

**St. Teresa of Calcutta Early  
Learning Center and Child Care  
PARENT HANDBOOK**



**256 Swamp Pike Schwenksville,  
PA 19473**

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# **WELCOME To St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center and Child Care!**

We are delighted you have chosen St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care to fulfill your child care needs. Caring for your child is a responsibility we take very seriously. It is our goal to provide a loving atmosphere that emphasizes development of the whole child - mind, body, and spirit. We take pride in our teachers and staff who are dedicated to providing quality care and education for our children.

Please take time to read this handbook, as it will answer many of the questions you may have concerning our policies and procedures. Our goal is to partner with families, to supplement your parenting efforts, and support you in your role if you are a working parent. We encourage you to become an active participant in our school activities and programs we offer. If you have any questions, concerns, or problems, feel free to talk to your child's Teacher, the Management Team, or the Director. We want the best for you and your child.

Visit our website at [www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org) . Please take some time to familiarize your family with our website as you will find important information there such as:

1. STC ELC scheduled closure dates
2. Classroom monthly calendars specific to curriculums in your child's classroom
3. STC ELC monthly calendars and information about special events
4. Links to online programs for virtual learning and Parent Resources
5. Tuition and FACTS links
6. Emergency closure information due to weather or unexpected closures
7. Pictures of the great things we are doing here at the Early Learning Center!
8. Special Celebration Days
9. Summer Camp information
10. Faculty Bios

And Much Much More!

*Editor's Note : The term "parent" is used throughout the handbook to represent the primary individual(s) responsible for the child's care. The terms "school", "STC", "STC ELC", and "Child Care" are used to represent our facility here at St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center and Child Care.*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center and Child Care is part of a multi-parish organization within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and was founded in 2008. We are licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services which is governed by OCDEL (Office of Child Development and Early Learning) and we are a participating Keystone STARS facility which strives to provide quality child care and education. We are located at 256 Swamp Pike, Schwenksville, PA 19473 and serve surrounding Montgomery, Chester, and Berks County areas.

STC Early Learning Center and Child Care is open 12 months a year from 7:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Monday through Friday.

Our website has important information for families that is updated frequently.

[www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org)

Part-time programs are also available, but not guaranteed as they are based on availability. You will be asked to designate your child's hours of attendance at the time of enrollment as we use this information for staffing purposes.

***\*\*We currently are a Mask Optional Facility and are abiding by a 5 day quarantine for children diagnosed with COVID-19 if they are able to mask well. If they are unable to mask properly in our care, as determined by the child's teachers, they will be asked to observe a 10 day quarantine from our program if diagnosed with COVID-19. Families are required to report to us any positive cases when a child is diagnosed. Non-reporting of a child's positive case of COVID-19 or any other communicable disease is subject to the child being expelled from the program. A list of communicable diseases may be found at <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Reporting-Registries/Pages/Reportable-Diseases.aspx>***

### **St. Teresa's Early Learning Center priorities are:**

- **Safety**
  
- **Love**
  
- **Learning**

## **Mission Statement**

Our goal is to provide young children a safe environment in which they can develop emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially. We promote a positive atmosphere where parents, teachers, staff and children interact with mutual respect and caring. We are committed to providing students with the opportunity and skills necessary to face the challenges of the Twenty-First Century as people of faith and vision, with the will to succeed as productive members in society.

## **St. Teresa Early Learning Center Philosophy**

The staff of St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care believes that each child is a precious gift from God with unique and special qualities. We help children to learn compassion, respect for others and an awareness of the world around them. Religious concepts are woven into our curriculum and the daily activities within each classroom. The children are taught daily about God's love for them. We believe that children learn best in a play-oriented, hands-on environment in which each child develops school readiness skills at his or her own developmental level. Through play, children learn to socialize and communicate their thoughts and feelings to others. They also learn to organize, to problem-solve and to use their imaginations. The activities we provide give children many opportunities to develop their cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth. We hope that they will develop friendships as they learn the "golden rule" - to treat others as they would like to be treated. We want them to value the importance of play, since that is where learning begins.

## **Programs**

St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center and Child Care services children from 6 weeks through 12 years. We offer different programs for each age group and use a theme based curriculum. We have introduced Frog Street Press curriculums into all of our programs from Infants through Pre-K Plus. This curriculum weaves character education into 10 learning domains that are guided by the PA Learning Standards. To learn more about this program go to our website for the link.

## **Curriculum**

St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care utilizes a thematic approach to curriculum with a different theme every week and a bible verse every month. The theme and the verse are carried out in the books the children read, the songs they sing, the art projects they do, and the parts they role play. The classroom teachers prepare weekly lesson plans, which are reviewed by the Management Team for review and feedback. We utilize the Frog Street programs which combine character education with academics and teach to the current PA Learning Standards for children from infancy through Pre-K. If you would like more information about our curriculums please let a member of the management team know and we are happy to provide that to you.

### **Infants 6 weeks – 1 year**

The Infant classroom provides a nurturing environment where your child will begin to develop their physical, emotional, and social skills. Your child will learn skills like: making vocal sounds and using simple gestures like waving, exploring their environment and handling toys and other objects, sitting up, pulling up to stand, and walking. Parents are asked to provide all diapers, wipes, bibs, utensils, and food for their child's needs while in our care.

### **Pre-Toddlers 1 – 1 ½ Years**

The Pre-Toddler classroom provides nurturing support as your child continues developing their physical, emotional, and social skills. Your child will learn skills such as: playing with others and independently, saying simple words and using head nods to communicate, pointing to recognized ordinary objects, walking and running independently, using a sippy cup to drink from, sleeping on a mat instead of the crib, and eating solid and finger foods.

### **Toddlers 1 ½ - 2 ½ Years**

The Toddler classroom provides care, love, and beginning education as your child continues developing their physical, emotional, and social skills. Your child will learn skills such as: following simple directions, pointing to and recognizing pictures when they are named, throwing and kicking a ball, showing interest and excitement with the other children, beginning color, letter, and shape recognition. They should be able to feed themselves appropriate finger foods and begin spoon feeding themselves in our Toddler program.

