



Ashworth Learning Center

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Welcome to Ashworth Learning Center! Ashworth Learning Center is a licensed childcare center and preschool servicing children six weeks of age up to 5-year-olds.

MISSION STATEMENT

At Ashworth Learning Center, our programming starts at infancy and grows with your child through formative developments. We believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Therefore, our childcare experience is promotes each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, fostering a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Each applicant must complete an application, as well as an interview. The applicant then must pass a National Criminal Record Check/ fingerprinting. An applicant must also provide a physical examination report, including having a TB screen (not test)/[['/.

Within the first three months of being hired, all employees must complete the following training:

CPR (every two years thereafter)

First Aid (every two years thereafter)

Universal Precautions (annually)

Mandatory Reporter (every three years)

Essentials Training (every five years)

During the first year of employment, every staff member needs at least ten (10) professional development hours of training. Essentials training can count towards this training. Every year thereafter, regular staff need at least six hours of professional development training. Directors and on-site supervisors need at least eight hours.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Center Director-

Responsible for the overall functions of the center, including supervising staff, designing curriculum, and administering programs. The director shall ensure services are provided for the children within the framework of licensing requirements and the center's statement of purpose and objectives. The center director will have overall responsibility for carrying out the program and ensuring the safety and protection of the children.

On-Site Supervisor-

Responsible for the daily supervision of the center and must be on-site daily either during the hours of operation that children are present or a minimum of eight hours of the center's hours of operation.

Among other duties, the on-site supervisor is directly responsible for:

- The daily operation of the center and supervision of direct-care staff
- Ensuring children are accounted for and proper record keeping is maintained
- Ensuring information regarding exposure to communicable disease is posted immediately upon notification
- Ensuring parents are immediately notified of emergency or other serious incidents
- Ensuring information is communicated to parents at the end of the day etc.

*These functions may be performed in a dual role by the director if the director remains on site.

Childcare Teacher-

Responsible for encouraging the healthy intellectual and psychological growth of the children in the facility. Will teach and supervise while motivating them to use their mental capacities and exercise their imagination. Duties include, but are not limited to the following:

- Designing and following a full schedule of activities
- Balance teaching between logical and social exercises
- Provide basic care and caregiving activities
- Follow a curriculum given by the Ashworth Learning Center Director.
- Use a wide range of teaching methods (stories, media, indoor or outdoor games, drawing, etc.) to enhance the child's abilities
- Evaluate the children's performance to make sure they are on the right learning track
- Remain in constant communication with parents and update them on the progress of their children
- Observe the children's interactions and promote the spirit of concord
- Identify behavioral problems and determine the right course of action
- Adhere with teaching standards and safety regulations as established by the official sources
- Maintain a safe and clean atmosphere at all times
- Serve meals and snacks in accordance with nutritional guidelines
- Sanitize the coordinated areas assigned on a daily basis

Preschool Teacher-

Responsible for instructing children in activities designed to promote social, physical, and intellectual growth needed for primary school. Duties include but are not limited to the following:

- Follow a curriculum given by the Ashworth Learning Center Director.
- Provide a variety of materials and resources for children to explore, manipulate and use, both in learning activities and in imaginative play.
- Teach basic skills such as color, shape, number and letter recognition, personal hygiene, and social skills.
- Meet with parents and guardians to discuss their children's progress and needs, determine their priorities for their children, and suggest ways that they can promote learning and development
- Prepare materials and classrooms for class activities
- Serve meals and snacks in accordance with nutritional guidelines
- Assimilate arriving children to the school environment by greeting them, helping them remove outerwear, and selecting activities of interest to them

- Establish clear objectives for all lessons, units, and projects, and communicate those objectives to children
- Prepare and implement remedial programs for students requiring extra help
- Maintain a safe and clean atmosphere at all times
- Sanitize the coordinated areas assigned on a daily basis

