



# Family Handbook

2019-2020

Approved by the Board of Directors  
Ridgefield School District No. 122  
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## RIDGEFIELD EARLY LEARNING CENTER (ELC)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) sets forth the position that “a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. Although the quality of an early childhood program may be affected by many factors, a major determinant of program quality is the extent to which knowledge of child development is applied in program practices—the degree to which the program is developmentally appropriate.”

Research in the area of cognitive development in young children suggests that children learn best in an enriched, multi-sensory environment that is age-appropriate. Each child should be free to interact with this environment and construct personal knowledge in a learning style and at a rate most appropriate for him/her as an individual.

The preschool program in which this type of learning can best transpire is one in which the major portion of the day is devoted to free play. Free play allows each child to explore multi-sensory experiences, with adult guidance, when and how s/he chooses. Concepts can be learned in the way the child is most comfortable—through art, music, construction, stories, math or science experiences, or dramatic play.

As children construct knowledge, adults serve as guides who observe, comment, and ask questions regarding the child’s use of materials and interactions in both the physical and social environments. Adults encourage children to go deeper in their thinking and understanding.

A child’s growth and development in one area influences and/or depends on development in another area. No one area of development and learning is more important than another. A child’s physical and cognitive development reinforce each other.

Specifically, the Ridgefield Early Learning Center (ELC) environment is planned to include six major categories of experience for the children based on the Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines:

- 1. About me and my family and culture**
- 2. Building relationships**
- 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around**
- 4. Growing up healthy**
- 5. Communicating**
- 6. Learning about my world**

Every child in Ridgefield, Washington has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances.

Early learning that supports the full participation of every child builds on these strengths by fostering a sense of belonging and supporting positive social relationships.





## We believe that . . .

- Every child and family has unique gifts and abilities that are to be celebrated and nurtured.
- Early childhood is the most extraordinary period of growth and development that lays a foundation for learning throughout one's life.
- Families are their child's first, most important, and life-long teachers.
- Children are active learners who learn through relationships, play, active involvement, engagement, exploration and use of their senses.
- Every child and his or her family deserve equitable access to appropriate supports that acknowledge their uniqueness and enable them to reach their full potential.
- Learning and development are interrelated; this means that learning builds upon previous learning and development in one area impacts other areas.
- Children learn best when they are emotionally and physically healthy, safe and free of hunger.

## We are committed to . . .

- Valuing and embracing all children and their families.
- Promoting the retention of home language and culture.
- Involving parents, families and communities as partners and decision makers in early learning.
- Building trust and fostering collaborative partnerships that benefit children, their families and the professionals who work with them.
- Helping everyone who loves, cares for and educates children by providing information about children's growth, development and experiences
- Supporting children's health and safety .
- Encouraging environmental responsibility and global community.
- Build understanding of the importance of high quality, inclusive early learning practices and program .
- Reflect and honor the diverse community and cultures within Ridgefield.

# ELC Curriculum Philosophy

The ELC emphasizes developmentally appropriate practices for young children. Partnering with families, teachers use resources and tools to develop and build upon each unique child's abilities and needs. Research has shown that young children learn and gain more experience when their early foundations are: meaningful, authentic, developmental and hands-on.

## Creative Curriculum

This is an adopted comprehensive curriculum that supports a child's development integrated across social-emotional, physical, cognitive, language, literacy, social studies, science and math. There are five principles that guide practice for intentional teaching of young children including: positive interactions; social-emotional competence; constructive, purposeful play to support essential learning; developing an environment that is child-centered; and facilitating teacher-family partnerships.

## Second Step

This is an adopted social-emotional curriculum. It supports young children with self-regulation and social-emotional skills to problem solve, develop empathy, collaborate with peers and adults through games, activities and songs.

## WA State Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines

These are the adopted early learning standards for our state. The instructional strategies used with children in our program are aligned to these state standards. You can find them at <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/guidelines.pdf>

# Calendar and Hours of Operation

The Ridgefield ELC program begins on August 28 and commences on June 12. ELC is closed on the following dates: September 2; October 11; November 11, 27, 28, 29; December 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31; January 1, 2, 3, 20, 24; February 14, 17; March 6, 30, 31; April 1, 2, 3, 27; May 25. The ELC School Calendar is available online at [www.ridgefieldsd.org](http://www.ridgefieldsd.org).

