



Parent Handbook

Welcome

Dear Parents,

We would like to welcome you to Stella Learning Center, Inc. (SLC). We are so glad that you have chosen to be part of our “family”. At SLC, we do our best to make you feel comfortable to entrust us with the care of your children. We consider it our privilege to be a part of the team that helps your children to grow and develop successfully.

We encourage you to take time to get to know our SLC staff. They are a wonderful group of people dedicated to the care of your children. Each team member has been trained in child development and positive guidance and is committed to professional development. They have much knowledge and experience in working with children. Please take advantage of this great resource and feel free to ask any questions.

The care and safety of our children is our top priority. SLC has an “Open Door Policy,” which means that parents and guardians are welcome to visit or call without notice anytime during our operating hours.

Again, welcome to Stella Learning Center. We look forward to working with you and getting to know your child and family in days to come. If we can be of assistance to you in anyway, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Daisy Ann Alviar
SLC Director

Non-Discriminatory Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Admission Policy

Days and Times – General Information

Stella Learning Center is licensed for up to 54 children. We welcome children ages 2 to 5 years of age. The center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. year round, excluding the following holidays:

- New Year’s Eve
- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Mardi Gras Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday we will close the preceding Friday; if a holiday falls on a Sunday we will close the following Monday.

Enrollment Process

Once a family makes the decision to enroll their child at Stella Learning Center they will be given an enrollment packet. This packet needs to be completed in full prior to the orientation date. Once a family fills out these forms and sends in the registration fee, the child(ren) will be enrolled at the center as “pre-registered” or “waiting list.” If there is a waiting list; the registration fee may be used to secure a place on the waiting list.

Orientation

Orientation will be every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. at Stella Learning Center. Orientation is designed to help families become better acquainted with SLC and its staff. Orientation must be attended prior to your child’s first day at SLC.

Registration Fee

Each family is responsible to pay a registration fee. The fee is \$40 for the first child and \$10 for each additional child. This is a one time, non-refundable fee, and may be used as a waiting list fee. If there is not an immediate opening, your child will be placed on the waiting list ONLY AFTER the registration fee and enrollment packet are turned in.

Registration Packet

Each family will receive a registration packet to fill out for each child they will be enrolling.

This packet will include the following forms:

- Child Master Card
- Center Payment Contract
- Emergency Medical Release
- Child Care Assistance Contract (if applicable)

The state of Louisiana requires that all of the mentioned forms be filled out completely and correctly. They must be returned to the SLC no later than the orientation date. The child(ren) will not be able to attend Stella Learning Center unless the center has received all the forms.

Nap Mat

Each child must have a nap mat, blanket and pillow, as well as a plastic bin large enough to store all sleeping equipment.

Tuition

The date that the family has written on the form for their “Date of Admission” will be when the billing cycle begins. If a family decides not to enroll after all, it is common courtesy to inform the SLC of this prior to the “Date of Admission” they have marked on the enrollment form. If SLC is not informed before their first start date the family will need to put in a two week notice. The family will be responsible to pay their weekly tuition up through their two week notice.

Tuition is due each Monday. Every family is responsible to pay their full tuition amount each week. If a payment is not made by Wednesday at noon, the account will be charged \$5.00 each day, until the payment and late fee (and NSF if applicable) are paid in full. Families, who are on vacation or away from SLC for other reasons are still required to pay tuition during vacation time.

Dismissal from Center

A *two-weeks notice in writing* is required prior to your child’s last day. You will be charged for two weeks of tuition after we receive the notice. If there is no notice given, you will be charged for two more weeks of tuition after your child leaves Stella Learning Center.

Stella Learning Center reserves the right to dis-enroll a child from the center for the following reason:

- If he/she harms another child, adult, or property (see dismissal due to behavioral changes),
- If financial obligations are not met, and/or
- If a parent/guardian becomes rude or abusive to any child or staff member.

Drop-in Policy

Drop in care is provided, based on availability of space, for families not needing full-time or consistent child care. All regular enrollment requirements must be met. Parents must call in advance each time the child is to attend in order to be sure space is available in the appropriate classroom. If the classroom is filled with full-time students, we will not be able to provide care for the child on that day.

Parent is Responsible to Provide

Toddlers

- Diapers
- Baby Wipes
- 2 Complete changes of clothes, clearly marked with your child's first and last name
- Outdoor Winter Gear (when needed)
- Diaper Rash Cream (as needed; please fill out the appropriate authorization form)
- Nap Mat
- Blanket/Sheets
- Travel Size Pillow

3-4 yr. olds

- Pull-ups (if needed at nap-time)
- Set of extra clothes, including socks and underwear
- Outdoor Winter Gear (when necessary)
- Nap Mat
- Blanket/Sheets
- Travel Size Pillow
- Plastic Bin (large enough to hold nap mat, blanket and pillow)

****Please do not bring outside toys or food without prior permission from the office. Stella Learning Center is not responsible for any items brought from home.**

Stella Learning Center will provide:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Afternoon Snack
- 1% Milk
- Age appropriate toys and equipment for all ages
- Materials for daily activities

Attendance at the Center

Arrival and Departure

At Stella Learning Center, we want your child to have the best day possible while in our care, and we believe that is more easily achieved when the day begins on a positive note.

