.

Family Matters Child Care Center admits families of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to children and families at the center.

It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, age, sex, or disability, in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other center-administered programs.

Sign Off Sheet

I, _____, have received a copy of the Family Matters Child Care Center, Inc., (FMCCC) Policies for Parents and I have familiarized myself with the contents of this manual.

Child(ren) Name(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

FMCCC Staff: _____

Date: _____