**ELC is OPEN Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.**

**Before School Care (K-4): 7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m./9:45 a.m. Wednesdays**

**After School Care (K-4): 3:35 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

**Preschool (ages 2.5-5): 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

**Developmental Preschool (ages 3-5): 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 12:30 to 3 pm**

# PROGRAMS



## Daily Schedule

Each classroom will have a daily schedule posted that includes whole, small and independent group opportunities that are developmentally appropriate to each age group. There will be opportunities for indoor and outdoor play for fine and gross motor development. Examples include circle times, free choice centers, structured activities and open-ended time for child choice based on interest and facilitated by teachers.

## Preschool - Ages 2.5 - 5

Play and social-emotional development is the priority for our preschool classrooms. There are plenty of hands-on experiences with small group and whole group activities. Naps and quiet activities are offered in the afternoon to full time preschool children. Outdoor play is encouraged and offered throughout the day. Centers are child-centered and high-interest. There is a ratio of 1 adult to 10 children.

## Pre-Kindergarten - Ages 4 and 5

Balancing social-emotional and academic guidelines and benchmarks as children prepare for a transition year to kindergarten is highlighted by small group, whole group and some independent student-centered, play-based experiences to prepare for the stamina of Kindergarten. Naps and quiet activities are offered in the afternoon to full time preschool children. Outdoor play is encouraged and offered throughout the day. There is a ratio of 1 adult to 10 children.

## Before/After School-Age Care - Grades K-4

Encouraging hands-on, meaningful experiences through indoor and outdoor play with opportunities for rest, activity and extensions of learning that are developmentally appropriate and student-centered. There is a ratio of 1 adult to 15 children.

## Visits to the Early Learning Center

Families are encouraged to visit and participate in their child's classroom experience. All visitors will be required to pass a background check prior to volunteering within the classroom or on any field trips. Please work with the Early Learning Coordinator to ensure you have this completed.



# Developmental Milestones

## Transitioning to School

Returning to school after a summer break or even a weekend can be made more successful by considering:

- Families talking about school in a positive way; reminding children of the fun activities that await them each day
- Reading books about starting school and asking about their own interests
- Family involvement at the ELC through volunteering can be a good example for your child that you are invested in their experience and education
- Open communication with your child's teacher and the Early Learning Coordinator about any issues that may impact your child

## Classroom Transitions

Most children will transition from one classroom to the next over the summer months or at the beginning of the new school year. Children will move based on the following: age, availability and development. These criteria will be discussed as a team with the family, teachers, and Early Learning Coordinator. Transitions are accomplished through documenting developmental milestones a child has reached and collecting a child's project work for parent pick-up.

## Guidance and Discipline

At the ELC we provide children with a consistent routine and safe environment in which to develop a sense of self and a love of learning. We work with parents to teach children to self-regulate emotions by using positive strategies and guiding children with clear expectations.

Classroom expectations involve respect for others, for self, for materials, and for the environment. As teachers model helping, caring, and thoughtful behaviors for the children, they encourage positive, responsible behavior. This consistent approach to discipline provides a secure environment in which a child can assess his/her own behavior and develop the ability to self-regulate.

ELC teachers also provide children with the opportunity to make behavior choices, predict consequences of their actions, and take responsibility for their decisions. They help children learn appropriate responses to use in conflict. Teachers may contact parents to develop a consistent home/school strategy as needed.

## Child Restraint Policy

ELC strives to create the least restrictive environment for children to explore freely. Occasionally there is a need to hold a child in order to keep the child and/or others safe. Teachers restrain children with the utmost care for every child's safety and dignity. Teachers participate in ongoing training to ensure that guidance reflects appropriate expectations for the developmental stage of each child.

# Developmental Milestones continued

## Toileting

The Early Learning Center requires that enrolled, tuition-paying children (ages 3-5) be fully potty trained. We understand that children take time to develop and may need support with occasional accidents. Families are asked to provide a complete set of clothing including: pants, shirts, underwear and socks. Any soiled items will be bagged and sent home the same day with a child for laundering.

