

# Guidance and Discipline Policy

## Chickadee Ridge Early Learning Center

### Philosophy

At Chickadee Ridge Early Learning Center, we believe that guidance and discipline are about teaching, not punishing. Our goal is to help children develop self-regulation, empathy, and problem-solving skills in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment. We use positive discipline strategies that are developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive.

### Core Principles

- **Respect for the child** as a unique individual
  - **Understanding child development** and appropriate behavior
  - **Consistency and fairness** in applying expectations
  - **Teaching rather than punishing**
  - **Creating a positive, predictable environment** that promotes security and independence
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### Strategies for Positive Guidance

We implement the following proactive and responsive strategies:

#### 1. Modeling Positive Behavior

- Adults demonstrate respectful, calm, and caring behavior.
- We speak to children the way we want them to speak to others.

#### 2. Setting Clear Expectations

- We use simple, age-appropriate language.

- Expectations are explained and reviewed regularly, especially during transitions or group times.

### **3. Redirection**

- When a child is engaging in unsafe or inappropriate behavior, we guide them toward a more acceptable activity.
- We offer choices to empower decision-making.

### **4. Encouragement and Positive Reinforcement**

- We recognize effort and cooperation more than outcomes.
- Praise is specific and sincere to build intrinsic motivation.

### **5. Teaching Problem-Solving**

- Children are guided to identify feelings, express themselves, and work toward peaceful solutions.
- Conflict resolution techniques are taught and practiced daily.

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## **Discipline Techniques We Use**

- Verbal reminders and gentle cues
- Visual prompts (e.g., picture schedules, feeling charts)
- Calm-down areas or sensory tools (not isolation or punishment)
- Natural consequences (when safe and appropriate)
- One-on-one coaching from staff to support behavior

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## **Behaviors Requiring Immediate Intervention**

In cases where a child is hurting themselves or others, or causing severe disruption, staff will:

- Ensure the safety of all children immediately
  - Use calm, firm verbal cues to stop the behavior
  - Remove the child from the situation if necessary (not as punishment but as a reset)
  - Help the child return when they are ready and supported
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## **Prohibited Practices**

We strictly prohibit:

- Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, shaking, etc.)
- Humiliation, shaming, sarcasm, or yelling
- Withholding food, rest, or toileting as a consequence
- Threats or bribes
- Isolation without supervision

Any use of such practices is grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of staff.

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## **Partnering with Families**

- Parents will be informed of recurring behavior concerns and strategies being used.
  - We collaborate with families to create behavior support plans if needed.
  - Referrals for external support services may be made with parent consent if appropriate.
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## **Suspension/Expulsion Policy**

Expulsion is a last resort. Before considering suspension or disenrollment:

- We will exhaust all appropriate interventions.
- We will meet with families to discuss concerns and develop a plan.
- Temporary suspensions may occur if safety cannot be maintained.

We aim to **support, not exclude** — and to help every child thrive in our care.