Leet Center

Discovering and Caring Together

The Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families

Northwest Missouri State University

naeyc Accreditation

Preschool Program Parent Handbook

Revised September 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I INTRODUCTION.....4
History.....5
Mission Statement.....5
Philosophy.....6
Program Goals.....6
Facility.....7
Preschool Office.....7
Accreditation and Licensing.....7
Code of Ethical Conduct.....7
Non-Discrimination Policy.....8
Ratios.....8
PART II PROGRAM OPTIONS.....**8**
Hours of Operation.....8
The Preschool Classrooms.....9
Tuition.....9
Bearcat Club.....9
Children's Health Records and other records.....10
Late Fees.....11
Withdraw Information.....11
Family Orientation.....11
PART III OPERATIONAL INFORMATION.....11
Hours of Operation.....**11**
Calendar.....12
Arrival and Departure.....13
Arrival.....13
Departure.....13
Arrival and Departure of Students with Disabilities.....13
Attendance.....14
Access to the Building.....14
Parking.....14
PART IV PROGRAM.....**15**
Our Teachers.....15
Curriculum.....15
Daily Schedule.....16
Nap/Rest Time.....17
Assessments.....17
Child Development.....18
Assessment Procedures.....18
Assessment Results.....18
Confidentiality.....18
Observations and Portfolios.....19
Meeting Individual Needs of Children.....19
Transitioning New Children.....19
Separation.....19
Potty/Toilet Training Policy.....20
PART V SAFETY AND HEALTH.....**20**
Emergency Procedures.....20

General Safety Practices……21
Inclement Weather Policy……22
Leet Center Announcements Regarding Hours of Operation……22
Leet Center Policy Guidelines for Inclement Weather……22
Health Policy……23
Allergy Policy……23
CPR/First Aid Training for Staff……23
Classroom First Aid Kits……23
Children with the following may NOT be brought……24
Children may remain at Leet Center if……24
Children with 1 of more…may NOT……24
Children sent home for Illness……25
Children returning After Illness……25
Medication Authorization……25
Accident and Illness Procedure……25
Child Abuse Policies……26
Guidance and Discipline……26
Use of Corporal Punishment and Harsh Language……27
Discipline Strategies……27
Meals and Snacks……27
Outdoor Play……28
Outdoor Temperature Policy……28
Clothing……29
Toys from Home……29
Smoking……29
Field Trips……29
PART VI FAMILY INVOLVEMENT……29
Knowing and Understanding Our Preschool Families……30
Parent Participation……20
Family Arrangements……30
Parent Communication……31
Parent and Teacher Conferences……31
Parent Resources……31
Parent Board……31
Program/Center Evaluation……32
PART VII UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS……32
Target Children……32
Target Families……32
Teacher-Student Parent Conferences……33
Student Observations/Participation……33
PART VIII GENERAL INFORMATION……33
How to Handle a Problem or Complaint……33
Volunteers……33
Birthdays……34
Closing Statement……34

USING THIS HANDBOOK

Dear Parents and Families,
Welcome to the Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families preschool program. Our goal is to provide a welcoming, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child.

This handbook is designed to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with the program. In the handbook we have tried to anticipate many of your questions about the program. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the program's policies and procedures. We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transitions between home and school. Daily communications and a sense of trust between parents and teachers are vital.

Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children and to ensure that parents are valued and respected. To accomplish this we depend on parents to be responsible and active child care consumers. We expect parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about the program. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child's experience and the program. We understand that nothing is more important than your child's early education and care experiences.

Given the nature of an ever-changing quality early education and care program, this handbook is a "living" document. You will be notified of formal policy changes during the year via a written policy notice through email. In addition, the handbook will be updated as needed.

Come and talk with us should you have any suggestions, questions or concerns.

INTRODUCTION

PART 1

This handbook is designed to acquaint all parents with current policies and procedures of the Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families (referred to as the Leet Center throughout this document). The handbook can be accessed through the website on-line at all times.

The Northwest Missouri State University Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families is an educational setting for community children, and a teaching and research Laboratory for University students, faculty, and staff.

Leet Center is a full-day teacher training childcare center in the School of Education. It is licensed by the State of Missouri and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Each room is staffed with one master teacher and a graduate assistant (GA). In addition, Northwest Missouri State University students work as teacher's aides (TA). A variety of child and family needs are met through the Center, while college students from several departments are learning through first-hand experience how to become model teachers.

Leet Center serves approximately 80 families with children from three through six years of age for preschool as well as after school care. Promoting high quality early care and education in a model setting is a primary goal.

HISTORY

The Northwest Missouri State University Early Care and Education Laboratory Center started in 1968. The first director, Dr. Peggy Miller, a graduate of Northwest Missouri State University, was the first lead teacher at the newly established Child Development Laboratory. The ECEL Center was located on West 9th Street, east of campus, in a residential area.

In 1984, Dr. Miller drafted a proposal to expand the ECEL Center School as an auxiliary effort supported by fees collected for child care. This allowed for expanded access for Northwest Missouri State University faculty and Maryville residents. In 1986, a plan was developed to share space in Brown Hall with the Horace Mann Laboratory School. The program was moved and re-named the Early Childhood Center, sharing space with the Horace Mann Kindergarten program.

The program provided a model for students pursuing the two-year Child Care Administration certificate and for Child and Family Studies majors. In addition, Dr. Miller initiated and received grants to implement both a school-age program and a Practical Parenting program. She worked to bring the first Project Construct training workshops to Northwest Missouri in 1990. Implementation of the Project Construct Curriculum Framework in the Early Childhood Center began in 1991.

In 1992, Mrs. Phyllis Leet donated funds to construct another room and two offices for the program for use by the extended care program. The room was expanded in 2000 to accommodate a full-day pre-kindergarten program.

The Early Childhood Center became licensed by the State of Missouri Child Care Licensing Bureau in 1997. Dr. Miller had worked toward this goal for many years.

In 2002, after 33 years of service to Northwest Missouri State University, Dr. Miller retired. Ms. Susan Baker served as the Director from 2002 – 2005. She worked diligently to attain accreditation for the program. The program received accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children in 2005.

In light of the changing needs of the community, the program now includes extended care from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for children ages 3-12. In 2006, the program's name was changed to the Early Care and Education Laboratory Center in order to better reflect all aspects of the program.

In 2011, plans began to relocate the center to the main floor of Brown Hall in the existing library space. In 2012 construction began with a donation from Phyllis and Richard Leet to construct three classrooms, office spaces, a kitchen, a new library and a café for children through from Kindergarten to sixth grade to enjoy. The center's name was changed to **Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families**. The Leet Center is now located on the first floor of Brown Hall and includes an amazing Outdoor Classroom.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Leet Center embraces the most current practices in Early Childhood Education and values whole child development through interest and project based curriculum. Our teachers and university students are committed to providing a safe and loving environment in which children explore, discover, learn and play.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Leet Center and its staff believe that children learn best in a supportive, loving, home-like environment where they are encouraged by caring adults who observe and learn beside them. We believe that children should be given time, appropriate materials, and engage in meaningful interactions to develop intellectually and emotionally.

The teachers in our center are advocates for children who love and encourage them to develop academically and socially. As they listen and learn with each child, they assess and guide the learning process and empower children to make sense of their world.

Children are provided with appropriate materials in our beautiful sunlit rooms. The environment is carefully thought out and room arrangement reflects a child centered view. Materials are displayed in a functional yet inviting manner which nurtures the child's inner creativity. Children's varied abilities are accounted for in the preparation of the centers. Tools and props are rotated frequently to reflect the needs and interests of the group.

Families and culture are celebrated at the Leet Center. The role of parents to our center is vital. The involvement and family connectedness is an integral piece of what makes our program strong. Families are frequently visible in and around the center, sharing life and what they love with the children. Their role in informing and working together with their child's teacher is the glue that keeps our center in place.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families aspires to meet the needs of ALL children and families. We provide care and developmental stimulation through play-based academic growth opportunities for young children as well as educational opportunities for families through our parent resource center and family nights. Teachers at our center see themselves as researchers, learning about each child's development and simultaneously furthering their own pedagogical knowledge. They specialize in developing and implementing the newest techniques based on the growing body of research that shows positive correlations between home-like indoor environments and strong interpersonal relationships and the ability to concentrate. In our indoor and outdoor classrooms, we are constantly "Discovering and Caring Together!"