## Developmental Screenings

### Preschool (ages 2.5-5)

The Ridgefield School District offers early childhood screening and assessment of children from birth through age 5 in the areas of fine and gross motor skills, communication, cognitive or thinking skills, social skills and adaptive skills. Screenings and evaluations for infant/toddlers (birth to 3) will be conducted by a family resource coordinator. Children from age 3 to 5 who qualify for services are served in our special education preschool classroom. Early intervention/preschool services for eligible children may include special education services, speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy, as determined by their individual needs. Visit our calendar for upcoming screening days or call the Special Education Office at (360) 619-1348 for more information. Twice per year, families will meet with their child's teacher and/or the center director to discuss benchmark progress according to the Washington State Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines.

### School-Aged Students

Parents of children with a suspected disability from Kindergarten to age 21 can contact the school psychologist in your neighborhood school. If your student qualifies according to Washington State regulations, he/she may access special education programs appropriate to need. Parents of students moving into the district with a current Individualized Educational Program (IEP) are encouraged to notify the school psychologist before enrolling.

### Referral to Professional Services

If parents have questions about their child's developmental progress, they are encouraged to first contact their child's teachers. Teachers may also suggest that parents speak with the Early Learning Coordinator.

School Life

# Student Life: Going In and Out



## Timely Arrival

You can help your child have a good start to the day by arriving and departing on time. Children benefit from knowing what is going to happen during school, and this information is discussed at morning circle time beginning at about 9:00 a.m. for morning preschool and/or 1:00 p.m. for afternoon preschool.

## Sign-in/out

Parents or other authorized family members or guardians are responsible for signing their child in and out of school each day. Only an adult can sign a child in and out. If a child is picked up for an appointment then returns to school later, the family member or guardian must sign the child out when they leave for the appointment and sign the child in upon return.

## Daily Routine and Documentation

Each classroom has a daily routine posted in the classroom and on the website. Teachers take notes and pictures to document your child's work. Documentation is posted at the sign-in/out bulletin board; in classrooms; and emailed to families.

## Who is Authorized to Take a Child From the ELC?

People listed on emergency medical contact forms are authorized to pick up the child(ren) from the ELC. People not listed on the emergency medical contact form must have written permission from the parent at the time the child is picked up. Parents can speak in person to the child's teacher and write a note or email the teacher regarding who is permitted to pick-up and drop-off their child. ELC employees are required to review valid government-issued identification of a new or different person dropping-off or picking-up a child.

## Parking for Drop-off and Pick-up

Families may park in designated parking spots in the Ridgefield Administrative and Civic Center (RACC). Families may also park in designated spots at the Union Ridge Elementary parking lot.

## Late Pick-up

Children are picked up, signed-out by 12:30 p.m. for morning half day schedules and 4:30 p.m. for afternoon half day schedules. We recognize that on rare instances you may be late due to an emergency. We ask that if you are going to be late, you call and let us know. The ELC reserves the right to add an additional \$25 per half hour or portion of a half hour that child is picked-up late. The ELC will notify you if we are going to charge for late pick-up.

## Absences

If your child stays home for any reason on a regularly scheduled school day, please call the Coordinator's office in the morning to let us know. There is no refund for missed school days.

# Student Life: at ELC

## Meal Times

ELC provides morning snack from 9:30 - 10 a.m.; afternoon snack between 4 - 4:30 p.m. Breakfast is served from 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. and lunch is served from 11:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Family members are welcome to join us at any meal time. Please advise us ahead of time.

## Nap Time

All children staying for the afternoon rest after lunch. Families provide a fitted crib sheet and a small blanket labeled with your child's name. All napping children are supervised by an ELC staff member. A child can also bring a small pillow or stuffed animal. Families launder bedding weekly.

## Field Trips

Parents are welcome to join field trips. Walking is the primary means of transportation for field trips. Parents will be notified prior to any walking field trip off-site. Permission slips will be sent home, signed and collected. Teachers carry emergency medical information.

## Supplies From Home

Please send the following supplies from home, clearly labeled with your child's name. These will be kept as a back-up change of clothing due to accidents:

- Underwear
- Socks
- Shirt
- Shorts, pants, dress, etc.
- Family photo (no larger than 5x7)
- Reusable water bottle with child's full name (to be washed at home daily)
- Full day children:
- Fitted crib sheet
- Small blanket

## Sharing

Each classroom teacher will determine a schedule for sharing. Suggested Materials for Sharing: Items found in nature, a favorite book, musical instrument, photograph.

