



Parent Handbook

- **Can include a letter on the first page-welcoming and thanking parents for trusting us with their child(ren)**

About Us

Saint John Community Child Care is a childcare center offering high quality care and education to children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age.

Our center is open Monday-Friday from 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM and is located within Saint John Community Christian Church at 1620 US-158 Eure, NC.

Vision Statement

At Saint John Community Child Care, our vision is to nurture a vibrant environment where children learn, thrive, and grow into compassionate and confident individuals. We aspire to be a trusted foundation for early childhood education, fostering creativity, curiosity, and lifelong learning while supporting families and enriching our community.

Mission

At Saint John Community Child Care, our mission is to create a nurturing and educational environment that fosters the holistic development of each child that will be in our care. We are committed to providing a safe and loving space where children can explore, learn, and grow, laying the foundation for a lifetime of success.

Licensing

The North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (NCDCDEE) ensures the safety of children in NC childcare programs by monitoring and licensing child care facilities. A copy of licensing rules is available in the Director's office, and a copy is available online at <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov>

Curriculum

Saint John Community Child Care uses Abeka curriculum in conjunction with the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development (NC FELD) to create their lesson and activity plans, as well as to differentiate instruction based on the needs of the individual children.

Operational Calendar

We will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day (1 day in January)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (1 day in January)
- President's Day (1 day in February)
- Easter (1 day in either March or April)
- Memorial Day (1 day in May)
- Juneteenth (1 day in June)
- Independence Day (1 day in July)
- Labor Day (1 day in September)
- Indigenous People Day (1 day in October)
- Veteran's Day (1 day in November)
- Thanksgiving (2.5 days in November- ½ day Wednesday, full days Thursday and Friday)
- Christmas (2.5-5 days in December, rotating each year depending on which days the holiday falls on)

If any of the above listed holidays fall on a weekend, Saint John Community Child Care may elect to close in observance of that holiday on either the Friday before or the Monday following that holiday. Tuition will **NOT** be prorated due to holiday closures to ensure that staff can still be compensated.

Inclement Weather

Saint John Community Child Care will make every effort to remain open during normal operational hours for parents and families who need to report to work during inclement weather. The Director will remain alert to updating weather conditions and should the need to close for the safety of students, their families, and/or staff arise, families will be notified. Although every effort will be made to remain open, tuition will **NOT** be prorated due to closures or early dismissals for inclement weather. Employees will be compensated for their normally scheduled working hours in an emergency closure.

If the decision is made to close early due to inclement weather, parents and families are required to pick their child(ren) up as soon as possible, and no later than 2 hours from the time of notification.

Smoking and Tobacco Policy

Saint John Community Childcare strictly prohibits smoking of any kind on the center's property. Possession of smoking products including cigarettes, vapes, e-cigarettes, or any form of tobacco and/or drug are also prohibited on the center's property. This policy applies to families, visitors, and center staff.

Staff members are discouraged from smoking in their free time. Third hand smoke presents dangers that young children are especially susceptible to. Staff members will not be permitted into a classroom setting if the scent of smoke can be detected on their person or their personal belongings.

Employment Qualifications

All employees must be at least 18 years of age with a high school diploma or GED and a valid qualification letter issued by DCDEE following the required background check.

All prospective employees must be able to provide the Director with at least 3 professional references that can be contacted.

All employees working in a classroom must have completed their credentials coursework (EDU 119 or equivalency) within the first 6 months of employment. Lead Teachers must have or be working toward their associate's degree in early childhood education or related field (minimum). At least one year of classroom experience is

Background Check

The North Carolina Child Care Law (General Statute 110-90.2) requires a criminal background check (CBC) be conducted and a determination of fitness be made on all persons who work or provide childcare in a licensed or regulated childcare facility.

A Criminal Background Check includes checking each of the following:

- Federal and North Carolina State Fingerprint Databases
- National and North Carolina Sex Offender Registries
- NC Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) database for state name check
- Responsible Individuals List (RIL) - The RIL is a list of those individuals that have been substantiated against for child abuse or serious neglect through NC's local departments of social services.
- Child Maltreatment Registry (CMR) - The CMR is a list of individuals who have maltreated a child in childcare since the January 2016 Session Law 2015-123 took effect.

- State Criminal history database for name check, sex offender registry, and child abuse/neglect registries from any other state of residency within the last five (5) years, if applicable.

Parent Communication and Involvement

Effective communication skills are fundamental to building positive relationships with families. Saint John Community Childcare employees are most successful when they are intentional in how they communicate with families and continuously strive to improve their engagement practices.