### **Little Learners 2 ½ - 3 ½ Years**

The Little Learners classroom provides nurturing support as your child continues developing their physical, emotional, and social skills. Your child will learn skills such as: taking turns in play, following instructions with multiple steps, using buttons, screws, and other moving parts, peddling a tricycle, using the toilet, being responsible for their own personal belongings. Children should be able to self-feed with little or no assistance and will begin learning how to clean up their things after a meal. They will begin using open top cups and will practice fine motor skills to help them become independent in this area. When exiting this program your child should be potty trained and need only a little assistance in the bathroom.

### **Preschool 3 – 4 ½ Years (children should be using the toilet regularly in this class)**

The Preschool classroom continues to provide necessary support as your child continues developing their physical, emotional, and social skills. We ask that children in this program are potty-trained and able to use the bathroom independently with little or no help. We do not change diapers in this program and are not set up for that in this classroom. Your child will sharpen their skills such as: taking turns in play, following instructions with multiple steps, being responsible for their own personal belongings, using the toilet independently, and we add beginning academics to our curriculums. Frog Street Press curriculum is a comprehensive, dual-language program designed to meet the needs of diverse learners, while supporting 10 learning domains. This engaging, interactive program celebrates the joy of learning while children travel down the road to success. We will also introduce a formal religious component to the curriculum in Preschool where children will begin reciting prayers and learn about the word of God through monthly bible verses.

### **Pre-K 4 – 5 Years**

The Pre-K classroom also provides nurturing support as your child continues developing their physical, emotional, and social skills. Your child will learn skills such as: speaking clearly and using full sentences, knowing name, address, and phone number, writing letters and numbers, hopping, skipping, and standing on one foot, working collaboratively with peers. Frog Street Press curriculum is continued through this class. Key learning domains are woven into every aspect of Frog Street Pre-K, and weekly instructional plans are implemented with fidelity. Integrated STEAM projects promote problem solving and beginning coding skills. Interactive digital programs support virtual learning and families at home. An exclusive partnership with the Conscious Discipline® program provides the tools for a strong social-emotional foundation. Children

in this program will also have the opportunity to attend First Friday Mass in the church with Father Brandt leading.

### **Pre-K Plus 4 ½ - 5 Years**

The Pre-K Plus classroom is for children who miss the school cutoff for kindergarten and those with summer birthdays in which families feel it may be beneficial to have the additional year of Pre-K. This specialized class will further the skills that were taught in Pre-K and may also provide Kindergarten level skills for the advanced learner. We will combine many advanced aspect of the Frog Street Press curriculum along with beginning aspects of the Kindergarten curriculum taught here at the St. Teresa K-8 school. The children in this class will also attend First Friday Mass monthly with Father Brandt leading.

### **Summer in Child Care and ELC**

All children in our program are enrolled for the summer months by default. If your child will NOT be attending our program in the summer you must notify the Director in writing by June 1, 2023. There will be a \$600.00 Summer hold fee if you would like us to save your child's spot over the summer months. This fee is put into place as we have to turn families away that need care in order to reserve a spot for your child over the summer and because we have the same operating costs in the summer as we do during the school year. See policy on vacations and extended absences from our program located in this handbook for more information. This fee will not be charged to families that are going part-time (2 to 3 days a week or switch to half-days for summer) from a full-time schedule. Children attending part-time during the school year will be assessed this fee.

### **CARES**

This program is available for students of St. Teresa of Calcutta School who need *child care before and after school hours*. Students have time to run and play together, do homework, have a snack and share time with friends. While this program is a part of the St. Teresa of Calcutta Education Center and School, registrations come through our office in the Early Learning Center as the school office closes at 4 PM. You will need to sign up through FACTS and the Child Care branch in order to pay the fees for CARES. Questions regarding CARES should go through the Early Learning Center but the school should also be notified if your child will be in attendance.

## **Sharing Items From Home**

Special "show and tell" days have been set-aside during the month when children are permitted to bring a toy from home into child care. Otherwise, personal toys are not permitted in the Early Learning Center. Each classroom is equipped with age appropriate toys, which encourage cooperative play and individual growth.

## **Parent -Teacher Conferences**

A parent-teacher conference may be requested at any time by the parent(s) if there are questions concerning a child's progress or a specific problem. However, we will encourage families to meet with their child's teacher ages 3 and up at least once per academic year to discuss their growth and progress at STC ELC. Teachers may also request to meet with a family member to discuss a child's specific learning plan.

## **Calendar and Newsletters**

Each month a calendar of events and the weekly themes will be made available in our lobby but also on our website. Please go to [www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org) for the most up to date information about your child's class. Newsletters are also sent to parents monthly via Tadpoles to update them on upcoming activities, give results on past events, and share interesting articles and information. Please read them to keep up with the happenings at your child's center. These are also located on our website at [www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org).

## **Holidays**

A yearly holiday schedule will be posted every September so that families can plan for dates when we will be closed. The child care center will be closed for certain holidays and teacher in-service days. Parents are required to honor their agreements and pay their regular tuition for these scheduled holidays. This policy applies to full-time and part-time enrollment.

## **Birthday Celebrations**

We allow parents to bring cupcakes or other special treats to child care to celebrate a child's birthday. You must notify the teachers if you are sending in a food item in order to ensure there are no children that have food allergies in your child's class. If a parent wishes to hand out invitations for a private party they must do so discreetly as the feelings of uninvited children may be hurt. Please give the invitations to the classroom teacher privately and ask the teacher to put them in the children's bag.

## **Parking and Speed Limit**

The speed limit through the parking lot is 25 mph. Parents are required to follow ALL traffic rules while on the campus (full stops at the stop signs, etc.). Parent parking is located at the front of the Child Care entrance. Parents should not park in the fire lanes. This space is reserved for emergency vehicles. For the safety of all, children should be accompanied by a parent into the building and have a hand held in the parking lot. Parents and children should enter through the front door of the Child Care entrance.

## **Enrollment Policy**

Enrollment at St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care is open to children from 6 weeks to 12 years old. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability.

The Fee Agreement is not meant to serve as a contract guaranteeing service for any duration. St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause. However, continued enrollment at St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care is contingent upon the parent's and child's adherence to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition. All Tuitions, Deposits, Registration, and Summer Hold Fees are non-refundable.

