

**\*\*Please note: This handbook is NOT reflective of current HCCC COVID-19 protocol and policies.  
Please refer to our website for most current COVID-19 protocol and policies.  
This handbook is subject to change at any time. Upon any changes, HCCC families will be notified in writing  
by HCCC administration.**

# Family Handbook



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## **Introduction**

### **Statement of Purpose:**

The mission of the Holliston Community Children's Center is to provide a safe, happy and stimulating learning environment where children have the opportunity to grow at their own pace and in their own time; and to support all families by providing quality care to children in their parent's absence.

### **Licensing and Sponsorship:**

Holliston Community Children's Center is a non-profit, non-sectarian community service organization governed by the First Congregational Church of Holliston, U.C.C., incorporated in 1728. The Church appoints church members to the HCCC Advisory Board. This Board along with the Minister, oversees the Center's goals, policies, budget and appoints the Executive Director to manage the operations of the Center. The Holliston Community Children's Center is licensed to provide educational services and curriculum to children in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

(EEC). Parents can contact EEC for the program's compliance history at 10 Austin St., Worcester, MA 01609 or 508-798-5180. The Church building and all its grounds are non-smoking.

**History and Organization:**

The Center was first organized in 1955 to provide quality nursery and kindergarten education for 200 young children (2.9-6 years) from Holliston and area communities, and was called Community Nursery School and Kindergarten. On September 5th, 1974 service was extended to include educational childcare for young children as well as before and after school care for children in kindergarten through fourth grade. In November 1988, the Center began its Infant/Toddler program. The Center changed its name to Holliston Community Children's Center in June 1997 in order to promote a more professional view of the services provided. Currently HCCC serves children from eight weeks through third grade in the full-time child-care program, three to five-year olds in the preschool program and infants and toddlers in the playgroup.

**Educational Philosophy/Curriculum:**

The educational program at HCCC recognizes the developmental needs of the whole child with equal emphasis placed on physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth. Curriculum is responsive to all beliefs, cultures and values. Children at HCCC learn through experimentation and investigation, with adaptations made for all children to participate. The staff work in cooperation with the parents to; nurture children's development, anticipate their growth, share their efforts and successes and provide opportunities for language acquisition. Teachers work as a team and design the curriculum to meet each child's individual needs and program goals and follow MA Early Learning Guidelines.

**Purpose of this Handbook:**

This handbook is meant to be a guide to the personnel policies and procedures of the Center. The Executive Director designs and updates both the Staff and Family Handbooks periodically to reflect such policies and procedures. The policies listed in this handbook are subject to change or termination at any time.

**Statement of Non-Discrimination:**

Holliston Community Children's Center does not discriminate in providing service to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, economic background, political belief, ability differences, toilet training status, marital status, national origin or sexual orientation.

## **Enrollment Policies**

**Enrollment Process:**

Enrollment in the programs is based on placement on the wait list, in combination with finding a good fit for the child and the classroom and according to availability. Waiting list applications are received and filled on a first come/first serve basis. Priority is given to children: 1) with parents working at the Center 2), with siblings enrolled at the Center 3) or on the state voucher waiting list (see the Tuition Scholarship section). The part time preschool program may use a lottery system to allocate space.

Before children enroll at HCCC, families meet with the Executive Director or Assistant Director. At this meeting, parents are invited to visit the classrooms, meet the teachers and spend time observing the program and receive

and review written literature and policy information. Parents are required to put down a nonrefundable deposit should they decide to enroll.

- The deposit for parents of children enrolling in the full day program consists of a registration fee and first week's tuition.
- The deposit for parents of children enrolling in the part time preschool program consists of a registration fee (one per family) and the first month's tuition for mid-year enrollees.

Children are invited to visit their classroom prior to enrollment for an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the class, staff and program. During the admissions process, parents must complete the following forms which are updated annually in September or upon enrollment anniversary date or more as needed. Each form is either required by the EEC or by the Center in order to provide safe, healthy and individualized care:

- Identification Information/Enrollment Sheet
- Authorization and Release Form which includes various parent/guardian consents
- Off-Site Activities Permission Form
- Transportation Plan
- Developmental History
- Family Information/Emergency Contact Information.
- Toothbrush for daily tooth brushing or signed opting out form updated annually
- Physician's Medical Exam; immunizations and exams updated annually until the child is enrolled in public school; proof of varivax vaccination or the disease; lead screening annually for children 12 months through the child's fourth birthday
- Individualized Health Care Plan from the pediatrician for any child with a chronic medical condition Parents are also given: a Family Handbook, a copy of the Parent's Rights and specific information about the child's classroom.

**Summer enrollment only:**

When enrollment allows, children may enroll for the summer only at the discretion of the Executive Director. Summer enrollees are not eligible for tuition free vacation.

**Disenrollment/Withdrawal:**

If at any time a family wishes to disenroll their child from HCCC, no less than a three-week notice is required. Families will be responsible for three weeks tuition after the notice has been given.

**Summer Disenrollment for School Age Children:**

Depending on the needs of children, families and the center, families may request to remove their school age (entering kindergarten through third grade) child/ren from HCCC for the summer. Families without a primary parent working over the summer may be given the option to withdraw their child for the summer if their spot is able to be filled during this time. Summer enrollment decisions are authorized by the Executive Director and made on a case by case basis/year to year basis.

**Transitioning to the next classroom:**

The decision to transition a child to the next class is based on several factors, including; chronological age, development, readiness, space and other factors affecting the child and the classrooms. The staff and family discuss the transition process and work to ensure a smooth transition for each child. With parental permission; teachers will share information about your child and collaborate on your child's schedule and needs. Children have the opportunity to visit their new classroom prior to their move. Families of children who do not move at the chronological age for their classroom will be asked to complete a special developmental placement form with the Executive Director and classroom staff. All staff works in conjunction with parents and public and private school

staff to ensure a smooth transition to and from HCCC as well. Classrooms are designed so children spend one year per room.

**Termination and Suspension:**

HCCC makes every effort to avoid the suspension and /or termination of children in the program. The administration will provide an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss other options prior to suspension or termination. This meeting might include referral information, involvement of support services, or clarification of school policies.

Families may be suspended and/or terminated from HCCC for violation of Center policies or in extreme cases, for the unsafe behavior of their child. Families shall be issued a notice from the Executive Director if a child is at risk for termination from HCCC. The notice shall review the reasons for termination, referrals for alternative child care and other referrals as necessary and determined by the Executive Director. Where appropriate the Executive Director shall inform families in the context of the notice what action, if any may preclude termination from HCCC. The Executive Director will consult with the Board in the event that termination of a child becomes necessary. It is HCCC policy to give families at least two weeks notice of termination, when possible, to support families in finding alternative care and to prepare the child for the change in care. Termination/Suspension is a safety measure, designed to protect the status of HCCC as a safe place for all community members. Children/Families may be suspended/terminated from HCCC for any of the following:

- Repeated and documented non-compliance with HCCC policies
- Assaulting children or staff members
- Inappropriate behavior of parents toward staff
- Chronic, documented disruptive behavior
- Behavior that jeopardizes the safety of themselves or others
- Accounts one month in arrears (tuition is due in advance of service)

**Parent Grievance Procedure:**

In the event you have a concern please begin with speaking with your child’s classroom teacher. If you need continued support the Executive Director or the Assistant Director is always available for you to consult with. The minister of the church oversees the policies and procedures of HCCC and is also available to you at 508429-8608. If your concern is not resolved please feel free to contact our EEC licenser at Dept. of Early Education & Care, 10 Austin St., Worcester, MA 01609 or 508-798-5180.