Communication occurs in a variety of ways and through a range of methods—verbally, nonverbally, and in writing; formally or informally; and one-time, daily, or occasionally.

Communication with families should be open, honest, and respectful. Effective communication requires recognizing that receiving information from others is as or more valuable than sharing information. Saint John Community Childcare employees who focus more on communicating their own ideas and expertise with their families miss valuable opportunities to not only learn important insights from the parents but to strengthen their collaborative relationships with them.

Holding effective drop-off and pickup conversations is a skill that employees hone with experience and practice. There must be a balance between being overly brief and engaging in a lengthy conversation that pulls them away from speaking with other parents or from supervision and teaching responsibilities. As such, drop-off and pickup times are not the time to have a serious discussion about concerns or behavior issues. If a parent initiates such a discussion, employees should redirect the conversation with the acknowledgment that their concerns are important and will be addressed at a place and time that respects their privacy.

If a situation occurs that is more significant in nature or there are reasons to elevate the situation, employees should immediately call for support from the Director.

Opportunities should be provided at least once monthly for parents/guardians to participate in classroom activities at no additional cost to them. Examples can include reading to the children, participating in an art project, volunteering throughout the day, teaching children about their cultural heritage, etc.

Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse and Neglect

Each staff member is required to complete an official training on Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Children Abuse, Maltreatment, and Neglect within their first two weeks of employment.

North Carolina law requires all adults to report suspected child maltreatment. You do not need proof that maltreatment has occurred; you only need reasonable cause to suspect maltreatment. You do not need anyone's permission to file a report. For a comprehensive

explanation of the North Carolina law requiring all citizens to report cases of suspected child abuse, neglect, and dependency, [click here](#).

You can make a report of suspected maltreatment in a childcare setting to DCDEE by calling 919-527-6500 or 1-800-859-0829. DCDEE has the responsibility for all investigations of child maltreatment. The law requires that information about ongoing investigations must be kept confidential and, as such, will not be included on the DCDEE website.

If DCDEE determines that child maltreatment DID occur, DCDEE will share the investigation findings, the dates of all visits made during the investigation, and any corrective action taken.

If DCDEE determines that child maltreatment did NOT occur, DCDEE will share violations of child care licensure law or rules resulting from the investigation and any administrative action taken as a result. DCDEE cannot post on the website that a child maltreatment investigation occurred if the maltreatment was unsubstantiated.

Guidance, Touch, and Discipline Policy

The intent of the Guidance and Touch policy is to inform Saint John Community Child Care employees about their responsibilities for ensuring appropriate adult:child interactions.

Positive touching, such as hugging, holding hands, lap sitting, patting backs, and assisting in physical activities promotes affection and a sense of security for children. All positive touching of a child shall be with the child's approval and respectful of the personal privacy and personal space of the child. Positive touching also affects the safety and well-being of the child such as holding a child's hand when crossing the street or holding a child gently but firmly during a temper tantrum.

Inappropriate touching involves satisfaction of adult needs at the expense of the child or attempting to change the child's behavior with adult physical force. Examples of inappropriate touching include forced goodbye kisses, corporal punishment, slapping, striking, pinching, tickling for prolonged periods, fondling, or molestation.

A relaxed, personal relationship between staff and with children is essential to supporting good relations. However, every Saint John Community Childcare employee must always maintain a professional relationship with children.

The following interactions are considered inappropriate and are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment (including spanking, hitting, punching, slapping, pinching, shaking, exposure to extreme temperatures, or other measures producing physical pain, and any form of physical punishment) OR any humiliating, frightening, or threatening language or punishment
- Verbal abuse, abusive or profane language, criticism, or derogatory remarks about a child or family.
- Physical restraint; binding; restricting the movements of or placing of a child in a confined space as a form of punishment, or forcing the child to stay in a restricted space away from the group
- Any form of emotional abuse, including any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment
- Rejecting, ignoring, isolating, or exploiting a child.
- Withholding or forcing naps, meals or snacks
- Punishing for toileting accidents or a lapse in toilet trainings
- Withholding outdoor play
- Bodily harm from forceful pulling/jerking/grabbing a child from any position.
(Note: a physical response, such as a temporary hold or safely moving a child, may be needed for a child with unsafe behavior when there is an observable action that puts the child or others at risk for immediate harm, and it is probable that the action will lead to injury).
- Yelling at children
- Withholding or requiring physical activity

The following actions are considered appropriate and ARE allowed as forms of discipline/behavior management in the classroom:

- Praise, rewards, and encouragement
- Reasoning with and setting limits for children
- Modeling appropriate behavior for children

- Modification of the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur
- Listening to the children
- Providing alternatives for inappropriate behavior
- Providing children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors
- Treating the children as people and respecting their needs, desires, and feelings
- Ignoring minor misbehavior
- Explaining things to children on their levels
- Maintaining consistency in behavior management
- Small, age-appropriate, and supervised periods of time-out when all other techniques of redirection have failed.