## Goals for Sharing

To continue a connection between home and school To open an inquiry or hypothesis for testing. (I wonder if...or I want to know...) To report to others about a unique discovery. (An instrument, a photograph of a rocket, or a bone found on a walk.) To share in the discovery of a book. To encourage new directions of expression and inquiry. Sharing is one of the key elements of project work. Items from home to share should contribute to the curriculum.

## Birthday and Holiday Celebrations

Birthdays are special events! ELC will celebrate each child's special day in a way that honors family traditions. Birthday celebrations could include a parent sharing a special story during the school day; playing a game or singing a song that has special significance to the child. ELC allows store purchased, pre-packaged in original containers, birthday snacks. Foods prepared at home may not be shared with others at school. Children and families are welcome to share their traditions. The ELC encourages children to practice universal values such as respect, courtesy and honesty.

# FAMILY LIFE

## Building a Community Beyond School

The ELC prioritizes building a community among families that stretches beyond school hours and a child's time in our care. Volunteer opportunities are available for families, such as field trips, classroom projects, and facility improvements. Please contact the Early Learning Coordinator for more details.



## Annual Parent Orientation

An annual orientation is held for families in the fall. At the time of enrollment, a family will have a brief overview of policies and procedures. The annual parent orientation provides time for in-depth conversation about the school as a whole.



ELC office phone number is 360-619-1333. The Early Learning Coordinator is the primary contact person in the office, generally from 8 am - 4:30 pm Monday-Friday.



During school hours, the office is open to receive phone calls and email messages. The email address is [elc@ridgefieldsd.org](mailto:elc@ridgefieldsd.org). Teachers are with children most of the time and have limited ability to take calls during school hours. To contact a teacher, please email or leave a message with the Early Learning Coordinator's office. Please do not contact teachers before or after work hours on their personal phones.



We believe ongoing communication between school and home is essential for a successful school experience. The ELC website is the primary tool to convey general information, policies, and resources. Urgent information, such as unplanned school closings, is noted on the home page.



For the safety and privacy of all members of the ELC community, we ask that no information, videos and/or photographs related to ELC, its employees, children, and families served by ELC be posted on any internet site including social media outlets such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.



ELC makes decisions about unplanned school closures dependent on Ridgefield School District. Families are alerted as soon as possible through Flashalert. Please check your television, phone, email, and RSD website for updates.



We ask that you schedule a time to talk to your child's lead teacher first about curriculum or classroom matters, as they are able to give you detailed information about your child's experiences at school. If your question is related to policies and administration, please feel free to schedule a time to speak with the Early Learning Coordinator. We urge parents to address concerns in early stages. All information is treated confidentially.

COMMUNICATION

# Health Policies

**Hand Washing** is the single most effective means of reducing the spread of infectious diseases. Children are taught these hand washing procedures:

- Wet hands with warm water
- Use liquid soap and rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds
- Wash everywhere: backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, and under fingernails.
- Rinse thoroughly until all the soap bubbles are gone
- Dry hands on a paper towel, use towel to turn off faucet

**We ask you to reinforce these skills at home as we ask teachers to do so at school.** At school we ask children, teachers, and visitors to wash their hands with soap and warm water in the following situations:

- When arriving in classroom
- After toileting personal/child
- Before and after sensory play such as play dough, sand, water, etc.
- Before and after preparing, serving, or eating food or table setting
- Before/after giving medication or administering topical ointment
- After handling bodily fluids (blood, nose blowing/sneezing)
- After attending to an ill child
- After being outdoors or involved in outdoor play
- After handling garbage or receptacles
- As needed

## Cleaning and Sanitation

The ELC uses soap & water solution to clean and a mild bleach water solution to sanitize and disinfect tables, chairs, and materials that are not dishwasher or washing machine safe. The appropriate steps are followed per the RSD ELC Health Care Policy.