Please follow a few simple steps to ensure that your child's day is started on a positive note.

- Children who arrive after 8:30 should eat breakfast at home. We serve breakfast from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
- All children must be at SLC by 10:00 a.m. If you will be later than 10:00 a.m., please contact the office to inform your child's teacher. (A doctor's note may be required.)
- Be sure to leave all toys or breakfast at home or in the car, they will not be permitted in the facility.
- Children should be clean, neatly groomed and comfortably dressed upon arrival to SLC. (See the section titled "clothing").
- Accompany your child to his or her classroom
- Make sure to let the teacher know that your child has arrived
- Feel free to stay for a few minutes after drop off, please leave promptly after saying goodbye (due to the fact that children can be easily upset by drawn out goodbyes)

When picking up your child, please check their folders and cubbies for any handouts, worksheets, or special projects. Upon entering the classroom, please feel free to speak with the teachers about your child's day.

Check Point Station

There is a check in/out form in the front office area. Please sign your child(ren) in and out each day.

Combining Grade Levels

During the early hours of the morning and toward the end of the day, Stella Learning Center will allow teacher's to combine classes in order to prepare for the day and/or clean classrooms, etc. Always keeping your child's safety first and foremost; we will be sure to combine classes with children whose ages are in close proximity. We will always maintain the ratio of the youngest child.

Release Policy

Your child will not be released to anyone who is not authorized on your child's enrollment form. Any person not recognized by office personnel will be asked to show a valid picture ID, such as a driver's license. **Authorization will NOT be given by phone.**

Courtesy Calls

Stella Learning Center would greatly appreciate a courtesy call if your child will not attend on a certain day. This helps us to plan our day more efficiently.

Parent Responsibilities

- We wish to keep a safe and clean facility; please notify office personnel if you notice any unclean or unsafe areas, or if you see any misuse of an area.
- Please notify office personnel immediately if any staff member or adult is not using proper conduct.
- Please feel free to address any suggestions, comments, or concerns. We welcome your input, and are more than willing to answer any questions.

Clothing

It is important that we at Stella Learning Center work together with parents to create a caring, comfortable environment that is ideal for your child's learning and development. Please bring your child to SLC with comfortable, sturdy, and washable play clothes. (One key may be to look at your child's outfit and ask yourself, "Will I be upset if my child comes home with dirt, finger paint, and/or glue, etc. on his/her outfit?") For safety reasons, please dress your child in rubber-soled closed toed shoes.

Because most classes play outside everyday (weather permitting), please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Your child's extra set of clothes should also be appropriate for the current season (summer, winter, etc.)

Please use a permanent marker to write your child's first and last name on all clothing, in order to limit confusion and any mix-ups with clothing.

Jewelry

Please leave all jewelry at home, as it may be damaged or even become a health hazard. Stella Learning Center is not responsible for any jewelry that your child brings to the center.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in the center.

Conferences

Any parent desiring a conference can request to have one set up at any time. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with parents on a daily basis to keep them informed on how their child is progressing.

Observation

Stella Learning Center encourages parents to stop-in at any time. It is important to us that our families are comfortable at all times. Parents are always welcome unless they are denied by a court order (Parents and other family members must be listed on the contact form in order to be observing a child.) Any parent/guardian who causes a disturbance in the center will be asked to leave.

Confidentiality

Any employee or other person that will be working directly with the children or the children's files is prohibited from discussing any information regarding the child or their family outside of SLC. All forms kept in a child's file will be available to the parent and or state licenser at their request.

Mandated Reporter

Every member of the Stella Learning Center Team is a mandated reporter. This means that if any employee suspects abuse or neglect, they are required by the state of Louisiana to report it to child protection. Staff will be trained on the recognition signs of abuse and neglect. If a staff has a concern they are asked to talk with office personnel immediately. Staff is responsible to record anything they notice on the Daily Observation Report. All of the policies and regulations will be kept in the office and reviewed with all new staff at orientation.

Postings

Stella Learning Center is a Type III Licensed Childcare Center and certification will be posted.

Educational Policy

Combining Age Groups

During the early AM and the late PM times Stella Learning Center will combine children of different ages, if there is only a few children in the center at that time. When combining children of different age group SLC will always maintain the staff to child ratio and never exceed the maximum group size. The children will always have age appropriate toys to play with.

2-4 Year Old Class

This room will work with each child individually to help them potty train (as needed). Curriculum will be implemented to ensure each child is receiving the education they need. The children will focus on basic numbers, letters, shapes, and color recognition. The classroom will also work with children on their self-help skills and social behaviors. Children develop differently and the teachers will work with the children to ensure they are reaching a variety of appropriate and meaningful development goals getting the best education possible for them.