**Tuition**

Families enrolled in HCCC’s programs are charged fees reflecting current tuition rates in the area. Tuition increases during the last week of August according to local tuition rates and program needs. Current tuition rates can be found on our website. Tuition will not be refunded due to emergency closures for facility, weather or public health emergencies.

**Tuition Payments:**

- Tuition is due in advance of services. For the childcare program, tuition is expected on Friday for the following week. For the preschool program, tuition is expected on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Other payment schedules can also be arranged for your convenience as long as tuition is received in advance of services.
- Tuition can be paid through our on-line child care management app or checks may be placed in the locked check box located in the main hall outside the office. Direct payment bank checks are accepted and can be sent directly to the Center.
- Families needing cost verification forms should see the Executive Director or Business Manager.

- There is a \$15 charge for checks returned by the bank for any reason.
- There is no credit for scheduled holidays and closings, children's illness, family vacation or center closings due to inclement weather or facility emergencies.
- For accounts with overdue tuition, a late fee will be applied to the account of \$25.
- If a family is experiencing problems with their payment schedule; they should speak to the Executive Director immediately. Most times we can work with you to develop a payment plan to meet your needs.
- Families with accounts one month in arrears can be terminated from HCCC, as tuition is due in advance of services.
- Contact information and office hours for the Business Manager are posted on the check box.

### **Scholarships and other financial assistance programs:**

HCCC and the church offer scholarships to families needing tuition assistance for childcare or preschool. This assistance is effective for the fiscal year (September to August). Applications are available from the Executive Director.

Emergency Scholarships are also available, as the budget allows. This type of scholarship is meant to assist families experiencing a temporary financial setback, temporary unemployment or illness. These scholarships are good for 8 weeks or more and are renewable upon parent request. Families may apply for emergency scholarship at any time by writing a letter of request to the Executive Director, explaining their situation.

HCCC accepts state issued child care vouchers. See the Executive Director for more information.

## **Holidays and Closings**

**Holidays:** HCCC is closed for several major holidays during the year. Parents are given a list of specific dates for the calendar year upon enrollment. A current list of holiday closings is also listed on our website. Calendars with the dates of closure are always available during the year next to the tuition box.

The part time preschool has a school calendar also distributed upon enrollment. They are also closed for public school vacation weeks.

### **Bad Weather Days:**

HCCC will make every attempt to be open with a skeletal crew on bad weather days. However, times do arise when it is unsafe for staff and families to be on the roads. We reserve the right to exercise judgment regarding whether to close on other days of bad weather not declared in this designation. Snow day and emergency closings are not refundable. HCCC may choose to have a delayed opening or an early closing in order to avoid a complete closing. In these cases, safety for the children and staff is the priority. School closure information will be sent via email and our child care management app. by 6:00 am.

Preschool follows the Holliston public school closing in the case of bad weather. The preschool will be closed when Holliston public schools are closed or have a delayed opening.

### **Arrival and Departure Arrival:**

The childcare program opens at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 5:30 p.m. The part time preschool program begins at 9:00 a.m., please see your child's individual class schedule for departure times. During COVID all families should enter using the Jordan Hall door. Parents should assist children in hanging up coats and getting their belongings settled and are responsible for making sure the teacher knows their child has arrived and signing their child in on the sign-in sheet. We ask families to social distance from others during drop off and pick up. We ask during this

public health emergency, families keep their arrival and departure time brief to allow all families ample time and space. Children should wash their hands prior to joining classroom activities on a daily basis. **Families dropping off more than one child should keep all children with them until they have been signed in to their individual classroom. All siblings must remain with parents during arrival and departure.** All classrooms are staffed during all operation hours both on and off site according to MA EEC state licensing regulations.

**Departure:** At the end of the child's day it is the family's responsibility to notify the teacher of their child's departure and to sign their child out. Teachers are available at this time to relay pertinent information to the parent. Families are reminded that when they sign their children out, they become their responsibility. On Fridays, families should take the child's belongings and bedding home to be laundered.

**Daily Program:** The philosophy of HCCC is embedded with learning through play developed through the child's interest. Therefore, the general outline for the daily program at HCCC allows young children the freedom to learn and play independently and cooperatively. Each class follows its own schedule posted in the classroom. All staff members spend time with each child daily, to provide individual nurturing. A daily routine, sensitive to the child's needs, is planned and includes food, toileting/diapering, nap/rest and varied play activities.

#### **Daily Schedule/Routine:**

Teachers plan curriculum recognizing children's physical, social and cognitive needs. It is also important for children to have as much consistency in their schedules as possible. Parents should follow these guidelines regarding arrival and attendance:

- All children should be settled in their classroom by 9:15 a.m. every day
- If the child will arrive after 9:15 or be absent that day, we ask that parents notify HCCC of the arrival time or absence of their child
- HCCC will make phone contact with a family member to confirm a child's absence or tardiness
- Children may attend HCCC when and if they can participate fully in the program
- Alternate care is not available if a child is not participating in the regular activities of their class
- If a school age child will not be returning to the Center after school, *parents must notify the Center* before the child's bus is due to arrive at HCCC. This is extremely important, as Center staff will begin a "Child locating process" to locate unaccounted-for children.

#### **Truancy:**

Per law, school age children may not be at HCCC during school hours on a day when school is in session. Children in the school age program must arrive at HCCC from the bus to demonstrate they have attended school that day.

#### **Release of children:**

HCCC maintains a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child for the safety of all.

**Children will only be released to the child's parent or other person authorized in writing by the parent.**

Any changes or additions to a child's pick form up must be made in writing by a parent. Parents should inform teachers if someone different will be picking their child up, even if they are on the authorized pick up list.

Picture identification will be required from any authorized pick up persons not familiar to the staff. Siblings or babysitters must be at least 16 years of age to pick up a child. If a teacher feels a parent is in a condition that may place their child at risk (i.e. under the influence of alcohol or drugs), that teacher will encourage the parent to allow a different authorized person to pick up, and may contact the authorities as necessary.

#### **Authorized Staff as Pick up Person:**

We prefer that parents do not authorize HCCC staff members to pick up their child. If it becomes absolutely necessary to do so, parents should first discuss this thoroughly with the staff member, and then speak to the Executive Director. A special release form must be completed in order for staff to release children.

Staff members may not walk children off the premises to attend events such as CCD, Scouts, etc. Families are responsible for making arrangements in these instances.