Incident/Accident Reporting

In the event of an accident resulting in injury to a child requiring medical treatment, employees are required to implement general first aid techniques while comforting the child. They do not have the authority to apply any type of medication to any injury. Application of ice, soap, water, and a bandage are the only authorized care for injuries involving an open wound.

They must immediately notify the supervisor on duty if the emergency is of a serious nature. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately (the Director usually does this, or another designee). Parents will be notified to transport their child for medical attention, or the Director or designee will call **911** or the Emergency Medical System for an ambulance transport at the parent's request.

An Incident Report and log entry must be completed for all incident/accident reports for falls, scratches, bruises, bites, and scrapes that occur within the center, to include emergency situations. Parents/guardians will be informed of the incident/accident and will be asked to sign the report. All reports are maintained in accordance with record keeping requirements. Serious accidents and child abuse allegations are reported locally and to DCDEE.

Enrollment Policies

In order for a child to attend the center, all paperwork must be completed within the required timeline and all fees must be paid. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the child being unable to attend the daycare until all necessary paperwork and fees are submitted. It is important for parents to adhere to these guidelines to ensure a smooth enrollment process and to secure their child's spot in the center.

Enrollment Process

Prospective parents/guardians are invited to come to the center and pick up an application. Applicants may complete the application at the center or return it later. There will be a \$100 non-refundable administrative registration fee billed annually. Visits to tour the center are by appointment and will be scheduled during a time when there will be minimal distractions to the learning environment. A written two-week notice is required to withdraw from care.

Tuition and Fees

Saint John Community Child Care follows the subsidized child care market rates as set forth by the North Carolina Division of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) when creating their tuition rates. These rates are subject to change when market rates change, or as the star rating of the facility changes. Families will receive written notice of rate changes at least 30 days prior to the change taking effect.

<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Weekly Tuition Rate</u>
Infants (0-1 yrs)	\$215
Toddlers(1-2 years)	\$210
Early Preschool (3-4 years)	\$200
Preschool (4-5 years)	\$200
School Age- After School Care (5-12 years)	\$40.00
School Age- Full-Day Summer Care (5-12 years)	\$150.00

Tuition is due weekly on Monday mornings, prior to services being rendered. Payments may be made in advance, but children may not be dropped off for the week if payments have not been made for that week. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the Director, but are never guaranteed. If payment is not received, the child's spot cannot be reserved or held. Saint John Community Child Care DOES NOT offer part-time care,

except school-age care during the school year. If, for example, a family chooses to enroll their child, and only brings them to school 2-3 days out of the week, they are still responsible for paying the full amount of weekly tuition. Drop-in care may be allowable, operating on a daily tuition rate, based on need and the availability of space within the center. Please see the Director for additional details. Tuition is not prorated for holidays, emergency closures, personal illness, or family vacations. If a payment is late, a \$30 late fee will be applied. Additionally, if the payment and late fee are not paid, the child will not be allowed to attend school until the balance is cleared. Parents are required to provide a 2 week notice when trying to unenroll a child/children.

We offer a discounted rate for multiple children enrolling within the same household of 10% off of the total tuition bill. For example, if a family enrolls one infant at \$215/week and one preschooler at \$200/week, that would typically cost \$415. With a 10% discount, that rate would be \$373.50.

We also offer a discounted rate for active duty military families. Military families will receive 10% off of their tuition, even if that tuition is only for one child. Discounts are not stackable.

Tuition can be paid via cash, money order, cashier's check, credit, debit, or automatic ACH payments. In addition to tuition, there will be a \$100 non-refundable administrative registration fee billed annually.

Meals and Nutrition

Saint John Community Child Care will provide children enrolled in full-time care with breakfast, lunch, and 2 afternoon snacks. A monthly menu will be posted in each classroom outlining the details of those meals, and should any substitutions need to be made in the kitchen, that menu will be updated to reflect those changes. Families can fill out a form to opt out of the school's nutrition plan if they would like to provide their children's meals from home, however, those meals must still meet the following (same) guidelines as the meals provided by the center):

- Breakfast must include at least one serving of grains, one serving of protein, and one serving of either fruits or vegetables. Breakfast will be served with milk or a milk alternative.
- Lunch must include at least one serving of grains, one serving of protein, a milk or a milk alternative, and EITHER:
 - One serving of fruit AND one serving of vegetables
 - OR
 - Two servings of vegetables
- Snacks must include a serving of grains and a serving of fruits or a serving of vegetables.
- Items that are not considered to be of healthful, nutritional value such as candies, highly processed foods, sodas, "juice" drinks that contain no or very little real fruit juice, etc. Will not be served to children, even if brought from home, except on special occasions (for example, cupcakes for a birthday).