EMPLOYEE POLICIES

Punctuality/Calling in sick- If you will be late, please notify the Director or person in charge for that given day as soon as possible. Arriving late more than two times in a month will result in a write-up. If you will not be able to come in for your scheduled shift and it is an early shift, you need to leave a voicemail at the center and email the Director at least two hours before your scheduled shift. If your shift is in the middle of the day, you need to contact the center and let them know you will not be in at least two hours before your scheduled shift. Missing more than three days in a month will result in a write-up unless given permission by the Director. More than two write-ups in a three-month period could result in termination. If you would like to schedule a day off, you need to email the date to the director at least a week prior. We understand circumstances happen where time needs to be taken off last minute, and we will try our best to accommodate those.

Breaks and Child-to-Staff Ratios-

Breaks will be scheduled by the Director. Employees will generally eat the same meal and food as the children in their care, as per state guidelines. Thus, meals taken with children are considered paid time, as they are part of the duties assigned. Every staff member should sign out for a 30-minute break for every 8-hour shift. Please do NOT take longer than 30 minutes unless approved by the Director. Please do not leave for your break until the staff-to-child ratio is being fulfilled.

Proximity-

Staff should be near the children, as this helps prevent injuries. You may sit for short amounts of time, but if the children are up and moving, the staff should be doing the same. While watching the children outside, you may sit down for short periods of time. However, the chairs should be placed so that all staff are spread out throughout the gated proximity.

Personal Appearance-

All employees are expected to present a neat and clean appearance and dress appropriately for their position and duties. An employee's appearance and dress should reflect the professional nature of the position as well as the functional nature within the expectations and responsibilities of the job. Please note that Ashworth Learning Center is not responsible for damage to or loss of an employee's articles of clothing, jewelry, and/or accessories.

Dress Code-

Semi-casual attire should be maintained throughout the center. Your attire should allow you to be hands-on with the children, as well as covering your body parts. Jeans, khakis, casual dress with leggings are proper attire. The following will not be allowed:

- Short shorts (defined as shorts that come up higher than the tip of your middle finger when your arms are straight at your sides)
- Short dresses or skirts (dresses and skirts above the knee are not acceptable. Do not wear dresses and skirts if it will interfere with your ability to get down on the floor with the children)
- Low scoop neck shirts or blouses (at no time should undergarments be visible)
- Clothes that expose the stomach or chest
- Jewelry which may present a safety hazard
- Clothing with logos and pictures that are inappropriate for children
- Tank tops of any sort
- Yoga pants
- Sweat pants and workout attire

In addition:

- When wearing low waist pants or skirts, staff should wear tops long enough to cover the bottom when bending or squatting.
- During swimming activities, staff should wear one-piece swimsuits or a two-piece swimsuit pre-approved by the Director. Appropriate clothing should be worn over the swimsuit when transporting children to and from the Center and the pool.

Employees who are found to be in violation of the dress code may be asked to go home and change; the time required to do so is unpaid. A verbal warning will also be given and documented. Second and subsequent violations will result in a written warning.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

We believe that children need limits in order to feel secure about themselves and their environment. The purpose of discipline is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. At Ashworth Learning Center, we strive to develop a positive relationship between the teacher and the child. We also believe that if an interesting and challenging program is offered to the child, discipline problems will occur at a minimum.

Specific discipline strategies used by Ashworth Learning Center:

- Maintaining realistic expectations of children
- Providing clear and simple limits
- Planning an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere
- Keeping children busy to prevent problems from occurring in the first place
- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives
- Encouraging children to work together to solve programs and make cooperative decisions
- Encouraging children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions
- Removing children from the situation until they are calm and able to discuss the problem
- Conflict resolution for older children

According to licensing procedures for child care centers in the state of Iowa:

- Corporal punishment, including spanking, shaking, and slapping, shall not be used.
- Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or which causes pain or discomfort to the child shall not be used.
- Punishment shall not be administered because of child's illness, lack of progress in toilet training. There shall not be punishment or threatening of punishment that is associated with food or rest.
- No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.
- Each program shall have a written policy on discipline of children, which provides for positive guidance, with the direction for resolving conflict and setting well-defined limits. The written policy shall be provided to team members and parents.