**Late Policy:**

HCCC closes promptly at 5:30 p.m.; with the exception of designated half days or emergency closures. Arrangements must be made for the child to leave HCCC by this time. Parents who are delayed unexpectedly must notify the Center. Parents will be charged \$15.00 for each 15-minute period after the closure or any portion thereof. **After five offenses (per fiscal year) this charge will double.** Parents should remember to leave extra travel time, especially in inclement weather. Consistent lateness will be a cause for a child's dismissal from HCCC.

In the event of a late pick-up, staff will make every effort to stay with the child at the Center until the child is picked up. If we have not heard from the designated pick-up person, and it is past our closing time, we will attempt to have the child picked up by an emergency contact person. If no one can be reached and we still have not heard from a parent/guardian or pick-up person one hour after closing, we will call the Holliston Police and DCF to ensure the child's safety. **This is a last resort and would only be used in an emergency situation.**

The late policy also applies to families who are late picking up their child from preschool at their assigned time.

**Children's Belongings**

**Labeling:**

Please label all of your child's belongings, including but not limited to: boots, shoes, bathing suits, mittens, lunchboxes, rest items, etc.

**Daily Wear:**

Children participate in any indoor or outdoor activity they choose each day. Children are expected to have secure fitting sneakers every day and to be dressed in clothing that is comfortable and washable so that spills and soils do not matter. Dress shoes, flip flops and sandals (including CROCS) are not allowed for outside play. Children must arrive dressed for the day.

**Extra Clothes:**

Parents are asked to keep an extra set of clothes (underwear, socks, shirt, pants, etc.) at the Center. They can be stored on your child's hook. When the extra clothes are soiled, they will be placed in a plastic bag to go home and be laundered. Parents should then replace them with a clean set. Please remember to be sure that your child's extra clothes are appropriate for the season. HCCC also has a limited selection of clothes for the instance when a child has none. We ask that these items be laundered and returned within a timely manner.

**Outside Wear:**

Each classroom plans to go outside daily, weather permitting. Please dress your child (infants through school age) for outdoor play. Jacket, boots, hat, mittens and snow pants should be brought daily in the winter, while heavy sweaters, hat and jacket are worn in the autumn and spring according to temperature. Summer wear includes a bathing suit, closed toe water shoes, sun hat, towel and extra summer clothes. Children should have sneakers at the Center everyday.



**Diapers:**

Families provide diapers and wipes for their child. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child has an adequate supply. For families wishing to use cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent lining that is completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of bodily fluids. Both will be changed as one piece and be placed in a plastic sealed bag labeled with your child's name each day for laundering.

**Toys from Home:**

Toys from home are discouraged at HCCC because they can be lost or broken or can cause issues in the classroom. If children do bring something special from home they can share it with the group at meeting and return it to their cubby or coat hook for safe keeping. Teachers may allow toys from home on special days or at their discretion (violent toys of any kind are not allowed).

**Outdoor Play:**

Children at HCCC play outside at least two times daily (and often as much as possible!), weather permitting. All staff are trained on proper playground supervision and assigned to specific equipment which requires additional supervision.

**Sun Lotion and Insect Repellent:**

Families should provide their child with UVB/UVA SPF 15 or higher sun lotion for outside play protection. Hats and/or sun protective clothing are recommended. Staff will apply sun lotion more than once per day. If public health authorities recommend insect repellent, only repellents containing DEET will be used on children at HCCC. Written parental permission is required to apply sun lotion and insect repellent.

## **General Family Information**

**Parent Interaction:**

Daily classroom information will be sent periodically throughout the day via our child care management app. Parents are welcome to call the Center for an update on their child's activities and are welcome to visit the Center at any time. HCCC encourages these visits and phone calls, looking forward to creating a home – center connection. Parents may schedule a meeting with their child's teacher any time of year and have access to their child's file in accordance with stated procedures. Parent/Teacher Conferences are also offered with Progress Reports. Classroom and Center activities are designed to nurture a cooperative relationship between home and HCCC. Teachers provide the parents with the comprehensive information they request. Please check HCCC's website for information about the program and your child's classroom. Parents are always welcome to visit their child's classroom and contribute to curriculum activities. Please speak with your child's teachers to arrange a convenient time.

**Classroom "Etiquette"**

In order to provide the healthiest possible environment for our youngest learners, siblings are not permitted in the Infant or Toddler Classrooms. In addition, we ask that siblings remain with parents at all times when in the building. In all classrooms, we ask that parents respect the work being done by the children at any given time and do not linger in rooms. We ask that parents socialize in the halls rather than the classrooms.

**Resting:**

All toddler and preschool children have a designated quiet time after lunch (infants sleep on their own schedules). Parents may bring in sheets, blankets, stuffed animals or another "cuddle toy" to assist their children in resting comfortably. These items can be left at the Center Monday through Friday and must be taken home by parents

and laundered on the weekend, or more as needed. If a child falls asleep on their own, HCCC staff may not deny that child sleep. Children this age benefit from a rest period after a full morning, especially when they are in an active group situation. The length of the sleep, rest or quiet activity period will be appropriate to the developmental needs of the individual child. When children choose not to sleep or awaken early, they will be offered quiet activities for the remainder of the sleep or quiet activity period.

**Phone Lines:**

The phone number for center communication is 508-429-2708 and is equipped with voice mail. When calling the center you may press #2 as soon as the greeting is audible to bypass the directory instructions. HCCC Staff members check the voicemail periodically during the day.

**Daily Reports:**

Parents of infants and toddlers will receive daily information regarding their child's eating, sleeping and toileting activities each day via our child care management app. When possible photos and daily notes with information about your child's activities will be sent via our child care app.

**Family Literature:**

A variety of parenting and child development resources are available for families to look at, sign out and borrow. All resources are available from the administrative staff.

**Infant Room:**

Shoe covers are provided by the Center so parents may comfortably go into the room. Shoe covers or socks are required, bare feet are not permitted in the infant room. All who enter the infant room should wash their hands immediately upon entering.

**Parent Communication:**

Parents are encouraged to share information daily with their child's classroom teachers about their children and to discuss their development. If any changes occur in a child's health environment or routine, or you have any concerns regarding your child either in or out of HCCC, please alert your child's teachers so we can proceed as a team in cooperative care.

**Program Evaluation:**

Parents are given the opportunity to evaluate the program and offer suggestions through surveys and/or discussions. Parents may also assist with the evaluation and improvement of the program by speaking directly to the teachers, the Executive Director or at Parent Advisory Meetings.

**Parent Advisory Meetings:**

These meetings are held throughout the year to provide parents with a formal vehicle for involvement. Parents meet with members of the HCCC Advisory Board, the Executive Director and Assistant Director to discuss issues of importance at the Center, give feedback, offer suggestions and organize special events and fundraising activities.