## Liquids

For the safety of children, water in a sealed, spill-proof container is the only beverage allowed in areas used by children. All other employee or visitor beverages must be labelled with name and date and stored in the kitchen. This is true for teachers, administration, families, and guests to the school. This also applies during field trips.

## No Drugs, Alcohol, or Vaping/Smoking

All areas of the ELC/RACC campus including the building, playgrounds, and parking areas are designated drug/vapor/smoke- free.

## Outdoor Play

We consider our playgrounds outdoor classrooms. Teachers take children outdoors for play and educational experiences daily. We ask that you assist your child to dress for outdoor play each day. Your child also has their own space at school for extra changes of clothes, seasonal outerwear and footwear. If there is a “Red Alert” for air quality; over 110 degree Fahrenheit; or wind chill below -20 degrees Fahrenheit, children will remain indoors to play. During other less comfortable weather, children will go outside for abbreviated times as determined by child comfort and safety conditions.



## Snacks

The ELC provides a mid-morning and afternoon snack to all children in attendance for both preschool and before/after school care. Menus are posted near the sign-in/out kiosk.

## Meals: Breakfast and Lunches

Breakfast is served from 7:30-8:00 a.m. for both School-Age students and Preschoolers who are enrolled for full days. Lunches are also served to preschool children daily from 11:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Teachers use lunch time as another opportunity to develop social skills, and to reinforce healthy habits and nutrition. Children may not trade food, but will be offered as much as they need. Preschool children will eat family style in the classrooms and for school-age children, their lunches will typically be a grab & go sack lunch on early release days.

## Animal Policy

The ELC currently has no animals onsite and requests that families refrain from bringing any animals to the campus as many children have allergies and other health conditions that cause severe reactions.

## Injuries and Incidents

Because young children are so active, they may occasionally sustain minor injuries in play. Teachers treat minor bumps and scratches with basic first aid including bandages, ice packs, and soapy water. Teachers document accidents on an incident report form. We ask parents to sign incident reports and return them to the child's teacher or director. Parents are given copies of incident reports upon request.

In the case of more serious injuries or illnesses, the ELC notifies parents immediately by phone. It is critical that your child's file has up to date phone numbers. Additionally, some injuries require that we contact our licenser (DCYF) and/or Child Protective Services.

## Ill Children

If symptoms of an illness prevents a child from participating comfortably in activities, or if a child's condition is suspected to be contagious and requires exclusion as identified by public health authorities, the ELC will notify the child's parent or other authorized person to have the child picked up. Generally, children may return to school 24 hours after being symptom free and feeling better. Children must not be present at the ELC if they have any of the symptoms below currently or in the previous 24 hours:

- Fever of 101 degrees fahrenheit or more with other symptoms (temporal thermometer)
- Diarrhea (two stools above normal or blood in stool)
- Vomiting (two or more times in 24 hours)
- Rash not associated with heat, diapering or an allergic reaction
- Open sores or wounds that can't be covered, or mouth sores with drooling
- Lice, ringworm or scabies (can return after first treatment)
- Appearing severely ill, lethargic, persistent crying, difficulty breathing

**There are no make-up days or discounts for days your child is absent due to illness. Families are encouraged to prepare in advance for alternative care for times your child is too ill to come to school.**

In cases of communicable disease, the ELC is required to notify the local health department, the licensor, and parents of children who may have been exposed to the illness. The ELC is required to share the date of possible exposure; possible duration of the illness; and symptoms to watch for. All other information regarding children's health and well-being is confidential.

# EMERGENCIES

## Health, Medical, Dental or Serious Injury

### Employee Training

ELC employees receive training in medication administration. In addition to this, employees receive ongoing training in first aid, CPR, AED use, bloodborne pathogens and communicable disease prevention.

### Immediate Medical Care

On your enrollment form, you authorize the school to obtain immediate medical care for your child if an emergency occurs and you cannot be reached immediately. Please keep your contact information current.

### Transport Plan

In the case of an emergency, the ELC will call 911 and contact parents immediately. The ambulance usually transports to Salmon Creek Legacy Hospital.

### Confidentiality

DCYF (licensors and CPS) will have access to staff and child records per licensing requirements.