Daily Schedule

7:00 – 8:00 Arrival and Free play/Prepare for breakfast
8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 Toileting/Choice Play
9:00 – 9:45 Group Time
9:45 – 10:00 Wash hands, prepare for outside/large muscle activities
10:00 – 10:30 Outside/large muscle activities
10:30 – 11:00 Toileting/prepare for lunch
11:00 – 11:45 Lunch
11:45 – 12:00 Wash hands, prepare for nap-time
12:00 – 2:00 Nap-time
2:00 – 3:00 Quiet activities/Toileting
3:00 – 3:15 Afternoon snack
3:15 – 3:45 Art Project
3:45 – 4:45 Outside/large muscle activities
4:45 – 5:00 Diapering/choice play
5:00 – 6:00 Stories/free play/goodbyes

Outdoor Activities

Outdoor activities will be a part of the children's daily schedule. Stella Learning Center will have ample space outdoors for the children to play. The outdoor space will be equivalent to 75 square feet per child on the playground at one time. The children will be involved in large motor outdoor activities including group games, parachutes, running, playground play, and a variety of other activities to keep the children active. Their outside time will be divided by free play and teacher led structured play.

Night Care

Night care is not offered at Stella Learning Center.

Holidays

Many United States initiated holidays will be celebrated in the traditional way. If you would not like your child to participate in a particular activity or holiday, please notify the teacher and/or the Director.

Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity will be accepted at Stella Learning Center and will be implemented into the children's daily activities. The curriculum will involve learning activities about different cultures and will help to expose the children to different ways of living. In each classroom the children will be exposed to different cultures through books, pictures, music, and dolls, etc.

Emergency Policies

Emergency Contacts

Emergency	911
Houma Hospitals	
-Terrebonne General Medical Center.....	(985) 873-4141
-Chabert.....	(985) 873-2200
Coteau Fire.....	(985) 868-4355
Terrebonne Sheriff’s Department.....	(985) 876-2500
Poison Control.....	(985) 873-4069
Child Protection.....	(985) 875-3634

Attendance

Each employee will be responsible for keeping a daily attendance of each child throughout the day under their supervision. They will need to mark each child in attendance at time of the child’s arrival and departure. It is required that all staff knows the proper names of all the children under their supervision. Staff will take attendance before and after leaving the classroom and then continually throughout the day to assure that all children are accounted for. The attendance form will list each child’s first and last name and any preferred nick-name.

Fire

Near each classroom door a fire evacuation route notice is posted. Each staff will be trained in the evacuation procedure. It is the teacher’s responsibility to practice safety drills and that the drills are understood by the children under their supervision. This safety procedure will be practiced on a monthly basis.

Once a month an office personnel will sound the fire alarm and a practicing drill will take place. Once quarterly, a drill will be practiced during nap time. The fire alarms will be set off in the building; this will help the children to acknowledge the sound, and not be frightened if there were an actual fire in the building. Once the alarms are set off each teacher is responsible for all of the children under their care for that day. They will need to lead children outside to the back of the building. The teacher needs to make sure that all of the children in their classroom are accounted for. Teachers are responsible to bring outside with them their daily attendance sheets, ensuring that they have all of their children. Teachers are expected to be outside within 1 minute. Once the office personnel turns the fire alarms off and receives a head count from all the teachers, at that point everyone will be allowed to re-enter the building.

Emergency

For the safety of the children and staff, daily and monthly inspections are made of the facility and equipment. Broken or damaged equipment is promptly repaired or removed.

Whenever the children need to evacuate the building or to be brought to a shelter, the teachers will be responsible to provide the following; attendance sheets, contact information for parents and emergency contacts, radio, flashlights, first aid kit, and a phone.

If there is a situation where there is a missing child, after all areas of SLC have been checked, parents and police will be called.

It is mandatory that upon enrollment the parents list their contact information. In addition, the parents must list at least two more individuals that could be contacted in the event we are unable to contact the parents if there is an emergency. Parents will need to sign an emergency contact form stating that SLC is able to contact 911 in the event of an emergency.

In the event that a staff member is alone in the center, a second staff member will always need to be within five minutes of the center. This emergency contact staff member will have their name and contact information posted in office at all times.

If there is an emergency where there is no power, heat, and water, etc. if the power cannot be turned on within an hour the center will close for the remainder of the day or until the power is back on.

All teachers and aids will be trained in infant/child CPR. If there is an emergency on the premises, office personnel will be informed immediately. Office personnel will determine the extent of the emergency. Regardless of the situation the parents will be called, 911 will be called if needed.

In the event of an emergency, it is mandatory that gloves are worn at all times by any personnel assisting with a situation.

Each parent is responsible to walk their child into their classroom each day. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that a teacher knows when a child is being dropped off and/or picked up from SLC. No other person besides the parent and any other contact listed on the child's form will be able to pick a child up to leave SLC.

If an unfamiliar person who is not on the contact list comes to pick up a child, the parent will be called immediately. The child will not be allowed to leave with that person unless prior written (and in extreme emergencies, verbal) consent is given by a parent. This person must present a valid picture ID.

If an employee is unfamiliar with a new family member, the staff member will check the person's ID when they are picking up to verify that it is the correct parent. Along with other

personnel picking up that are on the child's form. Each person will need to present valid picture ID before they will be allowed to leave with the child.

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, or power failures can disrupt company operation. The decision to close the office will be made by the Director.

When the decision is made to close the office, employees and parents will receive official notification from the Director.