**Progress Reports and Conferences:**

Teachers will present a formal assessment of each child's development to families. After parents read and sign the report it is filed in the child's record. Families are strongly encouraged to meet and talk with Teachers at this or any other time during the year. For infants and children with identified special needs the progress report will be prepared every three months. For toddlers and preschoolers, the progress report will be prepared every six months. For school age children, the progress report will be prepared at least annually at the midpoint of the child's year. The progress reports will be based on observation and documentation of the child's progress in a range of

activities over time and may include samples of the child's work. For children younger than school age, the progress report will address the developmental domains of cognitive, social/emotional, language and fine and gross motor and life skills. For school age children, the progress report will address the child's growth and development within the parameters of the program's statement of purpose.

#### **Informal Parent Meetings:**

A phone and address list are available to families so parents can network and socialize and plan these meetings independently. Families must give consent on the Authorization form to be included on list.

#### **Building Maintenance and Safety:**

HCCC is cleaned and sanitized each evening by an outside cleaning contractor. Staff is trained on routine daily disinfecting tasks. Toys and materials are sanitized regularly and more often should health issues require it. Regular maintenance tasks are performed by the church sexton. The building has an annual safety inspection through the town and periodic inspections from the Board of Health. HCCC maintains an Integrated Pest Management Plan with the state of MA and an outside pest management company. Playgrounds are inspected by a certified playground inspector annually.

#### **Administrative Organization:**

The Holliston Community Children's Center is run by the Executive Director. He or she is hired and supervised by the pastor of the First Congregational Church. The Holliston Community Children's Center has an Advisory Board that reviews and makes recommendations to policies and procedures. This Board is comprised of members of the First Congregational Church of Holliston, our sponsoring organization. In the Executive Director's absence, the Assistant Director assumes responsibility for the program. The program has a business manager who is hired by the church who oversees the budget and maintains family accounts.

**Birthdays:** Families are invited to celebrate their child's birthday at HCCC, please speak to your child's teacher about the date and time. Some classrooms celebrate with a special snack or activity. All special celebration snacks must be cleared by the classroom teacher prior to serving for the safety of all children. **Snacks not cleared by HCCC personnel ahead of time will not be served.** If you are planning an off-site birthday party for your child and you wish to invite children from the Center, please mail the invitations to the child's home address.

#### **Grievance Procedure:**

In the event that a parent or family member has a grievance, that parent should first attempt to resolve the problem with the staff member involved. The next attempt should be to seek resolution through the Executive Director. Should the grievance involve the Executive Director or a Center policy, the parent should first meet with her/him. If unresolved, the parent may contact the Senior Pastor at 508-429-8608. The Senior Pastor will work to mediate the situation together with the Executive Director and the family.

Complaints about staff from families when appropriate should be addressed with the staff member. If further resolution is necessary they should be brought to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will meet with the staff member to review and investigate the complaint. The Executive Director and staff member (with or without the parent) will meet to discuss responses to the family and resolutions for the situation, if necessary. The Executive Director determines what response or strategy to pursue. The Senior Pastor may also be included in resolution discussions if needed.

#### **Water Safety Policy:**

When groups are off site, strict guidelines are put into place for when children are in and around water. These are followed by all staff and children, and taken to the appropriate level for the specific age.

- All field trips to water sites will be supervised by trained lifeguards
- Depending on the age of the children, an appropriate depth will be determined that the children will not be allowed to go past. (For instance, preschool children do not go above their belly buttons.)
- All children will wear colored hats (provided by HCCC) when in the water, making it easier to identify our group
- Staff will position themselves in such a way that they will be able to view the group at all times
- Staff will be in the water, on the beach and at the edge of the water at all times with children
- Staff will wear HCCC T-shirts to be easily identified by children and observers

### **Sleep Policy for Infants**

HCCC follows the attached *Keeping Sleep Time Safe* (attached) policies required by the MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). They include:

- All infants 12 months and younger are ALWAYS placed on their backs to sleep, unless otherwise ordered by a physician. All infants sleep on a firm surface that is manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Sleep wedges may only be used with physician authorization.
- Infants who fall asleep in equipment not specifically designed for sleep (car seats, bouncy seats, swings stroller, etc.) are moved to their backs on a firm sleep surface.
- After infants are placed on their backs, they are then allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from their back.
- Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other items are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants younger than eight months.
- Sleep sacks are recommended to keep your baby snug and warm, only sleep sacks that allow arms to move freely will be permitted. No weighted sleep sacks are permitted.
- Infants are constantly monitored during sleep.

### **Child Guidance/Discipline Policy:**

Staff members at HCCC encourage children to use their words to communicate their feelings. The discipline plan gives children limits and allows them to practice their new social skills. Choices are offered and reassurances given during these interactions. Consistent with this policy, no abuse or neglect of children is permitted whatsoever, this includes:

- Verbal abuse or punishment including ridicule or humiliation
- Spanking or other corporal punishment or physical abuse
- Time outs are not used, children are re-directed to a different activity
- Any cruel, unusual or severe punishment
- Isolation to a piece of equipment or confined space in lieu of supervision
- Neglect of any kind
- Withholding of food, forced eating or any other type of punishment related to eating/not eating food
- Punishment or reprimanding for wetting or soiling clothes or not using the toilet, or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing, or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting
- Denial of rest or bathroom facilities

As teachers, the staff recognizes the behaviors of many toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children as developmental stages and offers the children and their parents support and ways to identify and respond to these stages. The following steps are followed according to the child's age and developmental stage when disciplining in the classroom:

- Teachers maintain the classroom environment with enough space, independence, and variety of materials to avoid unwanted behaviors and promote positive behavior
- Teachers deal with a discipline problem or supervise and assist other staff members in dealing with the problem
- Teachers speak to children clearly, helping them to calm down
- Teachers help children choose words to describe what happened
- Teachers work with children to find a positive alternate behavior and solutions to conflicts and situations
- Teachers help children choose another activity or redirect their play, in order to alleviate a problem
- Teachers work with children to help them understand their feelings and communicate them to others
- Positive responses are given for appropriate behavior

Children are encouraged to help each other and to recognize area of conflict as a normal part of life. Ongoing problems are followed up with a parent conference, including teachers, Executive Director or other administrator and consultants as necessary. More detailed information about our Child Guidance Policy is available by speaking with the Executive Director.

### **Nutrition Policy- HCCC is an allergy sensitive environment for children and staff.**

#### **Nut Safe Environment:**

HCCC is a nut safe environment. No products that contain peanuts or tree nuts are permitted at HCCC. Foods labeled "this product may contain nuts" are also not permitted. Products labeled "manufactured in a facility that processes nuts" are permitted.

#### **Snacks:**

A morning breakfast snack is served in the childcare program from approximately 7:30-9:15 a.m. consisting of milk, fruit and a bread/cereal product. A morning snack may be served from 10-11 depending on the needs and schedule of your child's classroom. Children in the childcare program are asked to bring a small healthy snack from home. The breakfast menu is posted weekly on the Family News Board. We ask that parents refrain from sending in breakfast for children (other than infants) to eat at HCCC. Menus are made following the USDA CACFP guidelines for children's best nutrition. (Guidelines are available at [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)) If your child has special nutritional needs, please speak with an administrator.