Infant feeding plans will be provided for parents of infant children to fill out that will help us determine what/when to feed infants. Saint John Community Child Care is proud to support breastfeeding mothers. If you need a private place to expel breast milk, please ask your child's teacher or Director. We are also able to store and provide breast milk to children throughout the day as indicated in your infant feeding plan.

Daily Program Requirements

Each child must arrive daily with all materials necessary to participate in the center's daily activities, including:

- Flexible, comfortable clothing that can get messy.
- Shoes that the child can put on and fasten themselves. Flip-flops are not allowed.
- At least 3 weather-appropriate changes of clothes for children 2 and under, or children who are not fully potty trained.
- At least 2 weather-appropriate change of clothes for children 3 and up that are fully potty trained.
- A comfort item and blanket for naptime (ONLY for ages 1+).
- A water bottle with their name on it (Children 1+)
- Diapers and wipes (if applicable)
- Any emergency medications that your child must take throughout the day.

Please keep in mind that ALL medications including topical medications (lip balms, sunscreens, bug sprays, lotions, etc.) must have a completed medication administration form and the medication must be taken in by the Director. Please also keep in mind that temporary medications cannot be given at school. For example, if your child has a cold and is taking Motrin, we will not be able to administer that at school. If your child needs to be medicated temporarily, they should be kept home during that time.

Illnesses and Exclusions from Care

We realize that it is difficult for working families to keep their children home, but exclusion from school will help prevent contagion that promotes the health and safety of your child, as well as other children in the center. Please keep in mind that there will be people in close contact with center staff and children that are immune compromised, so keeping your children home when they are sick can save lives. The following chart contains general guidelines for exclusion for certain illnesses:

Disease/Condition	If your child has been diagnosed with this disease, our program will:	When to allow your child to return:
Chickenpox (or rash suggestive of chickenpox)	• Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure and include a warning about aspirin use. • Contact the Child Care Health Consultant if needed to find out other preventative measures to take • Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	Approximately 5-7 days after the rash begins or when ALL blisters have scabbed over.
COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19	• Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact the Child Care Health Consultant if needed to find out other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	Guidance from the state is updated frequently. Please see the Director for more info.

Diarrheal Illness	Temporarily exclude a child that has had 2 or more diarrhea episodes in one day. Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	When the child is diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication
Fever	Temporarily exclude the child from childcare if the child has a fever of 100.4 or greater	When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease	- Exclude if the child has an open, draining lesion on hand or has lesions in the mouth and is drooling. - Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	When lesions heal and/or drooling ceases, and the child can participate in center activities including meals and outdoor times.
Impetigo	- Temporarily exclude the child from childcare - Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	After treatment has been started
Influenza	- Temporarily exclude the child from childcare - The program will notify all parents - Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.
Lice	Temporarily exclude the child from childcare	24 hours after treatment AND no signs of nits or lice
Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis	- Temporarily exclude the child with yellow eye drainage and itching - Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	24 hours after the first dose of medication and symptoms are mil

Pneumonia	• Temporarily exclude the child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing. • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities
Ringworm	• Temporarily exclude the child if lesions cannot be covered OR child cannot keep the lesions covered without monitoring • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures.	If unable to cover the lesion(s), after treatment begins and the lesion starts to shrink
RSV	• Temporarily exclude the child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing. • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities.
Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever	• Temporarily exclude the child from childcare • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures.	24 hours after antibiotics are started when the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and has the energy to participate in center activities
Tuberculosis	• Temporarily exclude the child from childcare • Contact local health department and Childcare Health Consultant • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures.	Exclude until a healthcare professional provides a written statement that the child is not infectious

Vomiting	• Temporarily exclude the child from childcare • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures	When the child is vomit-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication
----------	---	--

The Director reserves the right to exclude any child from care at any time if they are unable to participate in ALL of the center's daily activities.



**Saint John Community Child Care
Policies and procedures**

Parent Acknowledgment Form

Dear Parents/Guardians,

All of Saint John Community Child Care policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated to ensure the health and safety of each child.

Acknowledgment of Understanding

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Saint John Community Child Care Policies & Procedures. I understand that Saint John Community Child Care operates in compliance with these regulations to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for my child.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Saint John Community Child Care Administration