

# CLASSROOM



## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The actual room arrangement of each program room is the responsibility of the program Lead Teacher and Full-Time Assistant Teacher. Space should be organized according to the Environment Rating Scales (ERS). Centers should include. These areas should be clearly defined, with obvious boundaries. The room décor should consist mostly of child artwork and photographs of animals, people, food, and the children themselves at the child's eye level. Room arrangement should take into consideration that staff must be able to see every child at all times.

The Director and/or Assistant Director must approve changes to the physical environment.

## CO-WORKERCOMMUNICATION

Open communication between staff members, parents, and children is crucial to a successful program. Before leaving a classroom for any reason (bathroom, making a copy, calling a parent) an employee should inform cooperating teachers of the reason he/she is leaving. For all involved, it is important that all issues be addressed and resolved as they arise. All employees are expected to function as a team member at all times.

## SUPPLIES

Each classroom has a monthly & yearly budget for purchases. Lead Teachers are responsible for complying to the budget and submitting supply/material requests to the Director and/or Assistant Director. Any additional purchases above the allotted budgets must be approved by the Director and/or Assistant Director.

## HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Holidays offer a time to reflect upon the feelings, beliefs, traditions and events that have great meaning in our lives. While the celebrations of holidays are special and enjoyable, we must use care when we incorporate the discussion of holidays into our curriculum as our school community is composed of individuals with varied religious and cultural backgrounds. Decorations that are hung in the classroom should reflect the season, not the holiday. These times are opportunities to explore the history, dances, stories, songs, traditions, decorations, foods and holidays of diverse cultures.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Students will celebrate these occasions peacefully! Parents are welcome to bring fresh fruit or healthy snacks to distribute amongst the classroom. Candy, cake, cupcakes, brownies, and other snacks with high sugar content will **not** be served. We encourage to keep the celebration simple with no exchange of gifts. Remind parents we are a nut free school.

## **DAILY DUTIES FOR CLASSROOM STAFF**

Each classroom has a set of opening, nap time, closing and weekly cleaning tasks. Below are some general things that must be completed each day. Staff members are expected to familiarize themselves with the classroom specific duties.

### **MORNING DUTIES**

Make sure all program room doors are unlocked; mix new bleach water; put away sanitized toys; straighten toys and shelves; re-stock supplies such as soap, paper towels, toilet paper, diapers, wipes, etc.; and complete room set-up for the day's lesson plan.

### **NOON/NAP-TIME DUTIES**

Straightening of shelves; sanitizing toys; cleaning tables/chairs/floors; curriculum planning; wash dishes; complete daily activity sheets for children; and prepare for afternoon.

### **AFTERNOON DUTIES**

Wash or spray toys that have been mouthed by children with bleach solution and air dry; take trash to dumpster, sanitize trash can, and replace trash bag; put toys and equipment away; check outdoor play area for equipment that needs to be put away; sanitize tables, chairs, and shelves; wash dishes; empty bleach solution; vacuum carpets; lock all program room doors after the last parent leaves for the day.

# CURRICULUM PLANNING

## CURRICULUM

Curriculum at Wunderkind includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Wunderkind uses the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos and the Creative Curriculum for Preschool as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms.

Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain a number of activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group as a whole. Lesson plans should be changed in order to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set-up in centers practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics and cultural studies. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

## DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

The Lead Teacher and Full-Time Assistant Teacher work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. Every staff member is responsible for the carrying out the schedule and activities. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children **thrive** on consistency! Routines should be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

**Lesson plans and the daily schedule must be posted in the classroom and visible at all times.**

## FREE PLAY

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) must be incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. Teachers are expected to actively participate with the children during free play activities by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc.

## NAP/REST TIME

DCFS requires that all children be provided a regularly scheduled nap or rest time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Lead Teachers are expected to offer a minimum of two parent-teacher conferences per year and must make every effort to meet with each family. A copy of the parent-teacher conference form and child development summary must be placed in the child's permanent file after conferences. The Lead Teacher should discuss suitable times to hold conferences with the Director and/or Assistant Director.

### Lesson Plan Sample

	Month
<b>Holiday/Celebration</b>	
<b>Theme/Focus</b>	
<b>Colors</b>	
<b>Books</b>	
<b>Language</b>	
<b>Practical Life</b>	
<b>(Fine Motor)</b>	
<b>Sensorial</b>	
<b>Art</b>	

Material/Supply List

# PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

## PARENT INTERACTIONS

Many of our employees will become well acquainted with the parents of the children. This is an important part of providing quality care, but there are a few guidelines to which staff members must adhere:

- Address parents by their first name.
- Talk with parents about an issue with their child only if you are not in the classroom with children.
- Never talk about concerns about a child in front of any other children.
- When stating a concern about their child, also state at least two positive things about their child. Don't focus only on the negative.
- Do not use other children's names when discussing behavior concerns and/or incident reports.
- Avoid the phrase "**I don't know.**" Instead, say "I'm not certain of the answer for that; can I get back to you?" then find the answer and reply to the parent as soon as possible.
- Conversations at pick-up and drop-off should be brief; your chief responsibility remains the supervision of the children. If you feel a parent needs more time or attention, ask to schedule a time to meet outside the classroom.



## HANDLING PARENT COMPLAINTS

- Listen carefully. Many times a person just needs an opportunity to air his or her feelings and feel they've been heard.
- Repeat what you have heard the other person say, trying to summarize it in one sentence. ("You're upset that Gavin isn't able to stay awake for dinner and seems crabby at night.")
- State the changes that you think the parent would like to have made. ("You would like us to make sure Gavin lies down for at least an hour every afternoon.")
- State what you will do to solve the problem. ("I will speak with the other teachers and make a note on his chart to make sure the message reaches everyone.")
- Follow through. If you tell a parent you will do something, do it promptly and follow up with them immediately afterward. ("I spoke with the other teachers last week; how are things going with Gavin? Did you notice a change?")
- If you are unsure how to solve the complaint, refer the parent to the Director and/or Assistant Director. ("I'm not sure how to answer that; the Director and/or Assistant Director will be able to better help you.")

# ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

## ARRIVAL

- Staff members are expected to greet each child and parent by name upon their arrival to the classroom. Arrival is the opportune time to discuss how the child's night was, what he/she ate for breakfast, special instructions for the day, etc. Upon arrival, each child must have direct contact with a staff member. Staff should be looking for previous injuries, signs of illness, or unusual behavior.

## DEPARTURE

- During the enrollment process, each family completes an "Emergency Contact and Parental Consent" form. This form provides authorization for select individuals to pick-up children from the center. If you are not familiar with the person attempting to pick-up a child, you must request photo identification and check the "Emergency Contact" form. At the end of the day, staff must check the attendance clipboard to verify all children have been signed out.