#### **Lunch:**

HCCC does not provide lunch, but does provide milk for lunchtime. Children are expected to bring a well balanced, nutritious lunch (nut free). Sandwich or finger food, and fruit or vegetable is suggested. School age children attending HCCC during public school release days, holidays or vacation periods are also expected to bring a healthy lunch. Microwaves are available to heat up foods you may include in your child's lunch box. Lunch boxes should be labeled with the child's name and have an ice pack.

The staff at HCCC encourages children to eat a well-balanced diet during lunch time; hoping to ensure that each child receives an adequate amount and variety of food. Children's lunch leftovers will be sent home so that you can monitor amounts and types of foods eaten - please note that for this reason, children will not be allowed to eat lunch leftovers later in the day. To support healthy habits, teachers design curriculum around nutrition topics to help guide children in this area and sit with the children while they are eating.

**Infant Food/Bottles:**

Infants are more susceptible to disease and germs and for this reason the policies regarding food and bottles for the infant room are more involved. All bottles stored in the refrigerator must be labeled and have covers. Parents of infants will be given specialized feeding information upon enrollment.

**Special Snacks:**

If you would like to send in a special snack for your child's birthday or other special occasion, please check in with your child's teacher. Please try to choose something that is fun, but also healthy for the children. Snacks must be safe for all the children in the class and approved by the classroom teacher before they will be served. For children under the age of four HCCC will not serve popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, chunks or raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

**Healthy Lunch Recommendations:**

In compliance with EEC/NAEYC regulations, here is a list of nutritious food items for parents to send: Fruit and/or Vegetables ~ apples, grapes (cut for children under 4), oranges, strawberries, bananas, plums, cantaloupe, pineapple, veggie sticks, raisins, raisins, avocado, watermelon, honeydew, etc.

Drinks ~ soy milk, 100% juices, water (milk is provided by HCCC at all meals)

Food Items ~ rice cakes, cheese, salad, pasta, hard boiled eggs, chicken, turkey, ham, roast beef (pieces small enough to be swallowed whole), hot dogs (cut, not in rounds for children under 4), tuna fish, cottage cheese, crackers & cheese, bagel & cream cheese, bread sticks, sunflower seeds, yogurt, etc.

Candy and soda are not allowed at HCCC, and we ask that you do not send other unhealthy choices.

## Holiday Policy

**Philosophy:**

HCCC, in an effort to respect the backgrounds and cultures of all of our families, does not follow a holidaybased curriculum. However, as our educational philosophy is child-centered and reflects the children's interests and the events taking place in their lives, the recognition and celebration of some special occasions is appropriate. Even with young children, talking about different celebrations can be a way to introduce the concept of respecting the differences and recognizing the similarities in people. Research shows the more children are introduced to these concepts from an early age, the less fearful and biased they are when presented with differences.

**Practice:**

Holidays can be somewhat abstract to young children, and parents are not likely to see much incorporation of holidays in the Infant or Toddler programs. Holidays celebrated by Preschool families may be more concrete, and may be recognized in the classrooms through a discussion during circle time or meeting, or if appropriate, with a special activity. Parents may see some materials, photos, artwork, or foods that reflect ways that families celebrate, if appropriate, to the celebration and the population served. In general, parents will find HCCC's incorporation of holidays is subtle. Our goal is to recognize that celebrations are part of many children's lives, while still maintaining an anti-bias atmosphere and focusing on more concrete subject matter for curriculum.

School age children are better able to understand different or unfamiliar cultures, and therefore this group may talk about or celebrate a wider range of holidays. School age children are also more product-oriented, and therefore some artwork or projects reflecting some holidays may be seen in this room if appropriate to the celebration and to the population served.

**Religion:**

HCCC is a non-sectarian program, and we do not endorse one religion over another or teach doctrine of any kind.

## **Transportation**

### **Public School Transportation:**

The Holliston Public Schools provide bus transportation for all eligible children, these arrangements must be made with the Bus Coordinator. All families will need a bus pass from the town in order to ride the bus to and from HCCC. Children are supervised boarding the bus and greeted in the afternoon by HCCC staff. Parents will be notified immediately should we be expecting their child on the bus and they fail to arrive. If we are not able to contact a parent/guardian HCCC will contact the school to determine the child's location. Parents must let HCCC know if your child will be absent, will not arrive off the bus or has been dismissed from school

### **Field Trips:**

Special permission slips are given to parents indicating where children will be going on field trips. When children take any field trip, families are notified in advance of the destination and transportation arrangements. Guidelines as outlined in the Health Care Policy are followed. In the summer, HCCC rents a school bus with a licensed bus driver. When children leave HCCC, they will have the name, address and phone number of the program on their person.

A transportation log shall be used to track each child (recording first & last names of every child) during transportation including the time of pick-up and drop-off. A HCCC staff member will physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior confirming that each and every child is no longer on the vehicle. The staff reviewer will sign and date the transportation log. HCCC will immediately notify the Transportation Provider if the number of children who boarded the vehicle does not match the number of children that were released from the vehicle or of any other discrepancies in the passenger log.

In the event of a vehicle breakdown on a field trip; the person in charge on the field trip will contact 911 for police support and the administrator in charge at the Center. If the children are within walking distance, and it is safe to do so, staff will walk the children back to the Center. If not, the person in charge at the Center will contact the provider of the transportation who will send a substitute vehicle. If this will take too long, or is impossible, the Executive Director or other person in charge at the Center may follow the Emergency Contingency Plan. The person in charge on the field trip will be responsible for the safety of the children at all times.

## **Children's Records**

### **Children's Records:**

Contact, health, safety and family information is collected upon enrollment for each child and is updated regularly. Files are kept in a locked file cabinet in the lower administrative office.

**Access to Records:** Information contained in a child's record shall be privileged and confidential. Only professional staff has access to the locked file cabinet that holds the children's files and password protected on-line assessment information. No file or information is shared outside the teaching staff, without the parent's written permission submitted to the Executive Director. The Executive Director grants exception to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF), the EEC. State employees shall not remove case material from the Center and shall maintain confidentiality.

Parents/legal guardians shall have immediate access to their child's record. Upon request the entire file is duplicated and released, free of charge. A record of release is kept on any person obtaining this information (name, signature, position, date, portions or record release, purpose and signature of person to whom information was given). Upon request confidential files are also immediately available to regulatory authorities.

**Amending the child's record:**

Parents/legal guardians have the right to add information, comments, data or other material to their child's file. Parents also have the right to request deletion or amendment to any information in the file. Parents must request these changes by conferring with the Executive Director, who will respond within one week.

**Transfer of records:** When the child is no longer enrolled at HCCC, parents can request their child's file. Child care centers must maintain a child's file for 5 years after the child has left the program, therefore, if the parent wishes to take the file, a Release Form must be completed so the Center has a record that the child's file is with the parent.