### Health Records

Health forms, emergency release forms, applicable medical plans for illness, injury and allergy management are kept in a child's individual file in a locked file cabinet. Children's emergency medical forms, emergency medicine, and medicine permission forms are kept in each classroom trip bag and accompany children on field trips.

### Individual Medical Care Plan

Children with known medical or developmental conditions, or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency, are required to submit a Care Plan for Children with Special Health Needs and Medical Permission Form before the child attends. These plans identify potential emergencies; address what procedures to follow; are signed by the child's primary care provider; and grant the ELC permission to act on a child's behalf.



## Medical Records and Immunizations

Washington State Department of Children & Youth Services (DCYF) requires that the ELC have on file a complete and up to date immunization record or

### Certificate of Exemption for Immunizations.

The ELC requires parents to update their child's medical and immunization records annually during the registration process. Immunization records are kept in a separate file in a locked cabinet. Medical information is kept in individual children's files. Childcare regulatory authorities have access to individual child files as well as separate immunization record files. In addition to this, only the director has access to individual child files and immunization records. Any other access is by express written parental permission. We do ask that you inform us immediately of changes to your child's health, including the development of food and environmental allergies.

### Allergies and Special Health Needs

ELC employees receive training as needed regarding food allergies and emergency care for children. If your child has allergies which require emergency medication, such as Diphenhydramine (Benadryl), inhalers or EpiPen Jr, you must complete the Care Plan for Children with Special Health Needs and Medication Permission forms. These are available from the office as well as on our website. Part of the medication plan includes a copy of the valid prescription in the child's name. The care plan fully describes the needs and treatment steps for your child. If it is a food allergy, please list the foods to which your child is allergic. Parents and the child's physician must complete the Medication Permission Form for each medication kept at school. These forms allow the ELC to receive the medications at the school office, and to administer your child's medicine should it be needed. Children with life-threatening or severe food allergies should bring their own snacks. Rescue medications will be located in the classroom or outside during play, in control of trained staff. Medications cannot be used if they are expired.

### Medication

For the protection of all students and school personnel, no medication may be brought to school in unmarked containers. All medications must be handled adult to adult. Medication Permission Forms are available in the office. Please complete permission forms with your subscribing primary care provider for prescription medications. Over the counter substances must also have a permission form completed by the parent. Common over the counter substances that are considered medication in licensed child care include, but are not limited to:

- Sunscreen (non-aerosol)
- Diaper ointments and powders
- Cough drops
- Antihistamines
- Pain relievers
- Fever reducers
- Lotion
- Chapstick
- Cough medicine
- Anti-itching creams
- Decongestants

**Please pick up medication when your child is done using it.**

## **The ELC follows these steps to keep long-term or emergency medications available at school:**

1. Parents whose children are at risk of suffering allergic reactions that may become medical emergencies must note such on the Medical or Emergency Information.
2. Both primary care provider and parents must complete and sign a written Medication Permission Form for each medication that needs to be kept at school. ELC needs this form completed before any prescription or non-prescription medication may be received by the school office or administered at school. The form may be emailed to the school by the physician. The school email is [elc@ridgefieldsd.org](mailto:elc@ridgefieldsd.org).
3. Both physician and parents must complete and sign a Care Plan for Children with Special Health Needs if the child has an ongoing special health need such as a food allergy or other medical condition.
4. All prescription medications administered at school must be in the original container with the child's name, physician's name, date, expiration date, and pharmacy label with telephone number. All prescription medication will be stored in the office medicine cabinet, with the exception of emergency medicine. This stays in the child's classroom or the travel bag when the child is on a field trip.
5. Non-prescription medication is kept in a safe place for adults to access and administer to children.
6. Parents are responsible for ensuring that medication and consent forms kept at school are still effective and have not passed their expiration dates. Please note that Medication Permission forms are valid for one year, so require annual renewal.

ELC staff members who administer the medication are trained in best practices of medication administration, including:

1. Verifying that the right child receives the right medication
2. In the right dose
3. At the right time
4. By the right method with
5. The documentation of each right time the medication is administered as specified by Medication Permission Forms

## **Sunscreen**

The ELC has shady and covered outdoor areas for play. We encourage the use of sun-protective clothing, hats, and applied skin protection. During times of high sun exposure, usually May through September, please apply sunscreen liberally to your child's skin before coming to school. Sweating can cause sunscreen to get into the eyes, so please do not apply sunscreen to children's hands or foreheads. The FDA recommends applying sunscreen with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher on exposed skin. The ELC will re-apply sunscreen with written parental permission. Encourage your child to wear a broad brimmed hat when outside (and please label it). Parents are responsible for supplying the sunscreen for their child. Please make sure to clearly label the product with the child's name. Parents must also fill out a Medication Permission Form.