The young child is a member of his/her family. It is our aim to work with each family to create the best possible environment for their child while in our program. The staff and college students of Leet Center focus on the total and unique growth and development of each child. We promote:

Cognitive Development:
- Learning to solve problems and form concepts
- Discovering and exploring the near environment

Social-Emotional Development:
- Developing self-esteem and personal adjustment skills

- Achieving self-confidence in relationships
- Developing a sense of responsibility and persistence in completing tasks

Physical Development:

- Developing hand and body coordination
- Learning physical skills
- Learning good health habits

Language Development:

- Express wants and needs using words
- Develop communication skills with adults and peers

Creative Development:

- Expressing ideas through creative skills
- Expressing self through creative media
- Developing the ability to think and act in different and unique ways

FACILITY

The center is located in Brown Hall on the campus of Northwest Missouri State University in room 120 and 123.

PRESCHOOL OFFICE

The preschool office is located in 137 Brown Hall. It is located in the main office of Horace Mann on the first level of Brown Hall.

ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING

The Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for children and families has been accredited by the National Association of Young children since 2005. The standards and criteria held by the Association are separated into ten categories, or the ten **Standards of Excellence**, as described below:

1. Relationships
2. Curriculum
3. Teaching
4. Assessment of Child Progress
5. Health
6. Teachers
7. Families
8. Community Relationships
9. Physical Environment
10. Leaderships and Management

A copy of the *Standards and Criteria* is made available in the director's office. All new staff will be required to read the information within the first two (2) weeks of employment.

*for more information regarding NAEYC, please go to naeyc.org.

The Center is also licensed by the Division of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) through the state of Missouri.

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

For an updated NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct please go to naeyc.org. Copies of the Code of Ethical Conduct are also available in the preschool office and all staff will receive an updated copy.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin or sexual orientation.

RATIOS

Appropriate ratios are kept according to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services licensing manual. The appropriate ratio varies with the age of the children enrolled. The ratios for the center are as follows: Mixed ages 3-5 year olds 1 adult to 10 children; mixed ages 5 years and older: 1 adult to 16 children.

PART II

PROGRAM OPTIONS

In order to meet the needs of the families served, Leet Center offers a number of options for child attendance. The amount of tuition charged is figured on the numbers of days and the hours the child is in attendance. The Leet Center serves three to five year old children with three classrooms of multi-age children three to five years old.

Hours of Operation – Leet Center is open from 7:30 am – 5:30 pm. We currently operate three classrooms for children ages 3 – 5. Parents have a variety of options from which to choose, based on availability. These options include attendance for 3 full days M, W, F or 5-day attendance per week with the following schedule choices:

Full-Day: 7:30 am – 5:30 pm;
School-Day: 7:30 am – 3:00 pm; or
Half-Day: 7:30 am – 11:00 am

Leet Center is open from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. during the school year. Childcare will be available through Bearcat Club from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on most professional development days and snow days for an additional cost. Childcare will not be available during winter and spring breaks.

Bearcat Club (a University run extended care program) will be offered to children who utilize the program on a regular basis. Additional children will be accommodated if there is space available. A child must be enrolled in the Leet Center or Horace Mann Laboratory School to attend Extended Care or Bearcat Club.

The Preschool Classrooms enroll up to 20 children per day. Enrollment is open to children who are three years of age before August 1st. Children must also be potty trained. The preschool waiting list for the current year is used to determine who will be accepted for enrollment. Parents will be called to see if they are still interested in their child attending Leet Center. The waiting list is organized on a first to apply first on the list basis. Parents are given official notification of acceptance into the program by a letter from the director stating the days and times of attendance requested by the parent. Applications for enrollment will be accepted throughout the year.

TUITION

Tuition is set by Northwest Missouri State University's Board of Regents from the recommendation made by the Chair of the Department of Professional Education. These are set on a yearly basis and families are charged four installments each semester spring and fall. Fees are paid to NWMSU bursar's office and are due on the 15th of each month. Late payments of fees are applied by the University at a standard rate of 1%.

The rates for the 2017-2018 school year are:

Attendance	Regular Tuition/month	Families That Qualify for Reduced Lunch	Families That Qualify for Free Lunch
5 day Morning Only Program	$180.00		
5 day School Day Program	$355.00	$265.00	$232.00
3 day School Day Program	$205.00		
5 day Full Day Program	$430.00	$321.00	$280.50
3 day Full Day Program	$265.00		

Attendance	Amount
Maximum for Full day	$20 (over 4 hours)
Half Day Rate	$10 (less than 4 hours)
Late Fee	$1/minute (after 5:30 pm)
Hourly Rate	$3/hour
Hot Lunch when available	$2.50
Regular Adult Lunch	$4.18
Special Event Adult Lunch	$4.49

Bearcat Club:

Bearcat Club is the Leet Center program that provides afterschool care for children. The program also provides care for children during breaks, snow days, and teacher in-service days. The fees are listed above. Bearcat Club cares for preschool and pre-kindergarten children that are enrolled in the full day program of the center but is a University run program. The intent of the program is to encourage and support the development of each child, and to provide a positive alternative for non-school hours that will enhance the child's development. The program is located in room 110 or 122 of the Brown Hall. The program also uses the Horace Mann gym, the preschool and pre-kindergarten rooms as needed. Following a full day of preschool or pre-kindergarten children participate in a relaxed atmosphere with the opportunity to choose from self-selected or planned activities (outdoor or indoor games, art activities, reading, crafts, etc.). The days when children attend the program for a full day (conference days, spring break, snow days, and summer) are also fun and educational. Morning and afternoon snacks will be served during the all-day program. Some days the parents will be asked

to send a sack lunch, but milk and water will be provided. Parents will need to send a sack lunch when children attend the all day program and the university is not in session. On snow days no school lunch will be served.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH RECORDS AND OTHER RECORDS

All children are required to have a completed physician's examination form, a physical exam and all immunizations up to date at the time of enrollment. Immunizations are to be kept up to date thereafter following the Missouri guidelines schedule. Record of a physical is required every year.

Immunizations are an important public health policy effecting children. As a matter of state law, children in the program must:

- Be fully immunized, or
- Be in the process of becoming fully immunized according to the approved schedule, or
- Have a physician's statement that immunization are not needed for medical reasons or a note from the parent stating that the child in not immunized due to religious beliefs.

Your child's file is kept in a file cabinet in the Leet Center office on the first floor of Brown Hall. This office is locked unless center personnel are present. Your child's file is considered confidential and only a limited number of individuals have access to view it. Parents may request to view their child's file at any time. Please contact the classroom teacher or the Leet Center Director to make arrangements to view the file.

The Director will have access to review the file so that medical and family information is correct and up to date. Lead teachers have access to review files to see what individual/special needs your child has. This information will help with planning and goal setting for your child. The school nurse will view records to check that immunizations are up to date.

When the program is being reviewed for relicensing, the licensing representative has access to the files that are required by the state. These forms would include but are not limited to: child enrollment, medical forms, and special instruction plans for allergies if one is appropriate.

When Leet Center teachers want to review your child's file they will sign, date, and give reason for viewing of the file. This file will remain in the Leet Center office during this review. Contact information for the family is located in the Leet Center office so that teachers are able to contact parents or family when needed.

A list of individuals that may view student records will be found in a folder in the front of the file in which your child's records are kept. Only those individuals listed may view the records without separate written consent. The individual must sign, date and give reason for viewing of the records. The written permission form may be obtained from the Leet Office (137 Brown Hall). All educational files are kept confidential and have limited access.

LATE FEES

The Leet Center closes at 5:30 p.m. Leet Center staff members work very hard each and every day and want to feel confident that they can leave at 5:30 p.m. Many staff members have evening commitments. Parents who arrive late often interfere with these plans. There will be a late fee assessed if children are picked-up after 5:30 p.m.

Examples of the late pick-up charge policy is as follows: $1 for each minute late, per child. That is, if a parent arrives at 5:35 p.m. 5 minutes late = $5.00 late fee will be applied (per child enrolled), 5:44 p.m. 14 minutes late = $14 (per child enrolled).

WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Parents are required to give the Center Director a minimum of three-week notice in writing prior to withdrawing their child from the program. If your child starts the month you will be charged for the full month.

FAMILY ORIENTATION

Before the school year begins, each family will receive mailings through the summer. An orientation night for new families will be offered the week before school begins during the back to school night. Your family will come to the center, meet the teachers, see the classroom and participate in an orientation meeting to help in becoming acclimated with some of the daily procedures of preschool. During this time the family will have the opportunity to ask questions about the program with the teachers and director.

PART III

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival and departure is a busy time in the Leet Center. Parents are asked to walk their child to their classroom. Please sign your child in at arrival and out at departure at the computer located just inside the main door. For **Billing and attendance purposes, parents must sign their child in and out of the program as well as mark hot, cold or no lunch**. If the child is not signed out you could be charged for extra time.

ARRIVAL

During arrival it is very important to set up a routine that your family can follow every day. This provides your child with a sense of security. Please keep teachers informed about your child's health, mood, eating habits, family situation, or anything you think might affect your child's behavior at school. We recommend that you help put away items in their cubby, walk your child into the room, greet the teachers and friends, help wash their hands and assist your child in selecting a toy or joining an activity.

When it is time for the person dropping the child off to go, tell the child you are leaving, and say, "Good-bye". If your child is having difficulty separating, signal a teacher for assistance. Feel free to call us later if your child is upset when you leave, and we will let you know how he or she is doing.

DEPARTURE

If someone we do not know is to pick up your child, please inform the teacher. This person must be listed as authorized to pick-up your child on the enrollment paperwork. Remind the authorized person that we may ask for picture identification to insure your child's safety. We are not allowed to release your child to an older sibling.

If there are any changes in emergency contact information or individuals who are authorized to pick up your child, please fill out a Change of Information Form immediately. You may have up to three (3) different people who are authorized to pick up your child on the emergency directory. We strongly encourage families to have at least two (2) authorized people listed.

During departure, it is also important to follow a set routine. We recommend that when you arrive, you greet your child and the teachers, and let your child know how much time he or she has to wrap up the ongoing project or activity. While your child is finishing up is a good time to talk with the teachers to discuss your child's day, but this is not the time to have a full conference with the teachers. If you feel you need a conference, please ask the teacher to set a separate time for you to meet. On the way out, check your child's mailbox. Be sure and say, "Good-bye" to your child's teachers, so they know you and your child are leaving.

Once you have reunited with your child and begun departure, the Leet Center is no longer responsible for your child's safety. Please be sure he/she remains with you both inside and outside of the building. Please use the sidewalk when going to your vehicle in the circle drive.

Arrival and Departure for Students with Disabilities - There is a handicapped entrance on the north side of Brown Hall and handicapped parking is at the end of the sideway leading into the building. There is an elevator on first floor of Brown Hall (South wing of the building). Anyone needing to use the elevator to go from first floor to the Leet Center must secure a key from the Horace Mann Office. The key must be returned to the office after use.

Signing In and Out of Bearcat Club – Morning Bearcat Club sign in is required at the computer in the Leet Center. As parents pick-up their child/ren they will also be using the four digit sign in/out code on the computer. These codes are used for attendance and billing purposes.

ATTENDANCE

If your child is scheduled to attend Pre-school and will be absent, please notify the teachers as soon as possible by calling (660) 562-1237 or call (660) 562-1542. As this will help when teacher assistants are taking lunch count for each classroom, so the center does not order an extra or not enough lunches for the class.

If your child is scheduled to attend Extended Care and will be absent, please notify the teachers or office as soon as possible by calling (660) 562-1542.

ACCESS TO THE BUILDING/PARKING

Families that are arriving at the Leet Center will enter the Leet Center door on the southwest side of Brown Hall facing the circle drive. The doors are open from 7:30 until 8:15 a.m. and from 10:50 until 11:15 a.m. for ½ day pick up and again from 3:00-5:30 for after school pick up. If a family arrives late to school they will need to enter through the Horace Mann entrance door. Please note that the center will not be accessible before7:30 a.m. in order to allow time for the teachers to prepare for the day.

Parking on the Northwest campus is limited, restricted and controlled by the University Campus Safety Office. The Leet Center is aware of the limited space involved in drop-off and pick-up of children through the circle drive. We apologize for an inconvenience this may cause you in bringing and picking your child up. We are doing the best we can to work through the situation. Campus Safety is doing their best to stop unauthorized parking in the circle drive. We ask for your patience and cooperation.

Parking – We realize that many parents are sharing a few parking spaces. It is OK for you to park in the circle drive, but please make sure you are in and out of those spots as quickly as possible. The official University Policy is to ticket anyone parked in the circle drive for longer than the designated time period. Curbs painted Red are 15 minute parking only and curbs painted Yellow are NO parking.

Parking Hangtag Permits - All Leet Center families may obtain a Horace Mann Laboratory School parking tag from the Horace Mann office. After you have turned in your enrollment paperwork, you will receive your Horace Mann parent parking hangtag(s). When you turn in your car license number, you will be issued a hangtag for your car's front rear view mirror. This needs to be done yearly in August to receive the current Horace Mann Parking Permit. If someone else brings your child, please explain the parking privileges and responsibilities. The hangtag(s) should hang from the rear view mirror. A maximum of two hangtags will be issued to each household. The permits expire August 31 of each year.

The Horace Mann parking permit hangtag allows parents to park on campus between 7:30 am and 5:00 pm, in any lot (including the circle drive) except disabled, when visiting, picking up, or dropping off your child. The hangtag is to be used for Horace Mann business only. Cars with hangtags may not be left in the circle drive or other campus parking lots while parents attend classes, work, or run personal errands (like coffee in the Union or to visit a friend on campus, workout at the campus fitness center). You may receive a parking ticket if these guidelines are not followed. If you receive a ticket you may appeal your ticket at Campus Safety office. Any questions or comments may be directed to the Office or Campus Safety. Cars parked in the circle drive should be there no more than 15 minutes. If there longer they are subject to ticketing.

Parking Safety – The circle drive has been provided for your convenience. We realize this is a small space and we ask your upmost care in driving through the circle drive. You may park in the circle drive when you bring and pick up your child. Remember circle drive is limited to 15 minutes.

Please do not leave children unattended in cars while dropping off or picking up children. Walk with your child on the walkway at all times. Walking in the driveway behind cars is dangerous. Help your child learn "parking lot safety" and avoid accidents. If you are transporting several children and need help, call the office and ask us for assistance.

PART IV

PROGRAM

OUR TEACHERS

Director: Ms. Cindy Scarbrough

Teachers: Mrs. Meghan Sheil, Mrs. Erika Yocom, and Mrs. Erica Buck

Leet Center requires Lead Teachers to have a Master's Degree in Early Care and Education. As a part of the Leet Center Professional development plan the Leet Center teachers will participate in current professional development opportunities to match current trends in early childhood education. The Leet Center teaching staff will meet weekly and have professional development opportunities on a monthly basis.

CURRICULUM

The Laboratory School has followed a constructivist model since 1991, using Project Construct as our curriculum model. This curriculum is child-initiated, providing opportunities for the children that support and enrich their development, learning, and growing independence. Curriculum development provides the framework for planning and carrying out work with young children and their families. The Laboratory School's curriculum is child-centered, interest-based, and hands-on to encourage each child's growing independence. Although planned themes may be used on occasion, children's interests are considered and the curriculum is adapted as needed. Each room is designed with interest centers (blocks, dramatic play, manipulatives, art, sensory, library, music & movement, science, etc.) and children choose from a variety of developmentally appropriate activities throughout the day. Each program includes a balance of child- and teacher activities designed to actively engage children in learning throughout the day and promote their creative expression. Assessment is an integral part of curriculum planning. Monitoring and documentation of children's participation within the learning environment is on-going. Children's interests, strengths, and needs are used to shape curricular decisions.

The classrooms will be rich in language opportunities and experiences. Such opportunities include but are not limited to: stories, finger plays, poems, labeling of items in the classroom, visiting with the students during free play, family style dining, special times for children to share ideas and thoughts. The children will have opportunities to have a special time to share things from home. The children will be given classroom responsibilities. Children will have opportunities to give their desires for topics to be studied.