## **Staff**

**Hiring:**

The Executive Director chooses prospective candidates, with input from other members of the team. Each fulltime staff member: possesses qualities and goals consistent with HCCC philosophy; has studied child development, child psychology or early childhood education; and has trained in an early childhood setting. Full time teachers possess, at the very least, the education and training requirements necessary for EEC Teacher Certification, although full degrees are preferred. Continual training and development opportunities are required for all HCCC staff members. Part time staff is: trained in the field of Early Childhood Education; students from local schools and/or colleges with an interest in Early Childhood Education; or others with a background or interest in Early Childhood Education.

**Requirements:**

Each Teacher, in addition to the education and training requirements, must hold certificates in Infant & Child First Aid and CPR. Every adult working with children is required to have a physical exam to determine good health and absence of communicable diseases. Reference checks are completed for all staff, and staff must have fingerprinting through EEC and a Background Record Check through the CORI and DCF systems. All staff members participate in a comprehensive orientation to familiarize them with Center philosophy, policies & procedures. During the year staff participate in monthly center wide staff meetings, weekly classroom team meetings and twenty hours of formal training.

## **Children's Art Work**

Children at HCCC are encouraged to represent their ideas and thoughts through their art. In each class, teachers work with children to stimulate this process and develop children's artistic representation. The focus is on the PROCESS of producing a piece of work, not the product. Art activities are introduced and extended through planned experiences, curriculum and literature. HCCC recognizes children's developmental stages and works within those stages so that the child does artwork in each class. Teachers provide children with opportunities to manipulate all types of paper, crayons, paints and other art media to allow children to explore, create, express themselves and learn about their environment.

Staff members do not present models for children to replicate or photocopy materials for children to draw on or color in. (For example, coloring sheets and making pictures for the children are not permitted.) Staff members do not draw for or in front of children or write on children's artwork without their permission. In each classroom, teams of teachers meet to discuss curriculum and plan children's learning.

## **Media Use**

HCCC follows EEC guidelines concerning the use of passive media such as television, films and videos. Passive media are used as infrequent events. The use of passive media is limited to developmentally appropriate programming that has been previewed by HCCC staff prior to use in a classroom. Another option for activity must be available to children; children are not required to view the program. Teachers must discuss what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills.



## **Referral Information**

If concern about a child arises, the teachers from the specific child's classroom discuss it with the Executive Director and document their concerns. HCCC staff meets together with parents to create an appropriate plan to help meet the child's needs. The Executive Director is responsible for the process of any referral plan. These components may be used in developing such a plan:

- Teachers and Executive Director make observations and document events for child's file.
- Parents are informed of the concern and directed to their pediatrician or other resources.
- A consultant may be contacted for further observations and reporting with parental consent- contact shall be made by phone or email by parents/guardians or center staff with parental permission

Any recommendations by referral services will be followed by the Center. A written plan will accompany any recommendation, and the Executive Director will schedule regular meetings with parents. In all cases the Executive Director monitors and supervises the Lead Teacher's interactions and observations in any case involving referral services. HCCC staff will work with all appropriate outside specialists to ensure a child's ability to participate fully in the program. Such consultants may be but not included to; mental health clinicians, behaviorists, speech therapists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists etc. Payment for consultation services is the responsibility of the family. HCCC does not cover any of these costs. HCCC provides consultant's access and a private space to work individually with children with parental permission.

In the event a parent does not seek appropriate services for the child, and/or neglect or abuse is suspected by HCCC, the Department of Child and Families will be called and the case will be turned over to them. The child's parents will be notified of this procedure.

### **Children with Disabilities:**

Children with disabilities are welcome at HCCC. In order to maximize inclusion and accommodation HCCC may request, with parental consent, information related to the child's participation in the program, identify accommodations to meet the needs of the child and change or modify the child's participation.

In the event that an undue burden exists and the child needs alternate care, the Executive Director will provide parents with written notification of the reasons for the undue burden, and will inform them that they may contact EEC. The Executive Director will make referrals as necessary in the event of circumstances involving an undue burden. A copy of this letter will remain on file at the Center. The factors considered in determining an undue burden are:

- the nature/cost of accommodation
- securing funding/services
- overall financial resources, effect on expenses/resources
- number of employees
- impact otherwise of action

### **Resources (For a more complete list, please see the Executive Director or Assistant Director):**

- Early Intervention ~ Services for children 0-3 years in all areas of development.
- Holliston Public Schools ~ (508-429-0661 x1) Student Support Services: provide services in many areas of development including speech and language, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social and mental health for children 3 years and above.
- Boston Children's Hospital ~ (617-355-6000): Offers the opportunity to have screenings and evaluations in many areas of child development. The main phone number will connect you to the clinic needed for your child.

- Pediatrician ~ Pediatricians used by families are able to make other referrals, as necessary, depending on the child and the need.
- Holliston Youth and Family Services ~ (508-429-0620)

## **Emergency Contingency Plan**

*Revised/Reconfirmed July 2021*

***In Case of Situations Requiring Evacuation of HCCC Building:*** The building is equipped with an alarm system directly connected to the Holliston Fire Department. In the event of a fire, an evacuation plan is in place and posted in all classrooms and offices. When evacuating the building, teachers take attendance information, children’s emergency information, two-way radios, cell phones and emergency supply kit with them. In the event of serious fire and damage requiring long term evacuation, Holliston Community Children’s Center (HCCC) has arrangements with local organizations for emergency shelter. They are:

**1. Holliston Town Hall, 703 Washington St. Holliston**

**508-429-0608**

The Town Hall will allow us to walk the children to the Town Hall (next door) and have shelter there until parents are able to pick up their children.

**2. Christ the King Lutheran Church, 600 Central St. Holliston**

**508-429-5705**

The Pastor at Christ the King agreed to provide their facility to be HCCC’s back-up emergency shelter arrangement. This was reconfirmed in July 2021. As this location is not within walking distance, this location will be used in case the Town Hall is not available, or if the emergency situation extends as far as Town Hall. The Holmes Bus Company has agreed to provide transportation to Christ the King in the event of an emergency. Parents will be called from our shelter location to arrange the immediate pick up of their children. ***Emergency Shelter:*** In case of a hurricane or severe storm requiring evacuation and shelter, the Holliston Middle School, 100 Linden St., 508-429-0657, becomes a shelter. The primary warning method in Holliston is the radio.

***Loss of Power:*** The Center is equipped with emergency lighting in the event of a loss of power. The emergency alarm system is also connected to this battery back-up system. Children bring their own lunches so mealtime would not be affected. If the loss of power will continue beyond a half a day, the Center may close. Parents will be notified of any closures.

***Loss of Water:*** A very temporary loss of water can be handled by using packaged wet-napkins or hand sanitizer to wash hands for diapering, toileting and eating. Our water cooler is a source of drinking water. If the loss of water will continue for more than half a day, the Center will close. Parents will be notified of any closures.

***Loss of Heat/Air Conditioning:*** Any loss of heat/AC for more than a few hours, or loss of heat in extremely cold temperatures which could affect the health of the children will involve a closure, as we have no alternate way of providing hot water or heat/AC. Parents will be notified of any closures.