FAMILIES

Families (the children whom we serve, and their parents, guardians, and other family members) are our center's most valuable asset. Every employee represents Ashworth Learning Center to our families and the public. The manner in which we do our jobs presents an image of our entire organization. Families judge all of us by how they are treated by each and every employee. Nothing is more important than being respectful, courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention given to families.

Our personal contact with the public, our manners on the telephone, and the communications we send to families reflect not only ourselves but also the professionalism of Ashworth Learning Center. Positive interactions with our families not only enhance the public's perception or image of us but also help us to obtain grants and contracts.

It is expected that all employees of Ashworth Learning Center will interact respectfully, courteously, and promptly with our families.

All of the families have the right to their privacy. Therefore, do not discuss the children and families publicly or with family members, either by name or physical description. Some families have also restricted photography permission for their children; please refer to the Social Media policy in this section for more information.

Employees who fail to have appropriate interactions with our families will be subject to disciplinary action, up to including termination.

PHONES

Employees are not permitted to make or receive personal telephone calls during work hours on their personal cell phones unless authorized to do so by the Director. Please direct friends or family to call our business line in case of an emergency, and the call will be directed to you right away.

When an employee needs to call a parent, our business line should be used, rather than a cell phone. Every time you make or receive a business telephone call, you are representing not only yourself as a professional but also Ashworth Learning Center.

Termination will occur if staff is found on their personal phones. All cell phones should be put away in a drawer.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The posting of confidential and identifying information about children, parents, or staff at the center on social media is strictly prohibited. In no way does Ashworth Learning Center wish to abridge the rights of its employees to engage in critical commentary and observations that may relate to the center and its operations; however, when such commentary and observations occur within a public forum and contain confidential information, it may result in disciplinary action for the employee. The posting of non-confidential information shall be restricted to official communication channels unless prior written approval from the Director has been obtained.

PICTURES

As with the use of social media, the publication of photos from the center, whether online or otherwise, is generally prohibited without prior approval from the Director. As mentioned previously, some families have chosen to restrict photograph permissions, and it is expected that all employees abide by those wishes. These restrictions will be noted in the children's file.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The center is open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. We are closed on the following days:

- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Memorial Day
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day

If any of these holidays fall on a weekend, they will be observed on either the Monday after or Friday before the holiday.

WEAPONS AND OTHER SAFETY HAZARDS

Possession or use of any type of weapon, dangerous object, or explosive device while on the center's property is prohibited and will result in immediate termination. This does not include items that might reasonably be expected to be used during the normal course of an employee's duties.

INTOXICATED PARENT

Try to detain the intoxicated parent. Have another staff contact someone from the child's emergency contact list and request a pick-up. Inform the intoxicated parent of the new pick-up plan. If unable to contact another pick-up person, the child must be allowed to leave with this parent. Inform the parent that the police will be called. Call the police and inform them of the situation.

MANDATORY REPORTER

If you see a child in imminent danger, immediately contact law enforcement to provide immediate assistance to the child. Law enforcement is the only profession that can take a child into custody in that situation. After you have notified law enforcement, then call DHS.

To report a suspected case of child abuse:
Call 1-800-362-2178
Then, follow up by making a written report within 24 hours.

SMOKING POLICY

There is no smoking allowed on the property. Staff must leave the premises to smoke and are not allowed to be visibly seen by staff or children during this time. Staff must wash hands as they enter the door and, if needed, will have to change clothes so the smell does not stay with that employee.

ASHWORTH LEARNING CENTER EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I, _____ have read and understand the policies and procedures contained within the Ashworth Learning Center Employee Handbook. I will follow and comply with these policies and to the best of my abilities.

Date: _____