Consideration will be given to students and families for whom English is a Second Language. An example would be the teachers will use pictures in developing charts etc. If needed, a Para will be obtained to help the children and family adjust to the language barrier.

The community plays a large part in the child's world. Community perspectives are a consideration in planning activities and curriculum. Community personnel often come to the center to share with the children. The university community is used in curriculum planning; like visiting museums, people sharing job duties.

Curricular decisions are closely linked and are shaped by the on-going assessment gathered by the staff daily. Such decisions are based on the fundamental concepts of being age-appropriate, individually-appropriate, culturally relevant, and use of anti-bias practices reflected in the program in dialogue with the families of the children. Theory and research in child development, family studies, and early childhood, and early childhood special education guide the curriculum and assessment practices of the programs.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Each classroom has a daily schedule that is posted on the parent bulletin board inside each classroom, but the following are some components that will be incorporated into each day:

Activity:	**Staff Responsibility:**
Arrival: wash hands	
Choice Time/Indoor Explorations – children select from a variety of activity areas including: Art, House/Dramatic Play, Reading, Science, Math, Writing, Sand and Water Table, Games and Puzzles or Project work.	**Supervise all areas, assist children with choices when necessary, discuss and motivate cooperation, creativity and peer interactions. Encourage children to help keep choice time areas organized and neat.**
Group Time – large group activity which begins the day with introductory songs, events of the day, news, sharing and discussion of project work.	**Participate in singing, focus children's attention on teacher directing activity, and encourage participation of all children.**
Morning Snack – nutritious snacks are provided for the children with milk and water.	**Supervise hand-washing, wash tables with three step method before and after snack. Encourage self-help skills and assisting with clean up after snack. Sit with children at tables and encourage conversations.**
Outdoor Explorations – Outdoor play on playground with a wide variety of age appropriate equipment, games and materials. **We will play outside in the rain if lightning and thunder are not present.	**Check that all children are properly dressed before going out. Check all equipment and toys prior to use. All areas of playground must be supervised. Avoid personal conversations with other staff. All equipment must be stored in proper places.**
Family Circle – Sing songs, discuss any social issues that need to be discussed, or read a book aloud to the children.	**Encourage children to participate in singing and discussion. Help focus children on the story. Quietly redirect children and avoid calling out names. Sing along! Learn the songs, share a new song, play and instrument, or teach a finger play.**
Munch & Mingle Lunch – Children will have lunch. They will be served family style if eating hot lunch at school or they will get out their lunch boxes if eating a cold lunch from home.	**Supervise hand washing. Supervise and help as needed with lunch. Sit with children and engage children in conversations at the table. Assist with clean up after lunch. Staff offer alternative activity for those finished eating**
Rest Time – Children will assist getting rest cots ready by putting on crib sheet, blanket, pillow and stuffed animal. Children will rest quietly on rest cots.	**Help distribute rest cots, remembering to leave space between each child. Help settle children and avoid conversation. Staff offers alternative quiet activity for children who have rested after a certain period of time.**
Choice Time/Indoor Explorations – children select from a variety of activity areas including: Art, House/Dramatic Play, Reading, Science, Math, Writing, Sand and Water Table, Games and Puzzles or Project work.	**Supervise all areas, assist children with choices when necessary, discuss and motivate cooperation, creativity and peer interactions. Encourage children to help keep choice time areas organized and neat.**

Afternoon Snack – nutritious snacks are provided for the children with milk and water.	**Supervise hand-washing, wash tables with three step method before and after snack. Encourage self-help skills and assisting with clean up after snack. Sit with children at tables and encourage conversations.**
Music and Movement – Children will be given opportunity to have a music and movement experience.	**Participate in singing, focus children's attention on teacher directing activity, and encourage participation of all children. Learn the songs, share a new song, play and instrument or teach a finger play**.
Outdoor Explorations – Outdoor play on playground with a wide variety of age appropriate equipment, games and materials. **We will play outside in the rain if lightning and thunder are not present.	**Check that all children are properly dressed before going out. Check all equipment and toys prior to use. All areas of playground must be supervised. Avoid personal conversations with other staff. All equipment must be stored in proper places.**

NAP/REST TIME

Nap time is an important opportunity for growing, active children to rest and re-energize. This is also a time for teachers to regroup, clean, do paperwork, discuss the day's activities, and plan future curriculum for the class.

All children rest in the afternoon. Children are asked to rest but are not required to sleep. Children are helped to relax by a variety of methods: darkened room, soft music or story tapes, rubbing backs, etc. Non-nappers are asked to rest quietly on their cot for 30 minutes. After that time, they may get up and participate in quiet activities. We will try to accommodate parent's requests to individualize children's rest routines. Please discuss specific accommodations with your child's teacher.

We ask that parents bring a small soft blanket, a crib sheet and a pillow or soft toy. We will send these items home weekly for the parent to launder and return to school the first day the child attends in the following week.

ASSESSMENTS

Child assessment is a vital and necessary component of all high-quality early childhood programs. Assessment is important to understand and support young children's development. Each classroom completes screenings and authentic assessments that encompass all areas of development; sensory, language, cognitive, gross-motor, fine-motor, and social-emotional. Assessment is also essential to document and evaluate how effectively programs are meeting young children's educational needs, and to inform of program improvement.

Child Development – Children do not just grow in size. They develop, evolve, and mature, mastering ever more complex understanding of the people, objects, and challenges in their environment. There is a general pattern or sequence for development that is true of most children. However, the rate, character, and quality of development vary from child to child. Culture influences development in different ways, and the goals for children differ from culture to culture.

Quality assessment looks not only at what is happening within the child, but also to the care that the child requires in order to thrive. For a child to develop and learn in a healthy and normal way, it is important not only to meet the basic needs for protection, food and health care, but also to meet the basic needs for interaction and stimulation, affection, security, and learning through exploration and discovery.

All staff is trained in the use of assessment in an early childhood program which includes the purpose and value of assessment and appropriate assessment tools. Leet Center staff work closely with university faculty and through discussions at center staff meetings to have a continuing process of evaluating the effectiveness of the assessments tools and program.

Assessment Results – The information gained during all screenings and assessments will be used to develop curriculum, parent education, and evidence for referral.

- Lead teachers use the information gathered during the assessment process, identifying children's interests and needs and use this in planning a curriculum that best meets the needs of all children. When appropriate the information is used in planning for individual student needs.
- If there is an indication of a developmental delay the teachers will use the information gathered for referral for further diagnostic screenings and assessments. As needed the Local Education Agency will be involved in further diagnostic screenings and assessments.

Confidentiality – All information gathered about a child is kept confidential. Records are kept in a secure area with limited access except by authorized personnel.

- Information obtained and collected by the program will be shared with other staff only on a "need to know" basis.
- Practicum students are not included in discussions of children and assessment/screening results unless the information is relevant to the practicum experience.
- Parents and guardians may ask to view screening and assessment results through asking the classroom teacher or the director.
- All information complied during screenings and assessments will be used to promote the healthy developmental growth of the child. As appropriate the classroom teacher, the parents, and other essential personnel will be involved in making goals for the child or a referral in cases of developmental delays.
- No information shall be shared with an outside agency without the written consent from the parent or legal guardian.
- On request, regulatory authorities (Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services) shall have access to confidential materials.

OBSERVATIONS AND PORTFOLIOS

During the preschool day teachers will utilize observations and interactions to gain knowledge about each child and their learning. Each observer will use guidelines on how to observe children and record their observations.

Child Portfolios-tools may include checklists, social inventory, anecdotal records, self-reflections, progress reports, samples of work, drawings, paintings, writings, stories and photographs, etc. **Parents are welcome to view their child's portfolio at any time.

MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN

TRANSITIONING NEW CHILDREN

We prefer to have new children ease into the room and routine. If a child enters the program in the middle of the year, we recommend a few short visits, gradually lengthening the visit time, prior to full-day enrollment. This helps your child become familiar with the environment and also helps us get acquainted.

Each child is unique in his/her patterns and ease of adjustment to new situations. Be sure to talk with the staff daily during the transition phase. A consistent daily schedule (arrival and departure routines) also helps children adjust to a new routine and environment.