## **Transitions Policy**

Transitions to the next classroom are based on several factors, including but not limited to: The child's age, the child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development, and availability in the current classroom or the next classroom they will transition to. Transitions are typically scheduled for June and September of every year in keeping with the academic school year. In addition, there may be a transition in January or one-off transitions based on enrollment and availability. Some children who are developmentally ready may transition from Little Learners to Preschool at this time as well, this transition is based on availability in the program. January transitions are kept at a minimum whenever possible.

## **Student Records**

Each child enrolled in our program must have an updated school record with all state and STC ELC required forms. This file is confidential, and will be shared with other staff members only as required to meet the needs of the child.

The state of Pennsylvania requires that emergency contact information be reviewed/updated by the parent at least every 6 months for accuracy. Medical records are required to be updated annually, or whenever the child's immunization status changes. Updated Health Child Forms are available in the lobby or we will provide you a copy upon request.

### **Requests for Student Records**

Parents/Guardians may request a copy of their child's file at any time. Parents must indicate to the Director in writing a request for their child's records. Upon receipt, the Director will provide a copy of the child's entire file to the parent/guardian. Information requested from a third party (i.e. school district) must be approved by the parent/guardian with their consent indicated on the Request for Child's Records form before copies are sent.

### **Parent Access and Confidentiality**

A parent of a child in care shall be permitted to visit the classroom in which their child attends for short periods of time upon request. State regulations do not allow for people other than authorized teachers to care for children in the class. In cases where Family Court or other legal entities have established visitation or custody rights, a copy of the orders must be provided to the STC Early Learning Center. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent requests a more liberal variation of the court order in writing.

### **Visitors**

Visitors (non-custodial parents/guardians or individuals providing therapy services to a child) are asked to schedule appointments, and are allowed in the child care areas only at the discretion of the Director. Visitors will be accompanied by a staff member at all times. Out of concern for child safety, we do not permit the use of photographs of school grounds; and photographs of any child, parent or employee of the school, to be posted on a web site, blog, or online social network without permission from a parent, employee, or child's family. Photo Release forms are signed upon enrollment in our facility. If you need a copy of this please request one from the Management Office.

### **Attendance**

A parent should notify STC ELC by 9:00 A.M. at (610) 287-2500 ext. 3 or email the Director at [childcare@stteresacalcutta.com](mailto:childcare@stteresacalcutta.com) whenever a child will not be attending on a scheduled day. Children may also be marked absent via Tadpoles. Teachers attempt to wait until everyone has arrived to start their activities, so timely notification is

appreciated. Also, the Director should be notified if a child is ill. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses which may occur at the Early Learning Center. In some cases a note from a medical professional may be required in the case of absence due to illness.

### **Notification of Absences**

**Parents are required to inform the center by 9 A.M. if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help classroom teachers effectively plan for the day. If your child is ill, we request that you notify the Director not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our center to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our center and report any contagious diseases that are required to be reported.**

**Parents, who know in advance that a child will be late, are required to notify the center by 8 A.M. so as to maintain the appropriate number of employees to ensure ratios are met when the child arrives at the child care center.**

### **Arrival and Departure**

Upon arrival each morning children are signed in on the electronic device ( iPad) by the teachers when they enter their classroom. Children are to be escorted by Parent to their designated classroom or their assigned area of the building and dropped off with the supervising staff member. Children are required by law to be under adult supervision at all times. **We ask that parents/guardians refrain from using their cell phones while on the premises.** Parental involvement in helping a child get settled with that staff member will help your child adjust quickly into the morning routine. Thus, we discourage parents from "sneaking out" of the school.

If there is anything that the staff can do to assist with the morning transition, parents should not hesitate to ask.

Children attending the morning Preschool/Pre-K and Pre-K Plus programs should be settled and ready for the program by 9:00 A.M. Parents are encouraged to minimize late arrivals (after 9:00 A.M.) as students will already be involved in the day's activities. 8:45 AM is a good arrival time for these classrooms.

When picking up children at the end of the day, Teachers will sign your child out on the electronic device. Please be sure to connect with the Teacher before exiting the classroom and /or building with your child. *You may send notes through Tadpoles for daily communications to your child's teachers.*

Once a child is removed from the supervising staff member it becomes the responsibility of the person picking up the child to supervise him/her.

## **Arrival Procedure**

For the protection of the children, we have a security system built-in to the child care center. Children are to be escorted by their parent or the adult dropping the child off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the child care center. Parents are asked to remain in the hall and the teacher will take the child's belongings and your child into the classroom. At arrival, parents are required to follow the Medication Policy if a child must receive medication during the course of the day. Parents are required to notify the child's teacher or Director of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The parent must present the special instructions in the form of a letter and verbally discuss them with either the child's Teacher or Director.

These special instructions include but are not limited to:

- \* early pick up
- \* alternative pick up person
- \* health issues over the previous night which need to be observed
- \* any general issues of which the child care providers should be aware to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day.

## **Pick-up Procedures**

Once a parent enters his/her child's classroom, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on child care center premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to entering child's classroom and are required to directly exit the building once they have picked up their child. You may briefly discuss your child's day with his/her teacher at pick up, however, the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at naptime if the parent is unable to meet at the child care center during the course of the day to hold in-depth meeting with the classroom teacher.

## **Late Pick- Up Policy**

**STC ELC Operating hours are 7 AM to 5:30 PM  
Monday through Friday.**

If an emergency situation prevents a parent from picking a child up by close of business and the Early Learning Center, the the Director's Office must be contacted immediately via phone at 610-287-2500 EXT 3. If we do not receive communication about a late pick-up, we will make every effort to contact you or one of your emergency contacts listed in Tadpoles for for pick-up. If a child(ren) has not been picked up by 6:30 PM and the Director's Office has not been contacted, as per regulation, Social Services will be contacted to pick up your child(ren). Please ensure that you consistently update phone numbers as they change for you and/or your emergency contacts so that this can be avoided. A late fee of \$1 per minute per child will be charged if a child is not picked up by closing and is payable directly to the staff member(s) who stayed with your child. A family that is repeatedly late to pick-up 3 or more times in a calendar year will have their late fees increased to \$5.00 per minute after the third offense. A family that is repeatedly late 6 times or more in a calendar year or does not pay the late fee required by the end of business the next day, may be dismissed from the Early Learning Center with little or no notice.