Health Care Policy

Immunizations

Immunization and Health records are to be turned in prior to the first day of attendance and are to be kept up-to-date at all times by the parent. Please notify Stella Learning Center immediately if there is a significant change in your child's health that would need to be accommodated by the Stella Learning Center staff.

Illness

It is of the utmost importance that we maintain a safe clean and healthy environment. If your child is sick, please do not bring him or her to SLC. We do understand that this may be inconvenient for you; however, if all parents and staff cooperate, children in the facility will be sick less often.

Children may not remain at Stella Learning Center if they are showing any of the following symptoms:

- Vomiting (after vomiting one time, the child must go home. They may return after they are vomit free for 24 hours.)
- Diarrhea (after 2 loose bowel movements, the child must go home. They may return after being diarrhea free for 24 hours.)
- Runny nose with green or yellow discharge or associated with fever, or cough with mucus secretion (*please note that any color discharge other than clear, may be a sign of infection.) A doctor's note may be required for the child to return to SLC.
- Under arm temperature of 100.4 after adding one degree. (Children may return to the SLC after being fever free for 24 hours without Tylenol or other such products.)
- Conjunctivitis/Pink Eye: the symptoms of pink eye are red, itchy, draining, and or crusty eyes. Children may return to SLC with a doctor's release or a written doctor's notice that the child is not contagious.
- Rashes or skin conditions: any unusual skin conditions must be examined by a doctor. Children may return to SLC after any sores have scabbed over and/or a doctor's release has been presented.
- Chicken Pox (or Baby Mumps): symptoms include low fever, rash, blisters, scabs, and malaise. Children may return to SLC after sores are scabbed over.
- Lice/Hair Infestation: Children may return to SLC after receiving a specified treatment of lice shampoo and all signs of eggs and nits are gone.
- Stiff Neck with Fever, Headache, or Swollen Glands: Children may return to SLC with a doctor's note stating that he or she is able to participate in the center's activities.
- Severe Coughing, Sneezing, or Breathing Difficulties: A doctor's note may be required for the child to return to SLC.

Please have someone available who can pick up your child within 30 minutes when called.

**Note: A doctor's note stating that your child is no longer contagious may be required upon returning to SLC.

We would appreciate your help in tracking contagious diseases. If you find that your child has a contagious disease, please notify Stella Learning Center's office personnel as soon as possible. We will notify other parents of the symptoms; we will not, however, give the name of the sick child.

Non-contagious chronic health problems will be managed according to the physician's written instructions.

If your child becomes sick or shows signs of sickness, he or she will be removed from the classroom and placed in the care of office personnel. A child should not be kept at SLC if he or she is not well enough to participate comfortably in daily indoor and outdoor activities. You will be notified immediately to come and pick up your child. We ask that you be able to make it to SLC within 30 minutes of the phone call. If this is not possible, please provide an emergency contact that can come within the 30 minute time frame. Coming as soon as possible is in the best interest of your child as it is much more likely that he or she will be more comfortable at home.

The child will remain isolated from other children until they are picked up. A staff member of office personnel will stay with the child at all times. Staff will have training at orientation to recognize common childhood diseases and to know what to do when they recognize them.

Once a child is sent home due to an illness, they are not allowed back at SLC for 24 hours, or until they are fever free for 24 hours and completely recovered from their illness. If the child has a confirmed illness, a doctor's note is required stating clearance to return to SLC. If a child has a doctor's note stating that they are not contagious and will be able to participate in daily activities, they will be allowed back at the area.

All families and the local public health office will be notified if their child has been exposed to any illnesses other than communicable disease by a form being posted near the check-in center.

Medication

Parents are allowed to bring in prescription and non-prescription medication for their child. The medication must be in its original container, labeled with the child's first and last name. The medication will not be given to the child unless the parent filled out the medication form provided. All medication that is brought in to SLC will be stored in a locked container. Medication that needs to be refrigerated will be kept in the refrigerator.

The medication that does not need to be refrigerated will be stored in a locked box in the office.

We must follow the instructions on the medication unless a physician's statement is provided that states otherwise.

In order to administer a medication that says "consult a physician," a written physician authorization with the child's name, date, medication name and dosage must be on file. Any time a child is given medication whether it is prescription or non-prescription medication, the staff member will document the information in the medical log book, documenting the name of

the medication, amount given, child's name, birth date, and staff signature. The authorization form will be kept on record in the child's file.

At Stella Learning Center, we always put your child's safety at top priority. When administering medication, the following guidelines must be followed:

- A written authorization of the parent must be provided with the following information:
 - Child's name
 - Name of the medication
 - Date(s) to be administered
 - Dosage
 - Time to be administered
 - Special instructions (if applicable)
 - Side effects
 - Signature of parent and date of the signature
 - Circumstances for administering "as needed" medication
- "As needed" medication or medical procedures and maintenance prescriptions must be updated by the parent as changes occur, or at least every three months.
- All medication sent to SLC must be in its original container, must be clearly labeled with the child's name, and must not have an expired date.
- We are obligated to follow any special instructions on the medication bottle (i.e., before meals, with food, and refrigerate, etc.)
- If medication label reads consult a physician, a written physician authorization with the child's name, date, medication name, and dosage must be provided and will be kept on file at SLC (in addition to the parental authorization.)
- When parents administer medication to their own children on Stella Learning Center premises, the following shall be documented:
 - Date
 - Time
 - Child's name
 - Dosage administered
 - Name of person administering medication
- A written one-time authorization must be provided for Stella Learning Center to apply topical ointments/sprays/creams (such as: sunscreen, insect repellent, diaper rash ointment, etc.)