***Missing Child:*** Any time a child is unaccounted for, Emergency Officials and parents will be called. If a child is missing from our site, Staff will check playgrounds, all rooms, etc to try and locate the child. If a child is missing while off site, one staff will gather all the children and sit them in one place, the other staff will call Emergency officials and HCCC.

All emergency decisions will be made at the discretion of the HFD/HPD or the Executive Director (or person of authority in their absence) in order to keep the children safe.

**Fire drills are held monthly and relocation drills are held annually.**

## Health Care Policy

A complete health care policy, as required by EEC, is posted on the family board and in the administrative offices. HCCC has a health care consultant to answer questions we may have about certain medical situations, need more information about a topic or illness, review our medical policies and procedures and to provide training to the staff.

Children in childcare are exposed to many germs. The staff do all they can to promote a health environment for the children. Teachers make sure to wash their hands before and after meals, before & after water play, toileting and diapering, and after wiping one's nose. Staff members wear gloves when serving snacks and meals, assisting a child with toileting and when coming into contact with any type of bodily fluid. Infant and toddler toys are disinfected on a daily basis, preschool toys are disinfected weekly and more when excessive illness is evident.

HCCC is required to comply with state laws regarding health records and policies, including:

- Documentation required as stated in enrollment process (physical, immunizations, lead screenings)
- Updates on any allergies affecting your child
- Requesting families separate their child from the program when it is necessary
- Requesting families follow the guidelines to determine when their child can return to the program
- Listening to parent's reports of their child's behavior, mood or health changes
- Posting information about contagious diseases in the child's classroom

HCCC directs its health care policy toward the following concerns: the child's well-being, families' schedules and the childcare program. The following guidelines will assist you in helping your children participate in the program during their illness: **When Parents suspect an illness:**

- Describe to your child's teacher how the child has acted for the last 24 hours
- Describe any symptoms which may help identify the changes in your child's health (i.e. teething would show drooling, biting, low fever, ear aches and irritability)
- Inform the teacher of any medications you gave your child prior to arriving at the Center (prescription or non-prescription)
- Leave a phone number of someone the teacher can call to pick up your child if necessary
- Call the Teacher to "check in" on your child's status
- Allow for a shortened childcare day according to your child's needs
- Call the Center to report the nature/status of the illness to be shared/posted for other families **When Teachers suspect an illness:**
- Teachers will discuss with you what the symptoms are and how much longer the child can participate in the program that day
- Teachers will make the child comfortable in the office or their classroom until end of day or parental pick up
- If your child shows symptoms necessitating exclusion, families will be contacted to pick up their child within 2 hours

### **During the recovery:**

- Describe your child's state of recovery to staff
- Follow all procedures regarding medication
- Plan to allow for a flexible schedule, as your child may need a shortened day
- Call the center to check in on your child's status. If it is determined your child is not well; the 2-hour time frame applies

### **Communication Regarding Illnesses:**

Contagious illnesses and/or symptoms of diseases are posted conspicuously by the entryway of each classroom. This allows parents to be on the lookout for possible symptoms in their own child.

**Illnesses:**

Families are charged for sick days, except when circumstances require special consideration. This is at the discretion of the Executive Director. In the event a child is hospitalized for one week or more, the Executive Director has the authority to adjust tuition when possible.

**Public Health Emergencies:**

In the event of a local or national public health emergency, HCCC will work in conjunction with EEC, the MA DPH, and Holliston BOH to create the safest possible environment. Special health guidelines may be put into place during these times. Families are expected to be aware of and adhere to these special policies during the entire public health emergency. Failure to follow these guidelines or mis-represent the health of your child or family will be grounds for immediate dismissal from HCCC. Please check our website for current health guidelines.

**Staff Training**

- All staff is trained in the emergency and evacuation procedures; in standard precautions and in medication administration.
- HCCC will always have first aid and CPR trained staff with children. CPR training will be renewed annually and first aid as required. Only trained staff will provide first aid and CPR.
- Full time staff members are trained in the administration of medication and in recognizing side effects and adverse reactions of common medications.

**Medication Administration**

- HCCC will always have a staff member trained in the five right practices of medication administration with children. All staff will adhere to the written medication administration policy.
- All medication administered to a child must be provided by the child's parent.
- All medications must be in its' original packaging with the original prescription label attached.
- All staff must follow the prescribed or written directions with regard to administration.
- All medications will be kept out of reach of children, those medications that fall under the DEC Schedules II-V must be locked at all times. (refrigeration available as needed.)
- All emergency medication is immediately available, not out of reach of staff.
- All expired, unused or discontinued prescription medications will be returned to the parents.
- Staff will not give the first dose of any medication, except under extraordinary circumstances with written parental permission.
- Doctor and parental written authorizations are required for any medication.
- All parents will be notified if topical medication is applied to a diaper rash.
- HCCC will follow the guidelines in 7.11.(l) with respect to authorizations for prescription/nonprescription medications. **Individual Health Care Plans**
- An individual health care plan will be maintained for any child with a diagnosed chronic medical condition. This plan will include: symptoms, medical treatment and potential consequences for not receiving treatment.
- Staff will be trained about the child's condition and treatment by a person authorized by the Primary Care Physician.
- Parents will be contacted if treatment is given to the child; either in advance or immediately after.
- Treatment will be documented.
- Parental and health professional authorization for treatment will be valid for one year.

**Abuse and Neglect**

- HCCC operates their programs in ways that protect children from abuse or neglect.
- Educators are responsible for abuse and neglect if: o The educator admits to causing the abuse or neglect, or the educator is convicted of the abuse or neglect in a criminal proceeding, or EEC determines, based

upon its own investigation or an investigation conducted by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) subsequent to a report filed under M.G.L. c. 119, §§ 51A and 51B, that there is reasonable cause to believe that the educator or any other person caused the abuse or neglect while children were in care.

- Every educator is a mandated reporter under M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A and must make a report to the DCF whenever he/she has reasonable cause to believe a child in the program is suffering from serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon the child, including but not limited to sexual abuse, or from neglect, including but not limited to malnutrition, no matter where the abuse or neglect may have occurred and by whom it was inflicted.
- HCCC must notify EEC immediately after filing or learning that a 51A report has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program-related activity.
- HCCC must notify EEC immediately upon learning that a report has been filed naming an educator or person regularly on the child care premises (including household members in family child care) an alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect of any child. Any educator accused of abuse or neglect in a report to DCF may not work directly with children until the investigation is completed. Any staff member convicted of any type of abuse claim by DCF will be immediately terminated.
- All Program staff will cooperate in any and all investigations by DCF and EEC.

### **Injury Prevention**

- Anything that is hot enough to cause a burn must be kept out of reach of children.
- Staff may not partake in any substance during work hours that would impede their ability to care for children.
- HCCC and its grounds are free of smoking, alcohol and firearms.
- When groups of children leave HCCC, the staff brings: fully stocked first aid kit, family contact information, information on allergies/medical conditions, emergency treatments & medications, emergency contact information, authorization for emergency care and cell phone.
- First aid supplies are easily and readily available to all teachers. Supplies include but are not limited to: adhesive tape, band aids, gauze pads, gauze roller bandage, disposable non-latex gloves, instant cold packs, scissors, tweezers, thermometer and CPR face shield.
- HCCC maintains records of injuries, serious incidents or other emergencies.
- Staff check children's clothing to make sure it is safe to be used on playground equipment; so as not to present an opportunity for strangulation.
- Staff protect children against cold, heat and sun injury. When sun block is used, it must be UVA and UVB with a SPF 15 or higher.