When transitioning your child into our classrooms during the initial visit, we ask that you stay with your child as they will not be officially enrolled and are not included in the teacher-child ratio. It is suggested that visits last, on the average, 2 - 3 hours. If you would like your child to experience different times of the day, schedule your visits accordingly. For liability purposes, parents may not leave their child unsupervised during visits.

SEPARATION

Children sometimes have difficulty separating upon arrival at the Leet Center. This is typical behavior which, over time, should decrease as children become more secure in their new environment. Here are a few suggestions to help ease separation:

- Allow adequate time in the morning for arrival adjustment before needing to leave for work.
- While traveling, talk to your child about going to "school," who will be there, etc. This prepares your child for what will occur. When you are rushed, children feel hurried and anxious.
- When you arrive, help your child get "settled in" by becoming involved in play.
- Once your child is playing comfortably, tell your child it's time for you to go. (You might also try a two-minute warning ahead of time.) Please, do not leave without letting your child know. Children are establishing their sense of trust and need to see you go and see you return at the end of the day.
- Give hugs and kisses and reassure your child you will be back. It is helpful to give them an idea of your return by identifying a time of day you will be back (e.g. "I'll see you after snack").
- If there is still protest and difficulty, teachers are close by to help your child when you leave. Usually, children calm down and begin to play soon after you leave. Remember, even those children who are comfortable in play and in their environment need your attention, affection, and reassurance.

POTTY/TOILET TRAINING POLICY

When a child begins enrollment, he or she must be completely potty trained. The child should be in cloth underwear and not in diapers, pull-ups, or training pants. Children are expected to use the toilets and clean up properly without assistance from teachers or teacher assistants. Assistance with hand washing reminders and clothing fastening will be given if necessary.

In the event the child is found not to be fully potty trained as indicated by three "accidents" (inability to reach the toilet on time, wetting or soiling undergarments), at the discretion of the teacher, the child will be asked to take a 2-week leave from the center to work towards readiness. If upon returning the child still is not trained as indicated by one or more accident(s) the child will be asked to take a month long leave. The month long leave will be repeated until the child returns fully potty trained. During the times of leave the parents will be billed as if the child were attending as enrollment will be reserved for their child. Parents have the option to decline the enrollment reservation, which would mean the child's name would go on the Leet Center enrollment waiting list if requested by the parent. The Leet Center will not automatically remove a child from enrollment, so parents must notify the center if they choose to drop enrollment.

Soiled garments will be place directly in a Ziploc bag with a note attached, to be sent home. The Leet Center at Northwest is not equipped or staffed to meet Missouri licensing standards and health requirements to diaper or assist in the toilet training process.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

PART V

To ensure the most optimal learning environment for children and provide a model program for future teachers, the Leet Center is licensed and inspected by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services - Bureau of Child Care and accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

We also receive annual inspections by the State Fire Marshall's Office, Health and Sanitation inspections by the Nodaway County Health Department, and inspections by Northwest Missouri State University Environmental Health and Safety director.

These inspections ensure that all fire, health, and safety regulations are met and that the Leet Center adheres to high quality standards regarding teacher requirements, adult/child ratios, curriculum, nutrition, and other administrative practices.

Regular maintenance of the facility and the equipment falls under the University maintenance department. Regular inspections are made of facilities and inspections records are kept in the office of the University Health and Safety supervisor. If Leet Center staff finds a concern or if during a routine inspection by the representative of Missouri licensing authority there is found to be a concern the followings steps are taken: 1)The Leet Center director shall notify the appropriate department on campus for repair. 2) The department will make a visit to the center as soon as possible to access the work needed to be completed. 3) Depending upon the work needed to be completed the department will make repairs immediately or when the parts required are secured. 4) If the latter is the case the equipment in question will be removed or blocked from child use until the needed repairs are made.

The University makes every effort to ensure the safety of students from environment hazards and pollution through the use of environmental friendly supplies and spraying for insects is not done when students are present and is done in a timely manner that no students will be in the area immediately after treatment. All chemicals and cleaning agents are kept in locked cabinets or closets. The building has been free of asbestos since the renovation of 1987.

Emergency Procedures

- Emergency phone numbers are clearly posted by all phones.
- The parent/guardian provides, in writing, the names and phone numbers of persons to contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.
- In case of an emergency, a faculty/staff member may go with the child to the emergency room and remain until a parent/guardian arrives.
- Teachers report in writing any injuries that may occur while the child attends the Leet Center.
- Teachers notify the parent/guardian of any injury requiring first aid treatment.
- Teachers report serious injuries to the Director immediately.
- Fire drills are practiced once each month and tornado drills every three months, to prepare children in the case of an emergency. Shelter-in-place (lockdown) drills are held at irregular intervals throughout the year.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each room, the hallway, and outside the Leet Center office.
- The signal for fire, tornado, and/or shelter-in place is part of the University alarm system.

General Safety Practices

- Background screenings are conducted, and all teachers, students, and volunteers are included in the Family Care and Safety Registry.
- Teachers, students, and volunteers are required to have a yearly TB test and a health form on file.
- All staff members are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse/neglect.
- Children are supervised at all times and appropriate child: staff ratios are maintained.
- Authorized pick-up information is on file and in the emergency directory.
- If we are not familiar with the authorized pick-up person we will ask to see identification and will match the person's ID with the emergency directory information provided by the parent(s).
- Each room is equipped with a first-aid kit.
- Teachers take roll and monitor the number of children in their care.
- Teachers move throughout the play yard to ensure adequate and appropriate supervision.
- The play yard monitored closely for safety and improvements.
- Safety mats are used under climbing equipment indoors.
- Staff is trained in CPR, First Aid, and Choke Saving/Rescue Breathing.
- Medicines are stored out of children's reach and administered only with written permission of parent/guardian.
- Individuals who serve food wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Cleaning supplies are stored out of children's reach.
- Teachers fill out documentation for accidents, incidents, and health-related situations. Parents receive copies of accident/incident forms.
- Teachers follow universal precautions for blood-related accidents and incidents.
- Choke tubes available to test if toys are too small.
- Latex "free" gloves are available in each room for emergencies.
- Toys are checked frequently and broken toys are discarded.
- Leet Center administration works with parking operations to improve parking lot safety - extra stop sign, caution sign, etc.
- Parking lot safety tips are shared with parents.
- Emergency numbers and first aid kits are included in fanny pack for walking and field trips.
- Parents are informed in advance of all field trips.
- Teacher-child ratio is adjusted for field trips to ensure that there is a higher ratio of adults to children.
- On field trips children must stay where teachers can see them at all times and vice versa.
- Health and safety information incorporated into the curriculum and taught to the children on a regular basis.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Leet Center Announcements Regarding Hours of Operation – Decisions made in the early morning hours will be relayed to KNIX, KXCV, KFEQ and KQ2TV.

Leet Center Policy Guidelines for Inclement Weather –

A. If the University is CLOSED, the Leet Center will be Closed
When the University is closed due to inclement weather; the Leet Center will be closed.

B. If the University Offices are Open, but Classes are canceled, the Leet Center will be Open with Limited Hours
When University classes are canceled, but the University administration offices are still open, the Leet Center will operate on a limited schedule. The Leet Center will open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 4:00 p.m. The later start time will allow for road crews to begin clearing roads and also provides additional time for driving to and from the Leet Center for the staff. If only a few teachers are able to make it to the Leet Center, classrooms will be combined in order to meet the needs of the children.

When the University administration offices are open, but classes are not in session (such as during winter break), and there is a possibility of dangerous driving conditions, the director will determine if the Leet Center will operate on a limited schedule.

C. If Maryville Public School is closed at the start of the day, the Preschool Programs will be closed, but the university run Bearcat Club will be available for those children enrolled in these programs, needing care and willing to incur the extra fees.

D. If the Leet Center is Open, with Threat of Inclement Weather
When the Leet Center opens as usual, but inclement weather becomes a serious threat, the Director will determine if an early closing time is necessary.

When University offices close early due to inclement weather the Leet Center will also close early. Parents will be notified through e-mail, telephone calls, and announces on the radio that the Leet Center will be closing early. The Bearcat Club supervisor will remain at the Leet Center until all children are picked up.

HEALTH POLICY

Each child must have a current health form with immunization history signed by a physician on file at the Leet Center. Classroom teachers will notify parents when certain communicable diseases are present and we ask that you notify the center when your child is out with a communicable disease.