ALL MEDICATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO OFFICE PERSONNEL. Please do not take any medication into the classrooms.

Stella Learning Center is not authorized to apply topical ointments, sprays, or creams (such as: sunblock, insect repellent, diaper rash ointment, etc.) without an authorization signed and dated by the parent. This is to be updated as needed.

Parent Administering Medication

Whenever a parent is administering medication to his/her own child on the child care premises, the following shall be documented:

- Date
- Child's name
- Time Administered
- Medication name
- Dosage administered
- Name of person administering the medication

Daily Observation Report

Each child will be observed daily for possible signs of illness, infections, bruises, injuries and other physical conditions. When noted, the explanation for the parent and the child will be documented in our Daily Observation Report. If you know of an injury, infection, pain or other noticeable ailment, please notify the teacher at drop off.

Notification of Injury or Illness at Center

Any injury, accident or incident will be documented. This documentation will include the:

- Name of the child(ren)
- Location of the incident
- Time of the incident
- Description of how the incident occurred
- Part(s) on the body involved
- Actions take
- Name and signature of the staff who took action and informed parent(s)

Parents are to be notified immediately in the following situations:

- Blood not contained in an adhesive strip
- Head injury
- Human bite that breaks the skin
- An impaled object
- Broken or dislodged teeth
- Any injury requiring professional medical attention

The following occurrences shall be documented with names, description, date, time, and action taken:

- Allergic reaction
- Skin changes
- Unusual breathing
- Dehydration
- Any temperature over 100
- Any illness requiring medical attention

Staff Health Requirements

All Employees must get a TB physical within 30 days of starting and must be free of TB and any illness detrimental to children. We ask that all staff stay home if they have any of the following; strep throat, inflammation of the eye, fever (101 or greater), lice, ringworm, rash, vomiting, diarrhea or any other illness or condition having the potential to affect the health of any other person at SLC. All staff needs to be able to lift the small children at all times.

Rest Periods

Each child will have their own cot or mat to sleep on. After lunch the children will all go down for a nap. Children who fall asleep will be allowed to rest up to 2 hours. Cots/mats will be sanitized with a bleach water solution daily after nap time.

Child's Special Needs

If there is a child that requires special instruction for whatever reason, employees that will be working directly with the child must fully understand the instruction to properly care for the child before the child is left under their supervision. The parents of the child, office personnel and staff that will be directly working with the child will all meet prior to the child's first day to go over the details of caring for the child to make sure everyone is clear and understands their duties. The meeting will also be used to determine whether or not Stella Learning Center is the best fit and can meet the needs of that particular child.

Inclusion

It is vital that children learn to work, learn, and play together. This helps develop them into successful, socially healthy adults. We believe in making every possible and reasonable accommodation for children with special needs. In order to facilitate the best experience possible for each child; we do require a doctor's note and special instruction for any child that has been diagnosed with disabilities. If possible, the parents should arrange for a family caregiver, doctor, therapist, etc. to attend one of our staff meetings to give us specific training on any issues that accompany the child's condition. This will help us to all be on the same page and work as a team for the welfare of each child. We will love and treat each child as if he/she is our own. Please let us know how we can make your child's experience at SLC better in any way.

Referrals

One of the joys of working with children is watching their individuality blossom with their rapid growth. By the same token, experienced professionals observe idiosyncrasies in a child's development based on experience with hundreds of children over the years. Should a child exhibit atypical behavior and/or other developmental delays or abnormalities, the classroom

teacher will notify the director as soon as possible. The director will then implement and document the following procedures:

- Collect relevant objective observation data in the natural setting from the classroom teacher and direct observation.
- Meet with the classroom teacher to determine pre-referral interventions/modifications that might be feasible and determine a timeline for reassessment.
- Implement suggested interventions/modifications and meet to reassess
- Meet with the classroom teacher to assess the need to meet with parents and the agenda for such a meeting.
- Meet with the parents and collaborate to determine the next steps that might include diagnostic specialists, withdrawal from program, and/or exploration of further resources available to make reasonable accommodations for the child's continued attendance at SLC.
- If it is determined that SLC's facilities cannot adequately meet the child's needs or that the child's continued attendance will interrupt the welfare of the other children in care, the child will be withdrawn from the program.

Behavior of any individual that jeopardizes the life or safety of others will necessitate immediate removal of that individual from the classroom.

Nutrition Policy

Meals

Stella Learning Center will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack to all children at SLC. Parents have the option of providing a healthy well-balanced meal/snack for their children. All food served at SLC will be kid friendly and meet all nutritional guidelines. Breakfast will be served between 8:00 am – 8:30 am. If your child is unable to be at SLC between these times, you are asked to feed them breakfast before arriving at the center. The children's lunch and snack will be served according to their daily schedule.