### **Extended Vacations and/or Absences**

**We recognize there may be times when families take an extended break and therefore want to temporarily suspend their enrollment in school. It is assumed that your child will be in attendance throughout the calendar year, including the summer months. If you plan to dis-enroll your child for the summer you will need to notify the Director in writing on a "summer vacation" form located in the lobby in order to hold your child's spot in the program for Fall. New this year, there will be a non-refundable, \$600.00 summer hold fee in order to save your child a spot in the program. This fee will be charged to families leaving for summer and wanting to return for Fall, requiring we save their child's spot in the program. This payment is due on June 1 annually for those families. The summer hold fee applies to full-time and part-time students, but will not apply to full-time students that simply reduce their schedule for the summer.**

**We do not offer vacation credits and tuition payments will still be due on the 1st of every month even if your child is not in attendance.**

### **Release of Children**

Since the safety of the children is our utmost concern, STC ELC maintains a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child. Parents must specify on the

enrollment forms at least two individuals to whom the child may be released, either on a regular or emergency basis. These individuals are in addition to both parents. If any of these individuals is picking up a child, they will be required to show ID the first few times until our staff are familiar with them.

Please inform the Director if a non-custodial parent is **not** included among those persons authorized by the custodial parent to pick up the child. This is only permitted via a court order. A copy of the appropriate documentation must be included in the child's school record. This information will remain confidential and will be shared with other staff members only as required to meet the needs of the child.

Should an unauthorized individual arrive to pick up a child, a parent or emergency contact person will be notified immediately via phone. If the Director is unable to reach a parent or emergency contact person, the child will not be released. Should an unauthorized person become uncooperative with the school's policies regarding the release of a child, the local police will be notified.

**STC ELC will not release a child to any parent, relative, or other authorized adult who appears to be impaired by the use of drugs or alcohol. In the event this situation occurs, the parent or emergency contact will be notified via phone.**

### **Tuition Payments**

Tuition is paid on a monthly basis. Monthly tuition will be automatically debited from your checking, savings account, or a listed credit card on the 1st of the month through your family FACTS account.

Any tuition **not paid** by the close of business on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month beginning 9/1/2022 may incur a \$30.00 returned payment fee. This fee will be charged with the next month's payment. Late tuition fees are only assessed when the return is due to insufficient funds or expired credit card. The child may not return until **full payments** are made. Please contact the STC ELC office if payment difficulties are anticipated so alternative arrangements may be made.

There is no credit given for scheduled school holidays, Teacher in-service days, child's illness or school closing due to inclement weather or acts of God.

### **Registration Fee**

The Early Learning Center's non-refundable fee of \$100.00 shall be paid annually (\$150 for families), to reserve placement each year for the upcoming

school year. This fee will be charged upon enrollment and then annually in April of every year for the upcoming Fall.

### **Tuition Agreement**

The director will present an agreement at the time of enrollment. This agreement will state your child's name, program, start date, rate of tuition, services tuition includes as well as payment schedule. Both custodial parents are required to sign this form. Adherence to this agreement is a condition of enrollment. The director will update this agreement periodically as rates change due to classroom moves or rate increases and parental signature is required.

### **Withdrawal**

**A one-month written notice must be provided to the Director for withdrawing or changing your child's schedule for any reason.** This is for billing and tuition payment purposes as tuition is non-refundable. This can be done via email to the Director at [childcare@stteresacalcutta.com](mailto:childcare@stteresacalcutta.com) . If the required written notice is not given, parents will be charged for that period.

### **Additional Days/Hours**

For those attending part-time, switching of scheduled days is prohibited. Parents are required to let the Director know at least 48 hours in advance if requesting to bring a child for an additional day. Additional days are offered based on enrollment and may not always be available. Last minute requests will be considered only if sufficient space and staff are available to adequately meet the needs of the additional child. A "Drop In" fee will be charged at \$50 per day per child for additional days.

### **Health Policy**

#### **General Health and Wellness Policy**

The health of the children is very important to us here at STC ELC. By monitoring each child's health status, teachers are able to maintain a better environment for the entire class. Children who are ill cannot be appropriately cared for in a group care setting. A child who is unable to participate in all school activities due to illness should not be in attendance. We understand that it may be difficult to make arrangements in the workplace to cover periods when a child may be too ill to attend the program. However,

cooperation in keeping a child home when he/she is showing symptoms of illness will be greatly appreciated by the teaching staff and all the children who would normally be in contact with that child. By establishing and maintaining a healthy environment, and reasonable health policies, all of our children will benefit.

If a child arrives in the morning showing symptoms of ill health, the school will be unable to accept him/her. The exception to this requirement would be that a licensed physician has indicated in writing that there would be no health risk to your child or to any of the other children or staff.

***Examples of health symptoms that require exclusion from the program include (but are not limited to):***

1. Severe pain or discomfort particularly in joints, abdomen, or ears.
2. Vomiting or diarrhea (2 or more episodes in 24 hour period, which also includes while the child is home).
3. Severe coughing or sore throat.
4. Oral temperature of **100.4 degrees** or more, accompanied by other behavior changes/symptoms.
5. Jaundice (yellow) skin or eyes.
6. Red eyes with discharge.
7. Infected, untreated skin patches/lesions or severe itching of body/scalp.
8. Difficult or rapid breathing.
9. Skin rashes (excluding diaper rash) lasting more than 24 hours.
10. Swollen joints, visibly enlarged lymph nodes, or stiff neck.
11. Blood/pus from ears, skin, urine, stool.
12. Unusual behavior characterized by listlessness, loss of normal appetite, or confusion.
13. Symptoms of chicken pox, COVID-19 impetigo, lice, scabies, or strep throat.

If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent will be advised immediately. The child will be given the opportunity to rest or have diversional activities in a separate area until a designated release person can pick the child up. If the child is not picked up within one hour from the time of notification, the emergency contact person will be called. Children who are sent home due to illness will not be readmitted to school until ***all signs of illness have been gone for 24 hours and the child is medication free.*** The exception to this

requirement is if a licensed physician has indicated in writing that the child does not present a health threat to others or themselves, and is able to participate in all school activities.

In cases of certain communicable diseases, St. Teresa Early Learning Center and Child Care is required to file a report with the Department of Health in 24 hours so that control measures can be used.