ALLERGY POLICY- When children are diagnosed with an allergy or there is a known allergy at the time of enrollment the parent must notify the Leet Center with a written doctor's statement. This would include food or other allergies (such as bee stings). If there is doctor's plan for care of the child due to the allergy, this must be given to the center and must have the doctor's signature to meet licensing standards.

If, for any reason, your child cannot eat a certain food, please provide a written notice from your physician and discuss this issue with your child's teacher or the director. Food service may be able to accommodate different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, lactose intolerant). The Leet Center will provide food substitutes to the best of our ability. The Leet Center will always be able to provide alternative beverages (100% juice or water).

A list of the children with allergies to various foods will be posted in the kitchen for those that prepare snacks and lunch to use in providing alternate selections. Parents will be asked to complete a release form allowing the center to post identified allergies. This form will be available from the Leet Center office (137 Brown Hall).

CPR/FIRST AID TRAINING FOR STAFF

The school nurse is CPR and First Aid trained. Each year, training in CPR and first aid are made available to staff and student employees at no cost to the individual. Classroom teachers and Graduate Assistants are required to have the training.

CLASSROOM FIRST AID KITS

Each classroom will have a backpack of First Aid supplies. This pack is to be taken with the class whenever leaving the room for outdoor play or taking a "field trip" to a destination on campus. The kit will contain the following items: CPR Mask, gloves, antiseptic wipes, and alcohol wipes, antibiotic ointment, band aids, gauze pads, Kleenex, paper towels, and germ-x. The classroom teacher should keep the school nurse informed when supplies need to be replaced.

Children with the following may NOT be brought to the Leet Center:

- Chicken Pox
- Conjunctivitis
- Whopping Cough
- Lice
- Measles
- Scabies
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Scarlet Fever
- Flu

Unusual behaviors will be monitored closely and parent(s) will be contacted if other symptoms develop. These behaviors include, but shall not be limited to:

- Cranky or less active behavior than usual
- Crying more than usual
- Feeling general discomfort or seeming unwell
- Loss of appetite

The Leet Center has limited isolation space, children developing any symptoms that require dismissal shall be picked up by the parent/guardian as soon as possible. Children will be kept in the Nurse's Office on first floor of Brown Hall until the parent/guardian comes. The child will be supervised at all times while in the Nurses' Office either by the nurse during her regular hours or by office staff if the nurse is not on duty.

If the child is well enough to come to school, he/she is well enough to participate in the regular program, including indoor and outdoor activities.

Children may remain at the Leet Center if they have ONE (<u>but not more than one</u>) of the following symptoms:

- A child with a temperature of up to one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100° F) by mouth or ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit (99°F) under the arm.
- After an illness has been evaluated by a physician, medication has been prescribed, and any period of contagion has passed as determined by a licensed physician.
- When it has been determined that a child has a common cold unless the director and the parent(s) agree that isolation precautions should be taken.
- When a child has experienced vomiting only one (1) time with no further problems or symptoms.
- When a child has experienced loose stools only one (1) time with no further problems or symptoms.

Please know that the decision for the child to remain is based upon the teacher's discretion. For example, if the child vomited only one time but seems cranky, tired, or unwell; the teacher may recommend the child be picked up. In these situations, the child can return the following day if the reasons for concern are no longer present.

Children with (1) ONE OR MORE of the following symptoms may NOT be brought to the Leet Center or will be sent home if these symptoms occur –

- Diarrhea: More than one (1) abnormally loose stool
- Headache or stiff neck
- Severe coughing
- Unusually dark, tea colored urine
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Gray or white stool
- Severe itching of the body or scalp, or scratching of the scalp. These may be symptoms of lice or scabies.
- Fever over one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100°F) by mouth or ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit (99° F) under the arm.
- Pinkeye-tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, followed by swelling or discharge of pus
- An infected skin patch(es)-crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of the skin
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Vomiting
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Yellowish skin or eyes

Also, the child may not be brought to the Leet Center if he or she is taking an antibiotic prescribed within the last 24 hours – children must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

Children Sent Home for Illness

Children sent home from the Leet Center due to illness shall not return to school the following day. A child who is feeling ill needs to be in a quiet place where he/she can rest and have lots of attention and tender loving care.

If children develops a fever while at school they will be isolated and cared for in the Nurse's office on first floor until the parent or emergency contact person can pick them up.

Children may return to school 24 hours after the disappearance of all symptoms, including the disappearance of fever, fever-reducing medicine free. Children returning with any of the previous symptoms or illness will be excluded from the Leet Center immediately. The decision is at the discretion of the staff. Your child's physician may be called if staff members have questions concerning your child's condition.

Children Returning After Illness

When your child is ready to return and medication is required, a "Medication Authorization" form must be signed by the parent and placed on file so that the school nurse or if the nurse had gone for the day the classroom teacher can administer the medication.

Medication Authorization

All medication will be given to the child only with the dated, written permission of the parent(s) stating the length of time the medication may be given.

Prescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, instruction for administration, including the times and amounts for dosages, and the physician's name. This may include sample medication provided by the physician.

All nonprescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled by the parent(s) with the child's name, and instructions for administration, including the times and amounts for dosages.

Medication Authorization forms are available for short-term (two weeks or less) and long-term (daily medications). If the Leet Center will be administering medication daily or over a long period of time, a physician's signature is recommended. Parents must also update the form monthly by initialing and dating the form. Parents are asked to take home medications once they are no longer administered at the Leet Center.

Accident and Illness Policies and Procedures

If a child is injured after arriving at school, the parent will be called. The Parent Information Sheet requires home, office, and emergency phone numbers. It is the parent's responsibility to update the family's emergency contact numbers. If we cannot reach a parent, the emergency contact will be phoned.

If the child is injured during the day, the parent will be contacted to pick up the child. If we cannot contact a parent, we will call the emergency contact. The emergency contact must be someone who can be available in case of mild illness, to provide temporary care for a sick child, and has transportation to the Leet Center. If the child would require treatment in the Emergency Room, the parent will be contacted and arrangements will be made for transporting the child to the Emergency Room.

If a child needs immediate medical attention, the teacher will call 911. Then the parent or the child's physician will be called. If we cannot reach the parent, the emergency contact will be phoned. The teacher who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing records and all parent permission forms.

Parents will be notified of all known minor injuries.

CHILD ABUSE POLICIES

Mandated Reporting

As professionals in contact with young children and their families, we at the Leet Center are required by law to help the DFS become aware of children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors; as well as day care/child care workers, are mandated reporters. Thus, it is policy of the Leet Center preschool program to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to DFS immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone. Our school will offer full cooperation of its staff during the investigation of the reported incident.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

One goal of the Leet Center is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. A philosophy based on providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behaviors guides the staff in their interactions with children. We use the Conscious Discipline Philosophy of Dr. Becky Baily and welcome you to seek out information on the philosophy online or in the parent resource library.

Young children, due to their developmental age, are not capable of understanding the consequences of many of their behaviors. Therefore, children need to be encouraged to make good choices and to be prevented from harming

themselves or others. This can best be accomplished through close supervision, gentle guidance, and most importantly, redirection.

Children need to learn to identify and express their feelings. However, often this requires the caregiver to acknowledge the child's response to the situation, and help him/her use appropriate strategies. For example, if we see a child about to hit another child for taking a toy away, we will prevent that child from hitting the other and say, "It looks like you want to keep the truck", and provide an alternative to hitting. We will also help the child understand the other child's point of view. "I see that Tommy is playing with the truck you had. It looks like he wants it too. Can you tell him that you are playing with it?" Through this method, children can begin to learn about the intentions of others and way, we hope to prevent one child from hurting another and at the same time help that child to learn to identify feelings and verbalize expectations.

Small children are very egocentric. As a result, they are not yet capable of understanding the concept of sharing and taking turns. Therefore, it is our responsibility to lend guidance through redirection to other activities when conflict situations occur.

As every parent knows, caring for young children requires a lot of patience. Children require ongoing guidance and support as they learn about themselves and others. Dealing with challenging behaviors is a process of teaching rather than punishment and control. Children are reminded what TO DO, rather than what NOT TO DO. For example, instead of, "DON'T run", children are told, "Please walk to the door". Through this strategy: (1) children know what you expect, (2) a more positive classroom climate is promoted, and (3) children and adults form supportive relationships.