If your child does not like a meal/snack on a particular day, you are welcome to provide a nutritious replacement. Stella Learning Center is not; however, responsible for the nutritional value of snacks provided by parents.

Due to great variation in the needs and dietary habits of children and doctor/parental preferences, we ask that parents provide all food for toddlers until they are able to eat the food on our menu without special accommodations.

Please notify teacher if your child has any special diet due to religious or health reasons. We will do our best to honor these restrictions, and as mentioned previously, you are more than welcome to bring a nutritious replacement.

Allergies and Special Menus

No food with peanuts or any trace of peanuts will be allowed on the premises. If you choose to provide your own meal on any given day, please check your child's bag lunch to make sure that it does not contain any peanuts or nuts for the safety of other children. Also, please bring a well-balanced, healthy meal for your child.

If your child has a special dietary need or food allergies, it must be put in writing on the Child Master Card. Also, a physician's note and/or parent note stating the restriction will be required. If a child has allergies or is on a special diet, we will try to accommodate. If no accommodations can be made, the parents will be responsible to provide a nutritional bag lunch each day.

Treats

Parents are allowed and encouraged to bring in a special treat for their child's birthday or holiday. Treats brought into the center must be store bought and free from traces of peanuts.

Communication

Parent-teacher Conferences

It is our desire that parents and staff will become partners in the education of your children. To do this, we will need your help from time to time. Since you know your children better than we do, we ask that you share any information that may help us to better understand your child and to adequately meet his/her particular needs. We also want to share with you the progress your child is making. Stella Learning Center has the following methods to keep you informed: Parent meetings, informal chats at arrival or departure, conferences, phone calls or notes, posted memos, and through the provision of article/magazines on parenting, child development and other relevant information.

We also want you to share information with us. We strongly urge you to use any of the following methods: informal chats with staff, conferences, and phone calls.

Record Updates

Please fill out a "Change of Information" form immediately if there is a change in any of the original enrollment information, including release information and emergency contacts. We will do a general file update every year to make sure all of the information our file is correct.

Financial Information

Registration Fees

A registration fee of \$40 is charged for enrollment of your first child. Each additional child will have a \$10 registration fee. This fee will help cover expenses related to registration and admission and is payable upon enrollment.

This fee (enrollment fee) may also be used to secure a spot on the waiting list if space is not immediately available.

All registration fees are non-refundable.

Activity Fee

An activity fee of \$50 for children ages two through pre-k is charged annually: \$25 due the 1st week of March and \$25 due on the 1st Week of September.

Tuition Charges

Tuition is based on full-time enrollment and guarantees your child a space at Stella Learning Center. Tuition Rates are listed on our “Rate Sheet” in the enrollment packet. Our tuition schedule has been established to provide your child with the best possible care at the most reasonable cost to you.

**Tuition discounts for Full-Time students only.*

Sibling Discount

A weekly tuition discount of \$5 per enrolled sibling is available to families with more than one child enrolled full-time at Stella Learning Center.

Special Activities

Activities and programs, such as, field trips, may be offered at an additional charge. Fees are payable as early as the first day of the program, or as late as the day prior to the event.

Holidays

Regular tuition rates apply during weeks containing holidays for which the center is closed.

Late Payment

Tuition is due on Monday of every week. If tuition is not paid by Wednesday at noon, a late fee of \$5 per day will be charged until it is paid in full.

Insufficient Funds

A fee of \$35.00 will be charged for any returned checks along with any bank fees.

Delinquent Accounts

Stella Learning Center will not provide service to families whose account balance is equal to or greater than one week of tuition. Should your account become delinquent, we will not allow your child to attend until payment arrangements have been made.

Collection Fees

If a balance is maintained on your account, we will notify you of the balance and will give you ten days from the receipt of the statement to dispute charges. If payments or payment arrangements are not made, your account will be referred to the Terrebonne Parish Court House for collection. At that time, there will be a collection fee of \$50 charged to the account.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Please make every effort to pick up your children on time. If tardiness is unavoidable, notify SLC immediately and arrange for your child to be picked up by another adult. If you arrive after 6:05 p.m., a charge of \$1 per minute past closing per child will be added to your account.

Absent Weeks

If your child is absent for an entire week, or only attends one day during a week, you may pay only half of the regularly scheduled tuition for that week up to three times in one year. In order to receive the half tuition credit for an absent week, a Planned Absence Form will be needed at least 1 week prior to the absent week. Full tuition will be charged for any absent weeks after the 3rd allowable week of planned absence. Unless the absence is caused by an unforeseen emergency, please notify SLC at least one week in advance.

After one full year of service from Stella Learning Center, you will be eligible for one week absent/vacation week without a charge of tuition.

Refunds

Refunds will only be made in form of credits to your accounts to be used on future services.

Drop-In Rates

Stella Learning Center offers drop-in care for families not needing full-time care (see Drop-In policy.) The Drop-In rates are as follows:

- 2 years – 5 years old : \$40/ day

Program Information

Value of Play

At Stella Learning Center, we do not underestimate, but rather, value free-play time. For children “play time” is essential. It is a time for them to grow, investigate, and develop social skills, hand eye coordination, fine motor skills and many other beneficial things. Playtime is a learning experience where children also develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. Children typically go through stages of play as they mature developmentally, however; all types of play can be seen in any classroom.