***Parents and staff are reminded to notify the school within 24 hours if a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable disease.*** If a child has not been fully immunized for some of these diseases (due to the child's age, medical condition, or religious reason) he/she will be excluded from the school during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department. Examples of "Reportable Diseases" include (but are not limited to):

Lyme disease	German Measles	Giardiasis	COVID-19
Whooping cough	Spinal Meningitis	Mumps	
Tuberculosis	Salmonellosis	Hepatitis A	
Measles	Rubella	Shigellosis	

All parents will be informed in writing if a communicable disease is reported. St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center and Child Care follows the reporting guidelines issued by OCDEL, CDC, and Montgomery County. A copy of DHS guidelines is on file in the Director's office and is available for your review upon request.

***\*\*We currently are a Mask Optional Facility and are abiding by a 5 day quarantine for children diagnosed with COVID-19 if they are able to mask well. If they are unable to mask properly in our care, as determined by the child's teachers, they will be asked to observe a 10 day quarantine from our program if diagnosed with COVID-19. Families are required to report to us any positive cases when a child is diagnosed. Non-reporting of a child's positive case of COVID-19 or any other communicable disease is subject to the child being expelled from the program. A list of communicable diseases may be found at <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Reporting-Registries/Pages/Reportable-Diseases.aspx>***

**The wellness policy is that if a child has 1 or more symptoms of sickness including but not limited to vomiting, diarrhea, severe or hacking cough, fever of 100.4 or higher or an unexplained rash they are not permitted to come back to school unless they have been symptom free AND medication free for 48 hours WITHOUT a doctor's note. If they have a doctor's note they may return after 24 hours being symptom AND medication free, and with doctor's permission to attend group**

care. This note must state that a child is able to attend “group care and does not pose a risk to themselves or others by attending”. This note MUST be signed by a physician and dated. STC Early Learning Center reserves the right to ask for a note from a medical professional for any absences due to illness or suspected illness before allowing a child to return to care.

### **Doctor's notes**

Notes from a medical professional may be faxed to the center or brought in and handed to the director when your child returns for care. Do not give notes to classroom staff or drop the child off without a note as you may be called to pick your child up from the center immediately. If any of the aforementioned symptoms occur while your child is in our care, we will call you and require that you make arrangements to have your child picked up within an hour.

### **Medication Procedures**

Please know that administering medication here at STC ELC is an optional service that we provide to our families. There are stringent guidelines we need to follow in order to provide this service. Teachers and Management Members are responsible for checking the medication logs and dispensing the medication, unless it is an emergency medication (epipen, inhaler). Emergency medications are kept in the classroom and with the child/teacher. The person dispensing the medication will sign and date the log when the medication is given. This will ensure that the medication has indeed been dispensed to the child.

If a child is receiving medication for the first time, the first 2 doses MUST be given at home before returning to school and sending it in for the safety of the child in case they were to develop an allergic reaction to the medication.

***It is a Parent's responsibility*** to provide the medication in its original container with prescription label on it, measuring device for the medication, Doctor's Authorization for the medication/prescription, and to sign the Medication Log on a daily basis when the medication is being administered. This is for ALL medications even if they are over-the-counter. Medication logs are available in the lobby for families in order to ease this process and allow them to fill them out ahead of time at home each day.

Sometimes a child may require medication such as antibiotics or other medication here at school due to a bacterial illness or other type of illness. We are only permitted to dispense these medications to children if they are provided to us in the original container along with the prescription label indicated dates and dose methods. Medications that

require specific timing and are dosed 3 to 4 times per day, as prescribed, are the only medications that we are permitted to administer here at the school. ***If a dosing is twice per day it is expected to be administered at home.***

***We are not permitted to give children over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, cough medicine, or any other medication unless it is prescribed by a doctor. This also includes but is not limited to teething ointments, medicated diaper creams, Neosporin due to cuts or injury etc.***

In the case of a child that has an emergency medication for asthma, a severe allergy, or another medical condition; a physician's instructions and prescription are required to be documented on an Action Plan for that individual child. Emergency medications are required to be kept here at all times and ALL medications described in a child's severe allergy/asthma action plan are to be provided to the school along with the measuring devices that are needed to administer medication.

Check expiration dates on all medications. ***We will not be able to administer expired medications even if the log and form are completed.***  
*Every medication needs to have the child's first and last name printed on the bottle. Only one bottle may be used for each child. Siblings may not share containers of medication.*

### **Allergy Policy/Emergency Medication**

If a child develops or currently has an allergy that may require medication or emergency medication, an authorization form must be on file. If it is determined that the child is in need of the emergency medication (antihistamine, epinephrine injection, inhaler, etc.) the child will be given the emergency medication first and then the parent will be notified. Families are required to sign the medication log located in the Management Office when dropping off medication and when medication has been dispensed. In the case of a severe allergic reaction in which a child is showing much difficulty breathing, emergency services will be called prior to parents being called. Families are advised to ask their doctor for an allergy/asthma action plan from their pediatrician and are required to give step by step instructions on how and when to administer each medication. Medications are required to be provided to our facility by the family while a child is in attendance. ONLY prescription medications in their original packaging with a pharmacy label will be accepted. Families are required to provide unexpired medication to STC ELC for us to provide care in a medical emergency due to an allergy or asthma. Families are required to provide any training to staff necessary to administer medications or care for their child

when applicable. Emergency medications are kept out of reach of children in the classroom that they attend, in the emergency bag that is located by the exit. Teachers are required to check these medications monthly to ensure they are not expired and will send families reminders about the expiration dates as they become close.

**Diaper Creams, Sunscreens, Powders etc.-** If a child requires over-the-counter diaper ointments or lotions (*powders are not permitted*), these must be labeled with his/her FULL first and FULL last name.

*The dispensation of medication is undertaken as a professional courtesy and not required by law.*

### **Toys from Home**

Toys are to remain at home. It is very difficult for young children to share favorite possessions, and all toys that enter the school must be shared. In addition, many toys break easily and contain small parts. These types of toys are inappropriate for our setting.

Show and Tell items may occasionally be requested by a child's teacher. Suggested Show and Tell items include books, photographs, special treasures such as sea shells, or theme related items. These should be discussed with the teacher and items will be shown at the teacher's discretion. Anything pertaining to violence (guns, war toys, etc.) are NOT permitted to be brought in for Show and Tell.