### **Use of off-site facilities**

- Staff confirm off-site facilities are appropriate for children prior to their arrival.
- Staff plan for and implement an appropriate supervision plan for children in public spaces.
- Parental consent is given for children to participate in regular walking distance off-site activities and special field trips.
- Parents are notified prior to children leaving the premises.
- Each child will carry or have on his person, the name, address and phone number of HCCC when offsite.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

- Staff handle all emergency situations in an appropriate manner and are able to communicate basic emergency information to emergency personnel.
- The program staff have access to a telephone whether on or off the premises, during all hours of program operation for the purposes of receiving and making phone calls.
- When considering evacuation or sheltering in place, HCCC follows the directions of the local emergency management authorities.
- Exit signs and evacuation procedures are posted in all classrooms.

- HCCC has a written plan detailing procedure for meeting potential emergencies including but not limited to missing children, the evacuation of children from the program in the event of a fire, natural disaster, loss of power, heat or hot water, public health emergency or another emergency situation.
- The plan must include but not be limited to: a method of obtaining information from local authorities to determine whether to evacuate or shelter in place in the event of a natural disaster; escape routes from each floor level approved for child care; a designated meeting place outside and away from the child care facility; a method of contacting the fire department or other appropriate authorities after the facility has been evacuated; a method of communication with parents in the event of an emergency evacuation; and a means to assure that no child is left in the home or facility after evacuation.
- The plan must be kept current and must meet the needs of all children in care, including infants, toddlers and any children (including but not limited to those with disabilities) who may need additional assistance during an evacuation.
- HCCC has monthly evacuation drills that are held at different times of the program day. Classrooms use 2 means of egress. The date, time, exit route used, number of children evacuated and effectiveness of each drill are documented. Emergency Evacuation procedures are practiced yearly.
- HCCC has an evacuation crib in the Infant Room for the purpose of evacuating infants.

#### **Care of Mildly Ill Children**

- HCCC staff meet the individual needs of the child for food, drink, rest, play materials, comfort, supervision and appropriate indoor and outdoor activity, as indicated by the health condition of the child.
- A sick child is removed from the group and supervised by a familiar caregiver or made comfortable in his/her classroom until a parent is able to pick up; in order to minimize exposure to other children.

#### **Management of Infectious Diseases**

- HCCC follows exclusion policies for serious illnesses, contagious diseases and reportable diseases in conformance with current regulations and recommendations set by the Division of Communicable Disease Control, Department of Public Health (DPH).
- HCCC will notify all parents in accordance with DPH recommendations when any communicable disease or condition has been introduced into the program.
- Staff will follow the recommendations of the DPH regarding the use of insect repellents. When parents provide insect repellent for their child to use while in the program, it must contain DEET

#### **Infection Control**

- All staff is trained in infection control procedures.
- All staff educate children about appropriate hand washing procedures.
- All staff follow the HCCC Hand Washing Policy and Cleaning/Sanitizing Procedures.

#### **Personal Hygiene**

- HCCC staff model appropriate hygiene practices at all times.
- When children are washed, disposable materials are used.
- When children need clean/dry clothes, they have access to them.
- HCCC staff assist children in brushing their teeth when they are in care for more than 4 hours.
- Children use individual labeled toothbrushes stored in a safe and sanitary manner open to the air without touching each other.

#### **Diapering and Toileting**

- All staff follow the HCCC Diapering and Toileting Policy **HCCC Information on exclusions due to illness:**

HCCC adheres to the following guidelines developed in conjunction with DPH, EEC and our Health Consultant.

- *Chicken Pox:* (see DPH guidelines on exclusion). A child with chicken pox will be excluded from the program for as long as the pediatrician feels necessary. A Doctor's note is required to return.
- *Conjunctivitis:* A child can return 24 hours after medication has been started or with a Doctor's note.
- *Diarrhea:* A child with more three abnormal bowel movements has diarrhea and can return to the Center when the condition is corrected.

- *Ear Infections*: Children may return once they are feeling well enough to participate in the regular activities of his or her classroom.
- *Fever*: A child must be fever free for 24 hours if the temperature was 100.4 degrees or higher.
- *Flu*: A child may return after being fever free for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in all regular activities of the day. HCCC will follow the DPH/CDC guidelines.
- *Head Lice*: A child may return 24 hours after treatment has begun and when all nits have been removed.
- *Hepatitis A, B and C*: These conditions are handled on an individual basis through discussion with the Executive Director.
- *Impetigo*: A child can return 24 hours after the first treatment has begun and if lesions are covered.
- *Pneumonia*: A child can return 24 hours after first dose of antibiotic treatment, is s/he can participate in regular activities of the day.
- *Scabies*: A child can return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- *Strep Throat*: A child can return 24 hours after first dose of antibiotic treatment has begun. If treatment is delayed pending the result of a throat culture *and* the child has been exposed to strep throat, the child should not return to the program until it is determined that the child does **not** have strep throat.
- *Ticks*: Parents will be contacted if a tick is found on a child.
- *Vomiting*: Children who vomit should not be in attendance until they have been given solid food and held it down without vomiting for 24 hours.
- *COVID-19*: Please see the current COVID-19 policies on our website.

For other specific cases, please see the Executive Director or Assistant Director. The general guideline we follow for determining if children are well enough to return to HCCC is when the child acts better and can participate in general activities, including going outside. In some cases, HCCC may ask for a note from a doctor before a child who has been sick may return to HCCC.

**Other Information:**

- HCCC’s Health Care Consultant:
  - is available to our program for consultation as needed.
  - visits our program quarterly.
  - approves our health plan at each license renewal, or more as needed.
  - approves first aid training and training in medication administration.
- General Emergency Procedures:
  - HCCC will call 911 to get EMS/Ambulance for any situation they feel warrants assistance.
  - Once EMS is on-site, they take control of the situation. HCCC will contact child’s parent or guardian and share pertinent information about the situation.
  - If child is transported, HCCC staff will accompany the child in the ambulance, bringing the child’s medical records and consent forms to the hospital.
  - If parents are un-reachable, staff will call emergency numbers on child’s record.
- Emergency Procedures when off the premises:
  - HCCC staff will call 911 from off-site location.
  - HCCC staff will call the center to notify administration from location.
  - HCCC Administrator will proceed with steps above, and meet group at either their location or the hospital.

*The state licensing agency for the Holliston Community Children's Center is the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).*

*For more information about regulations or to learn about HCCC's compliance record, please access their website at*

*<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/index.aspx> or*

*contact them by phone at 508-798-5180*

***This Family Handbook will take effect from September 1, 2021 forward.***