Here are some different types of play observed in children:

- *Unoccupied Play* – the child is relatively stationary and appears to be performing random movements with no apparent purpose. A relatively infrequent style of play.
- *Solitary Play* – although involved in play, the child plays alone, seemingly unaware of other children.
- *On-looker Play*- the child watches and observes the play of other children; the center of interest is other's play.
- *Parallel Play*- the child plays by himself, but in ways similar to and with toys and other materials similar to those of other children.
- *Associative Play*- children interact with each other, perhaps by asking questions or sharing materials, but do not necessarily play together.
- *Cooperative Play* – Children actively play together, often (but not always) as a result of organization of the teacher.

Parten, M. (1933). Social play among preschool children. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 28, 136-147.

Curriculum

We believe that children learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful, hands-on activities. Developmentally appropriate curriculum is designed with activities that are appropriate for all age levels. Our curriculum is designed to foster the social, emotional and cognitive development of the children in our care and can be individualized to build on strengths and to refine the weaknesses of each child.

Curriculum calendars are posted in each classroom. This calendar lists curriculum activities as well as special days or events. (i.e.: show and tell, parties, holidays and field trips.)

While our curriculum does include basic Christian values, it does not promote specific doctrines of faith.

Potty Training

Toilet training should be a positive experience with plenty of encouragement for doing well. Our teachers look for signs that a child is ready. Potty training takes place with our two-year old children.

A team approach is used in potty training children. Parents, staff, and children work together to promote the child's independent toileting. While we do encourage children to do all they are capable of doing, a staff member is always available to assist the child.

Communication between parents and staff regarding potty training is crucial. To ensure consistency, we ask that parents give input on habits/practices and needs of their child. Whenever possible, our teacher will use the same words and methods used by the parents of the child.

It is very important during potty training that children are dressed in clothing that can be managed independently or with little assistance. Try to avoid clothing such as overalls, belts, tights, and similar items which may be too difficult for a child to manage quickly.

Accidents do happen during this time. Please provide *at least two full changes* of clothes to be kept in the child's cubby, and replace them as needed. Stella Learning Center does not wash soiled clothing, so all dirty clothing will be placed in a bag and sent home to be washed.

Child Guidance Policy

We take a preventative approach to discipline that focuses on teaching children positive behaviors. Our goal is to provide children with the opportunity and motivation to make the right choices, function independently, learn social skills, and follow simple rule, and become responsible group members.

Discipline Policy

We will use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, positive self-esteem and cooperation. Each member of our team is required to complete training in the area of classroom discipline.

Discipline at Stella Learning Center is individualized, yet consistent for each child. The child's level of understanding is considered and discipline efforts will be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. Our staff is instructed to follow these guidelines.

1. We will use praise and encouragement for good behavior rather than focusing only on unacceptable behavior.
2. We will remind children of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.

3. We will monitor and analyze the situations and redirect play and learning activities when necessary.
4. We will use positive statements to guide the child toward more positive behavior.
5. There will be as few rules as possible. Rules that are developed will focus on health/safety, consideration of others and their feelings, and care of materials, and equipment.
6. Limits and rules will reflect the children's stage of development, and they will be constantly regulated.
7. We will handle disagreements between children fairly. We will avoid taking sides or the word of one child.
8. We will encourage children to handle non-dangerous situation for themselves.
9. We will step in and take control of the situation where other children or adults are being hurt, when children are hurting themselves, and when property is being destroyed.
10. We will remember that it is the misbehavior that we dislike and not the child.
11. In some instances, a brief, supervised separation from the distressing situation may be used to allow the child to refocus before rejoining the group. The amount of time which a child may be separated from the group is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal Punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, potty training or outside play
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on the child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age
- No child may be physically restrained in any way unless required to protect the safety of others.

All staff is informed that failure to follow these guidelines will result in termination of employment.

The Director or office personnel may become involved if the child is not responding to the teacher's efforts. At this point, the parents may be contacted and suspension or expulsion may occur. If positive forms of encouragement and redirection of activities fail, a meeting will be set up with the parents to determine a positive Individualized Discipline Plan.

Individualized Discipline Plan

Upon request of a parent or the SLC Director (with the consent of the parent) a meeting can be held to develop an individualized discipline plan for any student. The Plan will specifically cite a behavior that should stop or increase and will use incentives that are designed specifically to motivate the child for whom it was designed.

Biting

While there are many different causes for this behavior, biting most often is the result of a child's frustration or the result of oral pain due to teething. We understand that biting is developmentally appropriate for some ages; however, it must be stopped for the safety of other children.

Every effort is made by our staff to minimize the number of biting occurrences in our classrooms. Our procedure for handling biting is as follows:

- The child who bit will be removed from the situation.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- The bitten area will be cleaned.
- Reports will be filled out for the child who bit and for the child who was bitten.
- The parents of both children will be notified.
- The classroom environment will be assessed.
- The biting child will be closely supervised.
- The identity of the biting child will be kept confidential.