### **Items to Bring to School**

**Infants:** Each full time infant is provided his/her own crib and mattress upon enrollment. Parents are asked to provide the following:

- At least 2 crib sheets (port-a-crib size, NOT Pack n Play size as these are too loose)
- 2 -3 complete changes of clothing for the appropriate season
- Diapers and wipes
- Several bibs / burp cloth
- All food, drink and utensils required to serve food (our water is not hot enough to wash dishes so that they are disinfected, these items will be sent home daily).

- A sweater or sweatshirt and hat
- SOCKS! Those babies get cold toes from time to time, even in the summer months
- Shoes, if your child is pulling to stand and learning to walk

Parents are responsible for washing the crib linens at least once a week. All food, bottles, and clothing should be labeled with the child's first and last name (Mabels Labels is a great website to get labels that can go through the wash). Bottles and caps will need to be re-labeled frequently. Any items required to serve food such as spoons, bowls, cups, etc. must also be provided by the parent. Bottles must be filled at home. Refrigeration is provided for storing bottles and food.

**Toddlers and Preschoolers:** The school provides each child with their own nap cot that is only a few inches above the floor. Parents are asked to provide the following:

- Two full changes of clothing including socks and shoes (closed back and toe plastic shoes are recommended for those potty training so we can wipe them down)
- Meals must be provided daily in a labeled lunch box or container (2 snacks per day and 1 lunch time)
- Diapers and wipes, and/or extra sets of underwear if "in training"
- A child-size sleeping bag is requested for nap time, and a favorite sleep toy or blanket may also be provided

All items brought to school should be conspicuously labeled. Extra clothing should be provided as seasons change and as your child grows. Rubber soled, closed-toe shoes such as sneakers are the most appropriate school shoes for climbing, running, and playing outside. **We request that you do not send your child to school with open toed shoes.** Appropriate outdoor apparel is needed daily as every effort is made to have some outdoor play time, even in the winter snow. Labeled clothing that is attached where possible (hoods on coats, clips on mittens) will lessen missing items. Additional sets of clothing and appropriate underwear will be required when the child is "potty-training". Sleeping bags are sent home weekly to be laundered.

### **Rest Time**

In the Toddler and Preschool/Pre-K classes, naptime is from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. Children under the age of five are required by PA state regulation to have a two hour rest period.

If your child is outgrowing their nap they will be asked to stay on their cot for a rest period and given quiet activities in the classroom to complete on their cot.

Although we make every effort to meet each child's individual rest needs, it is difficult to guarantee a specific length of nap time, or wake-up time for each as a child's rest needs

vary with activity level, sleep patterns the night before, etc. It is equally difficult, and in opposition to our child-centered program, to keep a child awake if he/she wants to rest.

### **Food: Meals and Snacks**

Families MUST introduce new foods to their child AT HOME, in the case that the child would develop an allergic reaction.

Infant parents must send prepared bottles of breast milk or formula that are clearly labeled with the child's name. Arrangements may be made for mothers who wish to come to the school to breastfeed their infants. Instructions regarding a feeding schedule that has been established by the parent must be provided, and these schedules should be updated as necessary when new foods are introduced. Infant bottles will be heated in a bottle warmer, shaken, and temperature tested before feeding. Any contents remaining in a bottle after a feeding will be discarded. It is therefore suggested that bottles be filled with the approximate amount the child will drink at each feeding, and you send in 1 extra prefilled bottle just in case of a growth spurt and hungry baby🍼.

As solid foods are introduced, parents are requested to bring labeled jars or small containers of food. NO GLASS is permitted in our facility. The Health Department also asks that all food, whether commercially prepared or home cooked, be proportioned out in clean and sanitized containers complete with the date and a label. This food should be placed in the refrigerator upon arrival at the school. In warm weather, it is recommended that perishable food be transported in an insulated cooler. Any food item, with the exception of infant bottles, that requires reheating will be microwaved to ensure that the proper temperature of 165 degrees is reached. Therefore, all such foods should be sent in microwave-safe containers. For safety reasons, please do not send glass containers.

#### ***“What if I need to drop off and don’t have time for breakfast”?***

Parents may provide breakfast for children who arrive prior to 8:00 a.m. All food should be sent ready to serve to allow for the teacher to properly supervise children coming into school. Children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. should eat breakfast at home as school activities at this point in the day do not allow for the supervision of children who are eating breakfast. A mid-morning snack is served between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. daily. Lunch should be ready to serve (fruit peeled, soup in a microwave - safe container, etc.) and will be reheated if requested. Food items identified as choking hazards for young children, such as hot dogs, grapes, or cherry tomatoes should be cut into small pieces approximately the size of a pinkie finger. Items that require refrigeration may be labeled and placed in the refrigerator.

#### **All bibs, bottles, cups, bowls, spoons, etc. must be taken home daily.**

Department of Health requirements do not allow us to wash and store these items. A

child will be encouraged to eat the balanced meal that the parent has provided. However, if a child refuses certain foods, he/she will not be forced to finish the meal. We are not permitted to 'place' food in a child's mouth once they are developmentally able to feed themselves.

### **Emergency Closings**

STC ELC will make every reasonable attempt to open on time and remain open during inclement weather. However, in the case of extremely dangerous road conditions, or states of emergency, it may be necessary for the school to cancel classes, close early, or delay the opening time. Parents should check for Tadpoles emails and the website [www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org) for announcements of school closings or delays. Should the building require emergency evacuation, the staff-child ratios will be maintained to the best of our ability and the children will be evacuated to a nearby location. (please see our emergency plan located in our lobby and on our website@ [www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.stteresaeearlylearningcenter.org) . Each staff member responsible for a group of children will carry emergency contact information and class attendance records with him/her to the new site. Parents will be contacted by telephone and/ or Tadpoles text/email if an evacuation occurs. Children's location during an emergency will NOT be posted to the website for safety reasons.