## **Health Care Plan**

Please see ELC HEALTH CARE POLICY posted in the office and on our website for more health care related information.

# SAFETY PROCEDURES



## Routine Inspections

ELC routinely inspects and maintains all indoor and outdoor spaces. We abide by the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Guidelines, and follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. In addition to this, we are inspected annually by the Washington Department of Children & Youth Services (DCYF). An annual compliance report is on file in the office, available for review upon request.

## Pesticide Use Policy

Families are given a 24 hour notice of pesticide application if during open hours.

## Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness is a priority for the ELC. The school has taken steps to be prepared in the case of an emergency. Our staff is trained to deal with a variety of circumstances. We conduct monthly fire safety drills and quarterly emergency drills with children during the school day. The school has a response procedure for:

- Evacuation to the playgrounds or other nearby building, depending on what is necessary.
  - Shelter in place, prompted by an environmental or other emergency.
- Additionally, we have monthly inspections to ensure proper working order of fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, alternate alarms, and emergency lighting.

## Emergency Response

In all emergencies the ELC will follow the instructions of local emergency responders such as police or fire department officials who would manage the response and provide instruction to parents. Please note that in the case of a shelter-in-place scenario, children will be kept at school until authorities deem it safe to leave. Should school need to be cancelled, the ELC will notify you by phone to come to school immediately to pick up your child(ren). We will keep children calm, comfortable, and occupied indoors until you arrive. Please do not call the school since incoming calls will impede our ability to contact parents.

## CHILD ABUSE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All ELC employees are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation, as required by Washington State Law and DCYF licensing requirements. Employees follow recommendations of local authorities, including police or Child Protective Services, to inform families of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The CPS hotline is: 1-866-363-4276.



# ENROLLMENT

## Annual Registration

Currently enrolled families register annually in early spring for the coming school year. The registration process includes:

- Annual, non-refundable registration fee to reserve the child's spot \$50/child preschool, \$25/school-age care
- Updating child's schedule for the following school year
- Updating health and immunization record

## Enrollment Period

New families are welcome to enroll on a first-come first serve basis in the spring. Families are called in order off the waitlist. If there is no one on the waitlist for a particular age group, then openings are advertised.

## Priority Enrollment

Siblings of currently enrolled families are given priority (during open enrollment) when enrolling new children so that children may attend the same childcare. Full-time preschool options are also prioritized.

## Waitlist

Families are welcome to call any time of year to put their name on the waitlist. Families are called as openings are available year round. The waitlist is managed on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Tuition

Preschool with childcare (up to 10 hours per day) is \$51/daily. Preschool only is \$30/daily. School-age before or after care is \$20/daily. School-age before and after care is \$32/daily.

## Invoice and Payment Schedule

Tuition is due monthly on the fifth of the month for the coming month. The ELC accepts payments in the form of checks or online ProCare/Tuition Express. Families are emailed invoices no later than the 25th of each month. Monthly tuition is calculated based on the number of days attending per the financial contract for days/times. **OTHER FEES - Fee for Late Payment:** A \$15 fee will be assessed for late tuition payments. Tuition payments delinquent for 2 weeks may result in termination of care. **Fee for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) or overdrafts:** A \$25 fee will be assessed if a check does not clear the bank and personal checks will no longer be accepted as a form of payment. Rates are based on a maximum of 10 hours of care per day. Each child in attendance over 10 hours a day will be charged the Daily Rate plus a \$10 surcharge per day.

## Notification of Changes

If you wish to change the days or times that your child attends, or terminate services, ELC requires 30 business days written notification. Until the end of the 30 business day period, a family is financially responsible for the full cost of tuition, regardless of a child's attendance.