Most children stop biting after these steps have been taken. When a child has bitten more than twice, a conference with the parent(s) will be scheduled, and an Individualized Discipline Plan that is agreed upon by the parent and Director will be completed and implemented. It may become necessary to remove children from the center who continue to bite.

Dismissal Due to Behavioral Issues

If implementation of the Individualized Discipline Plan is not successful in correcting the behavioral issue or if a child exhibits behavior that threatens the safety of the child or others, we may no longer be able to provide care for that child.

A child may be temporarily or permanently dis-enrolled from SLC at the discretion of the Director. No refund will be given.

General Information

Abuse and Neglect

Childcare professionals are required by law to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Stella Learning Center trains all staff in the recognition and prevention of child abuse and requires staff to immediately report and document every situation that could be detrimental to a child's well-being.

Stella Learning Center Staff

We take great pride in the competency of our staff. Each member of our team strives to maintain the highest integrity and professionalism, while making every child and family feel loved. Our teachers come to us with high recommendations, and we make our final selection based on education and experience. We seek employees who value working as a team with parents, children and colleagues.

Every member of our staff is required to complete pre-service training before being placed in a classroom. All classroom staff are required to have at least twelve clock hours of training per year in topics such as: child development, communication, and curriculum activities. In addition to this, all staff must be First Aid and CPR certified. A background check is completed for each employee prior to the first day of employment.

Pictures

Stella Learning Center, Inc. uses still photography, videography, or audiotape recordings of children for training purposes and for implementation of evidenced-based strategies in the classroom setting during normal operating hours, on field trips, or activities. With written permission, these photos may be used:

- In newsletters or mounted on Stella Learning Center's website,
- Inside the school lobby, and other locations around the school,
- In social media (i.e., Facebook page, Twitter, etc.)
- Print media (i.e., newspapers, magazines, bill boards, etc.), and
- At fundraising and community events.

Severe Weather and Fire Preparedness

We conduct monthly drills (and monthly tornado drills during specified tornado drill season) to be sure that all of us are prepared in the case of an emergency. Parents and families are encouraged to learn our routines and reinforce them at home. Should you enter SLC while a drill is in progress, we invite you to join in the procedures that we are following.

Birthday

Birthdays are special days for the children. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at SLC, please make early arrangements with your child's teacher. Please bring items that are store

bought and pre-packaged. Approve any toy or gifts that will be given out as prizes/treats through the Director.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Stella Learning Center's programs are available to people of all abilities. Please let us know if there is any reasonable accommodation that would make our program more easily accessible to your family.

Hiring Staff to Baby Sit

At times, parents ask our teachers to babysit children away for SLC. Please understand that Stella Learning Center **DOES NOT** take responsibility for any services rendered by staff beyond operation of the center.

Office Phones

Please do not ask to use office phone unless it is an emergency. Also, please do not enter the office unless a member of the management is present.

Resources for Parents

We try to support Stella Learning Center's families in every way we can. We are happy to answer any questions on topics related to our scope of practice (i.e., discipline, potty training, etc.); many times we are able to suggest additional resources on the topic. If you are interested in reading materials, please ask. From time to time, we place interesting articles in the foyer for parents and staff; feel free to take one if you wish.

Parent Agreement Contract

I have read and completely understand all of the policies contained in Stella Learning Center, Inc.'s Parent Hand Book of Operational Policies as published.

Welcome, Statement of Principles, Open Door Policy, Accountability of the Staff, Hours of Operation, Holidays, Enrollment, Admission Requirements, Child Placement, The First Day, Disenrollment, Drop-In Policy, Attendance at the Center, Arrival and Departure, Grade Levels, Check Point Station, Release Policy, Courtesy Calls, Parent Responsibilities, Clothing, Jewelry, Health, Medications, Immunizations, Nutrition, Safety, Emergencies, Injuries, Incident Reports, Special Needs, Inclusion, Referral, Communication, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Bulletin Boards, Record Updates, Daily Reports, Web Page, Financial Information, Registration Fees, Activity Fees, Tuition Charge, Sibling Discount, Special Activities, Holidays, Late Payment, Insufficient Funds, Delinquent Accounts, Collection Fees, Late Pick-up Fees, Absent Weeks, Refunds, Drop-In Rates, Program Information, Value of Play, Curriculum, Special Program, Potty Training, Discipline, Discipline Policy, Individualized Discipline Plan, Biting, Dismissal Due to Behavioral Issues, General Information, Abuse and Neglect, Nap Time, Stella Learning Center's Staff, Pictures, Severe Weather and Fire Preparedness, Birthdays, Americans with Disabilities Act, Hiring Staff to Baby Sit, Office Phones, and Resources for Parents.

Date of Admission: _____

Enrollment (circle one): Full Time Mon/Wed/ Fri Tues/Thurs Drop-In

Child's Name _____

DOB: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Notice: Stella Learning Center, Inc. makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this handbook at the time of publication. Due to unforeseen factors, we reserve the right to change, without prior notice, any fees, dates, and policies contained in the brochure and the enrollment forms. A written notice will be given to families affected by a particular change in financial or other policies.