### **Discipline/Suspension/Expulsion Policy**

Aggressive physical, purposeful behavior by a child towards another child or staff member is unacceptable. Staff members will intervene immediately should this type of situation occur in order to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Physical restraint will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and then only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation. Children will be shown positive alternatives rather than just being told "no". Parents will be informed if such an incident occurs, and a conference may be requested at any time to discuss an acceptable behavior plan. Open communication between home and school is key to effective discipline. If a child's behavior is uncontrollable repeatedly, extremely and or consistently disruptive, and/or harmful to himself/herself or others, a parent may be asked to:

- \*Remove the child from school for the day or a number of days
- \* Remove the child from school entirely \*At their discretion, have the child evaluated by a professional. The facility would welcome the opportunity to discuss any results of such an evaluation with the professional.

At no time will a child be subjected to physical corporal punishment, humiliated, frightened, or verbally abused by the staff. Children will never be disciplined for sleep habits, toileting accidents, food consumption, or lack of participation in scheduled

activities. At all times a child's age, emotional state, and past experiences will be considered in discipline matters. Any violation of the school's discipline policy should be brought to the Director's attention immediately. The discipline policy applies to anyone on the facilities grounds, including parents or guardians of the children enrolled. These policies are in effect both inside the school and on the school premises.

If a child in our program is having difficulty due to behavior or physical needs they may be asked to find alternative care for the following reasons:

- The program provided and group care prevents the child from participating physically, socially, and/or emotionally comfortable in activities.
- The child has a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children. The child has needs that require us to place an additional staff member in their classroom to care for the child or puts a classroom consistently out of ratio due to that child needing specialized, one-on-one care within the classroom.
- Poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others. This includes but is not limited to biting, spitting, throwing food/feces, and spreading bodily fluids consistently.
- The program or the schedule for the day is not a good fit for the child.
- The teachers do not have the knowledge to assist the child based on their specialized needs.
- The Family does not regularly communicate with the teachers about a child's development and/or refuses conferences and meetings with our staff.
- The child is coping with experiences that they need help to understand and a mental health professional is not readily available.

Providers and families can work together to prevent expulsion by building strong relationships and talking about the child's culture, social, emotional, and behavioral strengths and concerns, approaches to learning, and strategies that work at home and in child care.

Possible reasons for considering expelling, suspending or otherwise limiting services to a child on the basis of challenging behaviors are:

- a. Continued placement in the class and/or program clearly jeopardizes the physical safety of the child and/or his/her classmates.
- b. The family is unwilling to participate in mental health consultation that has been recommended through the child care program or independently obtain and participate in child mental health assistance available in the community.
- c. Continued placement in this class and/or program clearly fails to meet the mental health and/or social-emotional needs of the child as agreed by the Staff and/or Family of the child

### **Discipline and Behavior Management Policy**

St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care believes that keeping children busy and actively engaged decreases the frequency of behavior problems in the classroom. Transitional activities help the children move smoothly from one activity to another. Our caregivers are instructed to use only positive guidance and redirection. Setting consistent, clear, understandable limits fosters the child's ability to become self-disciplined, which is our ultimate goal.

We encourage our staff to try to ignore negative behavior as much as possible (since much of it is an effort for attention) and focus their attention on the children who are doing what is appropriate. Hopefully this will draw the child into the group and thus avoid the need for frequent discipline. When these methods do not work, a short "break" may be used for children who continue to disturb others or are at risk of harming themselves. Children are born with enormous creativity!

We feel that too much discipline (correcting a child for every little thing) destroys their spirit. By teaching the child that each choice they make has a direct consequence, they will begin to learn to be responsible for their own actions. A negative choice will result in a negative consequence. St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center prohibits corporal punishment of any kind, cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse. No child shall be denied food as a form of punishment nor punished for soiling or wetting their clothing.

If a behavioral problem presents itself, every attempt will be made to remedy the situation. However, dismissal of a child for behavior problems will be at the sole discretion of St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care staff.

### **Toilet Training Policy**

Experts agree that children who potty train easily have parents who are calm and patient and show a matter-of-fact attitude toward toilet training. The staff at St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center is prepared to work with the parents in preparing our

older toddlers for this important milestone in their lives. No two children are alike and as such children train differently and at different times. St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center knows that toilet training is a gradual process that takes time and understanding. No child is ever forced to sit on the potty or ridiculed in any way for soiling their pants. We do not use negative tactics to toilet train. We encourage and praise the child for successes and show understanding and patience when accidents occur. We let the child know that we have confidence in them and believe in their ability to succeed.

### **Incident/Accident Reports (Boo Boo Reports)**

When a child is hurt in any way that requires first aid (a bandaid, ice, or other medical attention) the parent will be notified via an accident report form (boo-boo report) which will be emailed to the parent via Tadpoles. A copy of the form will be included in the child's school record. If the injury is of a serious nature, or is a serious injury to the neck area and above, a parent will receive a phone call from the school at the time the accident occurs and/or a photo of the injury and description about what happened.

In the event of an emergency, the child will be transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital or emergency room facility and a parent will be contacted to meet an accompanying staff member at that facility. It is extremely important that emergency contact information is up to date. A child cannot be transported for care, or receive any emergency care at school, unless the waivers for emergency care have been signed. These waivers are included in the enrollment packet.

### **Inclusion Policy Statement:**

STC ELC's philosophy that each child grows at their own pace helps each teacher to look at the children as individuals. By creating activities that engage all learners we are able to create a positive learning environment for all children. We foster children's natural curiosity and allow for natural exploration to foster independence and growth. Children are given learning opportunities that allow them to explore through their five senses. The teachers are continuously making observations about the child's growth and development to help change and adapt their lessons to meet the needs of all learners. Children are accepted into our program regardless of race, color, religion, sexual preference, age, gender, national origin, disability, or political beliefs of the child or child's parents.

### **Special Needs Policy:**

Children with special needs will be accepted into our program under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All families will be treated with dignity and with respect for their individual needs and/or differences and we ask that families treat

staff members with dignity and respect. STC ELC will be responsible for ensuring that confidentiality about special needs is maintained for all families and staff in our program.