An additional strategy used with older preschoolers and school-age children is to help them learn how to solve their own problems and resolve conflicts. Teachers provide support and guidance as children develop and practice these skills. The staff at the Leet Center recognizes that similarities in principles at home and at school make children more successful in their experiences.

Use of Corporal Punishment and Harsh Language

The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in the center. The discipline philosophy of the center is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. A philosophy based on providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behaviors guides the staff in their interactions with children. Children are re-directed and given choices to encourage appropriate behaviors. The use of threats and derogatory language by staff is not accepted behavior in handling children that misbehave.

Discipline Strategies Used by Leet Center Staff and Students

- Maintaining realistic expectations of children based on knowledge of child development.
- Providing clear and simple limits.
- Planning an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere.
- Providing appropriate activities that keep children engaged to prevent challenging
- Modeling appropriate and respectful behaviors.
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes.
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives.
- Encouraging children to work together to solve problems.
- Encouraging children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation.
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions.

- Guiding children away from the situation until they are able to calm down and address the problem.
- Conflict resolution (for older preschoolers and school-age children).

When there is an ongoing behavior concern, teachers will contact the child's parents. Communication may be in the form of informal or formal parent-teacher conferences or written behavioral reports. If a conference is scheduled, the parent and teacher will discuss strategies to promote appropriate behavior, and develop a plan for change. If the behavior concern continues after implementation of the plan, a child may be asked to leave the program for a short period of time (1-5 days). If the problem is not resolved, the child may be removed from the program. It is our intent to work together with families to promote a positive experience for their child. However, we do realize that there may be circumstances that keep a child from being capable of fully participating in a group program, and recognize that the program may not be equipped to deal with all circumstances underlying certain behavioral issues.

MEALS AND SNACKS

The Leet Center follows the guidelines of the USDA food program and children are served an approved mid-morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Menus are available online and are posted in each room. The cost for snacks is included in the tuition rates; the cost for lunch is Childcare/pre-k $2.50, K - school age $2.18, Adult $4.18, Extra milk $.50, Thanksgiving $4.49. If you choose, children may bring a sack lunch from home. Milk is provided for the children at lunch. We ask that sack lunches be well-balanced meals that meet the USDA recommendations for young children.

Lunch menus are planned by the University Dietician and meet the USDA food program standards. Meals are served family style to encourage self-help skills and communication skills. Your child will be encouraged to sample all foods served, but will never be forced to eat. Morning and afternoon snacks are planned in cooperation with the Nutrition and Dietetics Department at Northwest Missouri State University. The snacks are minimum prep items. Every effort is made to provide a variety of snacks that meet the standards and encourage children to try new and different food items.

Parents that have children with food allergies must notify the Leet Center with a written doctor's statement at the time of diagnosis or at enrollment. If, for any reason, your child cannot eat a certain food, please provide a written notice from your physician and discuss this issue with your child's teacher. Food service may be able to accommodate most different dietary needs (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant). If this is not possible, foods may need to be sent with the child on a daily basis. Please talk to the teacher or director if you have any questions. Lunch menus are posted on a monthly basis and snacks menus are posted weekly.

If your child is not here by 8:30 a.m., but will be here for lunch - please call your child's teacher so that a correct lunch count can be obtained. Also, if you are planning on joining your child for lunch, please let us know by 8:30 a.m. so that food service can prepare the correct amount of food. Adult lunches are $4.18.

The Student Union is closed during winter and Spring breaks, all children may be required to bring a sack lunch on those days. The Leet Center will provide milk and water for lunch.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an important part of the early childhood curriculum, and we consider the outdoors an extension of the indoor classroom. Toys, materials, and activities are also available outdoors to enhance the children's play experience. Typically, children go outside twice each day. If your child is not well enough to play outdoors, he or she is not well enough to attend the Center.

It is important for parents to provide the appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). During the cold weather months, the Center has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for everyone.

In warmer weather, the shade trees often shelter our playground from the hot sun. Parents are encouraged to provide sunscreen (medication form must be signed for staff to apply sunscreen). Children are also encouraged to get plenty of drinks to replenish body fluids. Typically, the length of time spent outside is reduced and often the children wait to go outside until late in the day or early morning when the sun is less intense.

Outdoor Temperature Policy: The Leet Center uses the following general guidelines when determining if the children and staff will go outside:

> **Winter –** If temperatures fall below 35°F wind chill, staff will keep children indoors. As temperatures approach 35°F wind chill, staff will call time and temperature to monitor the latest weather conditions. Staff will also check our playground wind factor and for snow accumulation and water puddles.
>
> Typically, staff members wait until later in the day to take the children outside when temperatures are warmer. Children spend a shorter amount of time outside in cold temperatures and are monitored closely. Please make sure your children are dressed appropriately for outdoor play – boots, mittens, hats, warm coats, etc.
>
> **Summer –** As temperatures/heat index approach 100°F, staff will call "time and temperature" to monitor the latest temperature and weather conditions. Children often participate in water play activities outside in shady areas of the playground.

CLOTHING

In order to foster independence and self-help skills, we ask that you send your child to the Leet Center in clothes that he/she can manage independently. Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing, and other vigorous activity, and that is appropriate for the weather. Because the children work with paint, clay and other messy materials, they should wear clothes that can be laundered easily.

- Tennis shoes or shoes with rubber soles are required. For your child's safety we recommend that you do not send your child in flip flop shoes.
- A complete change of clothes is essential for preschool messes, please have at least one complete set of clothing for your child. The extra set of clothing will be stored in a Ziploc baggie at school. Please be sure to mark your child's name on the outside of the baggie as well as the extra clothing.

TOYS FROM HOME

Bringing toys from home is discouraged. A snuggle toy is permitted for rest time, but we would prefer-unless otherwise specified for Friend of the Week or some other special occasion that all other toys be left at home. Leet center teachers cannot be responsible for toys and other items brought from home. If children bring toys from home, the teacher may ask the parent to take it back to the car with them or for it to be kept in their cubby for the day. Sharing of the item will be expected in the classroom so if this will be difficult for your child we ask that you help us avoid this by leaving toys from home at home.

We welcome books, CD's, and other special items that can be shared during group time or further learning experiences. Please be sure to mark all of these types of items with your family name.

Check with your child's teacher about her policy of bringing things to the classroom.

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted on the grounds of Northwest Missouri State University.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents must give permission for children to attend field trips. Each classroom plans its own field trips and parents are informed of each trip. Preschool and pre-kindergarten age children do not leave campus. Their field trips consist of walking excursions on campus. School age children in Bearcat Club may go on walking field trips across campus or in the community and on field trips using chartered school buses. If a chartered bus is used parents must sign a consent form before their child may attend.

If you do not wish for your child to attend an outing, please make alternative child care arrangements. We do not have the staff to care for a child that is not able to attend an outing. Parents are always welcome to join the class on field trips.

A cell phone is available for all field trips as needed.

PART VI

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING OUR PRESCHOOL FAMILIES

Families and culture are celebrated in the Leet Center. The role of parents is vital. Family involvement and connectedness is an integral piece of what makes our program strong. Families are frequently visible in and around the center, sharing life and what they love with the children. Their role in informing and working together with their child's teacher is the glue that keeps our center in place. It is important to us that we develop skills and knowledge to work effectively with our diverse families. Our staff will use a variety of formal and informal strategies (including conversation) to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure, their preferred child-rearing practices linguistic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds. Program staff will actively use information about families to adapt the environment, curriculum and teaching methods to the families we serve.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

You are invited to observe anytime. Observing allows you to note age and individual related behavior patterns and to watch your child as he/she interacts in a social environment.

If you have questions about what you observe (i.e., children's behavior, use of materials, teacher's behavior, etc.), please ask the teacher about it. When observing, people often see only a snapshot in time and may not clearly understand the context surrounding a certain action in the classroom.