## Termination of Services Policy, WAC 110-300-0485

Ridgefield Early Learning Center may terminate a child's services due to a parent or guardian's inability to meet the expectations and requirements of the program. This may include unpaid bills, continual late arrival, or a parent, guardian or family member's inappropriate or unsafe behavior in or near early learning center program space.

## Expulsion Policy

Ridgefield School District Policy Procedure: 3241P available on the district website.

## Schedules

Available schedules are shared first with currently enrolled families. If no currently enrolled family wants additional availability, openings are filled off the waitlist, then posted publicly (on website, and through community resources). Families can enroll their children for the following schedule options, based on current availability.

Scheduling for preschool (8:30-12:30) with childcare (7:00-6:00 pm, up to 10 hours daily) options:

- Five Days: Monday-Friday
- Three Days: Monday, Wednesday, Friday
- Two Days: Tuesday, Thursday

Scheduling for before/after school-age care options:

- Before School Daily 7:00-8:45 a.m. (9:45 a.m. on Wednesdays)
- After School Daily 3:35-6:00 p.m.

# Professional Associations



## **Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF)**

ELC is licensed through DCYF. ELC complies with all laws and regulations governing WA State licensed childcare facilities. Annual inspection and compliance reports are available to families upon request. For more information on DCYF please visit <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/>.

## **Washington State Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines 21**

ELC uses Washington State guidelines to inform curriculum development. Washington State guidelines are available in full at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/Guidelines.aspx>.

## **Early Achievers Participation**

ELC participates in Early Achievers, a quality rating improvement system managed through Child Care Aware of Washington ([wa.childcareaware.org](http://wa.childcareaware.org)). Every three years, ELC teachers and classrooms are observed. The observation leads to a rating score of 1-5. Parents must sign an acknowledgement where they can choose whether or not they want their child present during data collection periods.

## **National Association for the Education of Young Children**

All employees of ELC follow the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment available in full at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)





## Non-Discrimination Policy VALUING DIVERSITY

Ridgefield School District values the diverse ethnic heritage of the students we serve and believes to be prepared for today's global society and workforce, students must be able to understand, appreciate, work with and learn from people with cultures and backgrounds different from their own.

We understand educating our children requires a partnership. Students need support at home and from the community to succeed in school and life. Each student is unique and learning styles are different. We believe the diversity of our school community, which in simplest terms means the ways in which people are different, enhances the district's ability to implement our goals.

Education involves acknowledging and valuing what is comfortable and known and leading students to an understanding and appreciation of what is new and different. Encountering different perspectives, ideas, ways of thinking, and understanding is an essential part of this process. Through their experience with such differences students develop the ability to think critically, to make informed judgments, to imagine, to understand, and to grow. Helping students understand their connection to the world and to each other will enable them not only to achieve their highest potential, but also to serve as strong and effective leaders. This principle is at the heart of our mission to foster unlimited possibilities.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Ridgefield School District No.122 complies with all state and federal rules and regulations and provides equal opportunity in programs and employment and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin/language, marital status, HIV/Hepatitis C status, sex, sexual orientation-including gender expression or identity, creed, religion, age, veteran or military status, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups.

Ridgefield School District will also take steps to assure that national origin persons who lack English language skills can participate in all education programs, services and activities. For information regarding translation services, bilingual education or inquiries regarding compliance procedures, contact Chris Griffith, Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, 510 Pioneer Street, Ridgefield, WA 98642, (360) 619-1304, or by email at [chris.griffith@ridgefieldsd.org](mailto:chris.griffith@ridgefieldsd.org)



# ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND REVIEW OF ELC FAMILY HANDBOOK

Dear ELC Family,

Please read, sign, and initial each section of this acknowledgment.

## WALKING FIELD TRIP PERMISSION

Children take walking field trips away from the preschool grounds. Rather than sending notes home requesting permission to do this each time, ELC would like to have your permission to take walking trips throughout the year.

\_\_\_\_\_ By initialing here and signing below, I authorize my child(ren) to go on walking field trips away from school. I understand that these excursions will be adequately planned and supervised.

RECEIPT AND REVIEW OF HANDBOOK I, \_\_\_\_\_  
acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Family Handbook of Policies and Procedures for the Ridgefield Early Learning Center preschool and licensed childcare.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Print Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Early Learning Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_