### **Individual Education Plan Policy:**

Each child has the right to be respected as an individual with concern for his or her interests, handicaps, special needs, individual style, and pace of learning. We are committed to working in partnership with families whose children have Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) or individualized Education Plans (IEP). If a child currently has an IFSP or IEP we require a copy of the plan so that we can work together to ensure that the guidelines are put into practice and that we are able to meet the child's needs in group care. An initial conference may be required before a child is admitted to the program in order to determine the child's needs. We ask that families have any professionals already providing care for the child at home or in other programs contact us so that we may discuss what we need to do here at school to help that child be successful. Teachers will refer to notes and the IFSP and/or IEP in order to support the goals and objectives within the classroom. Teachers/Administrators will attend IFSP/IEP meetings when requested by families. Additionally, teachers will collaborate with all professionals providing services for children. We will support families in the services they request for their child and will make reasonable accommodations to support their services within our facility.

### **Transitions Policy**

Transitions to the next classroom are based on several factors, including but not limited to: The child's age; the child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development; availability in the current classroom or the next classroom they will transition to. Transitions are typically scheduled for June and September of every year in keeping with the academic school year. In classrooms younger than Preschool and/or Pre-K there may be a transition in January or one-off transitions based on enrollment and availability. Some children may transition from Little Learners to Preschool at this time as well. January transitions are kept at a minimum whenever possible.

### **Conference Policy:**

Families will be given the opportunity to hold a conference with their child's teachers either in-person or via a video call/phone call. These will be offered at the beginning of the school year to help teachers and families partner to develop a "learning plan" for children and to get to know families, then again in January and in May after progress reports come out and are given to families for review. A family is welcome to request a conference at any time or to decline a conference if they feel it is not needed.

Conferences are to focus solely on the child and are typically 15 minutes in length. Families will not be given information about other children in the program as this violates privacy of other children and families.

### **Special Medical Needs Policy**

Our facility does not have a certified nurse on staff related directly to Child Care. We will make every possible effort to accommodate children that have special medical needs and are able to attend group care settings as laid out by instructions from a medical professional. Children with special needs will be accepted into our program under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All families will be treated with dignity and respect. STC ELC will be responsible for ensuring that confidentiality about special needs is maintained for all families and staff in our program. Families are required to notify STC ELC of any special medical needs in order for a child to attend the program.

### **Required Records**

The following record forms are required by DHS regulations. If a child does not have a form on file with the school they will not be permitted to attend the program. If a child does not have an updated form (if required every 6 months), that child may not be permitted to attend.

### **Emergency Contact Form/Application for Admission**

This form will be required to be updated every six months as required by DHS regulation.

### **Enrollment Agreement**

This form will be required to be updated every six months as required by DHS regulation and will also be updated when a child turns 1, 2, and 3 years of age to update tuition amounts.

### **Health Appraisal**

This form is to be filled out by a licensed physician and returned to St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care within 30 days of enrollment or your child will be suspended from the program until the form is returned. Parents should have

the child's physician update this form at each Well Child Visit or whenever a new immunization is received. An annual doctor's visit is required for all children enrolled in our program. Parents who choose not to have their child immunized based on religious beliefs must provide a letter stating this that is notarized/signed by a religious clergy and that letter will be kept in the child's chart.

### **Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. All employees of St. Teresa of Calcutta are considered mandated reporters, according to the law. The employees are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, or season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to the child care center medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behaviors consistent with an abusive situation

In the event that evidence of suspected child abuse or neglect is presented while a child is in our care here at STC ELC we are required, by law and as mandated reporters, to report such suspicion to the Department of Human Services. It is not our job to determine if it is abuse or not, it is only our job to protect the children and report the evidence.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care expects, at all times, the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care but is the responsibility of each and every parent or other adult who enters the center. Parents will be expected to behave in a manner, which fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on child care center property thereafter.

### **Respect**

We here at STC ELC are Early Childhood Education Professionals that are trained and educated in the philosophies, academics, social and emotional growth, and all other areas of Early Childhood Development. If, at any time, a family member, an adult picking up or dropping off a child that is associated with the family, or a parent themselves is not respectful of a teacher or staff member and uses improper language, insults, or displays negative or degrading body language with that teacher or staff member, it will be grounds for dismissal of a child from our program. Children learn best through adults and peers modeling behavior and we expect our teachers, as well as our families, to help the learning process by behaving in a manner that is respectful of all around them.

### **Swearing/Cursing**

Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language.

### **Threatening of Employees, Children, other Parents or adults associated with St. Teresa of Calcutta**

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society we cannot afford to sit idly by while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the child care center will not assume the risk of a second chance. Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.

### **Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Others' Children at the center**

While St. Teresa of Calcutta does not necessarily support or condone corporal punishment of children; such acts are not permitted in the child care center. While verbal reprimand may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice regarding proper disciplinary procedures to be used. Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or director. Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the Teacher or Director's attention. At that point, the Teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, Teachers and/or the Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our child care center have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

**St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center will not release a child to any parent, relative, or other authorized adult who appears to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.**

In the event this situation is suspected, a telephone call will be made to the parent, emergency contact person, and/or police and the Department of Human Services.

### **Dismissal Policy**

St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause. St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center will also dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon child care center property. Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of dismissal. Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to the child care center's legal counsel for collection. The Director will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave child care center property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately.

## **Smoking**

For the health of all St. Teresa of Calcutta employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on child care center property.

## **Parent-Child Care Partnership**

While we love your children while you are away from them during the day and enjoy seeing them outside of school on occasion, STC ELC staff members are not permitted to be caregivers to children enrolled in our programs after business hours. Do not ask anyone employed by St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care to baby-sit your children. If you solicit and hire an employee from St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care to become a caregiver/nanny for your children within 6 months of withdrawing your child, St. Teresa of Calcutta Child Care families will incur a fee of \$1,000.

## **Child Care Termination Policy**

St. Teresa of Calcutta Early Learning Center and Child Care reserves the right to deny, cancel, sever, suspend, or terminate the services to any child, without notice, for any reason, so long as the determination is not based in whole or in part on the race, color, religion, sexual preference, age, gender, national origin, disability, or political beliefs of the child or child's parents. Any unused tuition will be refunded minus outstanding charges.

## **What to do if you have concerns**

Should you have a complaint concerning your child, employees, or procedures, the following steps should be taken to resolve the problem: first talk to your child's teacher; if you are not satisfied with the teacher's response, speak to the Director; if you are still dissatisfied, contact Father Brandt @ 610-287-2525 ext. 102 Father Brandt [frbrandt@stteresacalcutta.com](mailto:frbrandt@stteresacalcutta.com)