Your participation is eagerly welcomed in the programs. Your involvement can take many forms, and we hope that all parents will find meaningful ways to participate in their child's Laboratory experience. Some ways in which you may choose to participate include, but are not limited to:

- Field trip supervision
- Assistant teaching (occasionally or on a routine basis)
- Leading or assisting in special projects (carpentry, sewing, music, cooking, science experiments, cultural experiences, etc.)
- Construction or collection of materials for Leet Center use such as paint aprons, raw materials for art projects, dress-up clothes, dramatic play props, carpentry materials, etc.
- Attending or planning parent workshops
- Eating morning snack, lunch, or afternoon snack with your child – The Leet Center must know 24 hours in advance if you will be eating lunch with your child, so an appropriate number of lunches can be ordered.

FAMILY ARRANGEMENTS

The Leet Center recognizes that all families are not structured similarly and that some families may live apart due to a variety of circumstances.

The Leet Center teachers and staff are sensitive to the needs of children in these situations and will work to support the entire family. We are happy to provide duplicate information in the child's mailbox to accommodate both parents' need for information.

If information is needed by the Leet Center staff regarding custody, child pick-ups, etc., please provide us with the formal paperwork. Unless we have the appropriate paperwork, we cannot keep a child's biological mother and/or father from picking up his or her child.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Weekly copies of the classroom routine and activities will be posted on the parent bulletin boards outside the preschool rooms. It is helpful for you to review activities planned for the day with your child. This is a great way to talk with your child about his/her day. You may find if you ask your child, "What did you do today?", you might hear, "Nothing". If you know about specific activities that occurred, you can ask more direct questions: "Can you tell me about the picture you painted today?" Because the curriculum is planned in advance, some changes based on spontaneous learning opportunities, children's interests and needs can be expected.

We encourage you to provide the Leet Center with an e-mail address. This can facilitate timely communication and notification of special classroom and Leet Center events. The teachers may also use email to send newsletters and weekly project work descriptions to you.

The Leet Center will also host a page on Facebook where happenings and pictures will be posted only to the members of the page.

PARENT AND TEACHER CONFERENCES

Individual parent-teacher conferences will be offered at least twice during each school year. Parent Conferences for the school year will be held in October and March. During the conference, you will review and receive a copy of the Developmental Summary on your child.

Ongoing, informal communication of parent or teacher concerns and the sharing of special joys, sorrows, and accomplishments in the child's life are important. Please feel free to speak with your child's teacher during arrival/departure, or schedule a time to talk privately.

PARENT RESOURCES

The Leet center provides families with books on a wide variety of topics for families to use. These resources are available in the Preschool Parent Lending Library. Please ask the director about any questions that your family may have about the resource library.

If families would like to review any of the licensing regulations regarding childcare, both classrooms have a manual available. Please contact your child's teacher if you are interested in reviewing the child care licensing manual. Parents may also have access to their child's classroom files, family registry forms, accreditation materials, etc. For access to these materials, please contact the director.

PARENT BOARD

The Leet Center Advisory Committee was established to address concerns of the center. The committee is made up of center parents, community leaders, university personnel from the Early Childhood department, officials from the local school district, and staff members from the Leet Center and the center's NAEYC representative. The committee meets twice a year.

The purpose of the committee is not to make policy but to give opinions and advice. The committee looks at needs of the center, examines possible ways of auxiliary funding for the center, and other issues that pertain to the center.

Horace Mann Parent Advisory Council (PAC) expresses their individual and collective opinions on issues affecting *Horace Mann Laboratory School* policy and student life. All parents and teachers are members of PAC. The PAC board is made up of parents elected to the offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Publicity Chair, and Volunteer Chair. The goal is to promote and maintain positive attitudes among the community, parents, students, faculty, staff and administrators while allowing for input and advice on school policy and procedures. Two general PAC meetings will be held each year: fall and spring.

PROGRAM/CENTER EVALUATION

Leet Center conducts evaluations through parent input (informal visits/conferences and a formal parent survey), licensing requirements and NAEYC accreditation standards.

PART VII

UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Leet Center is a part of Professional Education Department within the College of Education and Human Services. Each year approximately 50 students receive direct practicum experience practice teaching at the Center. Most students are Elementary Education majors with a minor in Early Childhood Education. Students participate in activities and routines as they learn how to care for young children in a supervised setting. Some students are also responsible for observing the development of a child in their Center placement (**target child**).

Target Children – Most preschool-aged children enrolled in the Center will be target children at least one semester each year. Each college student selects one child to follow over the course of the semester. The student focuses on that child for observations and homework assignments. The student then writes a developmental summary.

Developmental Summaries are written records of development based on observations and assessment for each Target Child/Families prepared by the student teachers over the course of the semester. A copy of the developmental summary is kept in the children's files and the parent(s) receive a copy at the end-of-the-semester conference. Children also have a Portfolio of their development at the end of the semester. The Portfolios typically include: written documentation of the child's development, art work samples, and samples of writing, photographs or other types of media documentation (e.g., audio, video).

Target Families – Students are encouraged to get acquainted with the family of the child they are observing. They may ask you questions or write notes to you about your child.

PSY 410 students completing a minor in EC and a major in Psychology also observe family interaction and will be required to involve themselves more with the target family. The student may ask to conduct a home visit, participate in a family outing, or interview you regarding your family time.

Early Childhood Practicum Students – Students participate in the daily routine of the classroom during their practicum hours. Students will be responsible for observing, interacting, and supporting children throughout the day. In addition, students are required to and plan and implement developmentally appropriate activities. Toward the end of the semester blocks, students become responsible for a majority of the classroom routine. This provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate and implement all they have learned during the course of the semester. During this time, Leet Center faculty observes at the side of the room and takes notes in order to provide students constructive feedback.

Teacher-Student-Parent Conferences – At the end of the semester, parents of children who have been Target Children may receive an end-of-the-semester conference with the child's teacher and the student teacher. During the conference the student teacher informs the parent(s) about the child's development as observed over the course of the semester and uses the time to set goals and answer questions. During the conference, parent(s) receive a copy of the Developmental Summary on their child.

Student Observations/Participation – Occasionally, we have students from other classes observe and participate with the children. You will be informed of any research projects or other events needing your attention or awareness. All students are required to wear photo identification.

PART VIII

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOW TO HANDLE A PROBLEM OR COMPLAINT

If a parent has a problem or complaint, it is the policy of the preschool that is be directed to the attention of the head teacher or Director. If the response is unsatisfactory, parents may speak to the Coordinator of Early Childhood Programs and if needed, to the dean of human services. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions about preschool policies and program.

Cindy Rouner
Leet Center Director
660-562-1542
cindysc@nwmissouri.edu

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers in the classroom are welcomed. You, a grandparent, an uncle or aunt, or other significant family friends are welcome to come to the classroom and share special skills, interests and experiences with the children. Possibilities include but are not limited to:

- Read a book
- Tell a story
- Assist with a special art lesson in drawing, painting, sculpture (no arts/crafts project)
- Do some science or math experiments
- Show photos from a past trip
- Tell about your job, hobbies, etc.
- Cooking activities, holiday foods, ethnic recipes, healthy snacks
- Play an instrument, teach new songs
- Teach a dance or exercise program, yoga
- Share information about your culture/country, teach a language
- Talk about your favorite artists, musicians, bring examples of their work
- Gardening and planting

Classroom volunteer hours will be coordinated with the lead teacher of the classroom. If you are interested in volunteering on a regular basis, please indicate that interest.

Visitors will be asked to check in at the main desk of the Horace Mann Lab School in Brown Hall.

BIRTHDAYS

If you would like your child's birthday to be celebrated, you are welcome to bring a snack to share. We recommend that you select a nutritious snack to share. Check with your child's teacher for suggestions on fun and nutritious snack ideas. Due to child care licensing regulations, all snacks must be pre-packaged. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher at least two days prior to the birthday.

CLOSING STATEMENT

A strong home and school environment is essential when building a good environment for young children. All of our staff will try to do our very best to keep you informed and involved in our preschool program. Clearly, ongoing communication and support from both families and staff make the connection between home and school a two-way street. Please share with us information about your child and report any changes especially during a major crisis. Anything you share with us will held in confidence. We hope to nurture mutual trust and respect at every opportunity. There will be many ways for parents to become involved in the Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

Leet Center

Discovering and Caring Together

The Phyllis and Richard Leet Center for Children and Families

Northwest Missouri State University