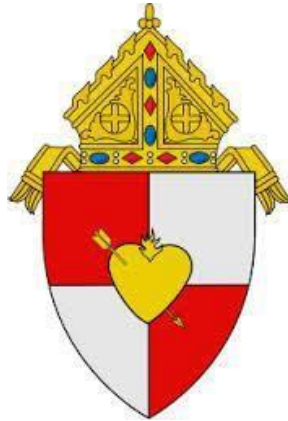


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Family Handbook 2020-2021



Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center
is operated as a ministry of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

MOST REV. FILIPE J. ESTÉVEZ
Tenth Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine

REV. FATHER JASON TRULL
Pastor of Assumption Catholic Church

DEACON SCOTT J. CONWAY
Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of St. Augustine

THERESA LITTLE
Executive Director of the Diocese of St. Augustine

DIANE M DODDS
Director, Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

WELCOME

Welcome to Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center! We are honored that you have chosen Assumption ECLC to be a partner in your child's education and care during these most precious preschool years. These early years contain tremendous opportunities in curiosity and the capacity to learn. Our faculty strives to provide a warm, loving and nurturing environment, in which your child will have the opportunity to develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically.

I look forward to getting to know each one of you and working with you to help provide the best start possible for your child(ren).

May God bless your family, our teachers and staff during this upcoming year!

In the service of the child,

Diane M. Dodds
Director – Assumption ECLC

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Section 1 – About Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

1.1 OUR MISSION

“The Assumption Catholic Community, united in the Eucharist, provides a challenging academic education where living a Christ-centered life comes first”.

1.2 OUR PHILOSOPHY

Founded in Christ, the Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center creates a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment for children beginning at infancy. The teachers and staff care for and value each child as a gift from God, and entirely promote their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. In partnership with families, children leave Assumption with the skills that provide them with a seamless transition into kindergarten. Each child develops a sense of confidence, autonomy, self-discipline, respect, and love of God and neighbor.

1.3 OPEN DOOR POLICY

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center maintains an open door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents will have immediate access without prior notice to the center.

In situations where there are custody or domestic issues the following will apply:

- ◆ The center must be provided with the most recent certified copy of court order and any amendments to the order, i.e. custody order, restraining order, or a protection order from abuse.
- ◆ The center will follow the orders of the court. Deviations from the court order will only be made if there are written instructions from the custodial parent/s (joint custody will require both parent signatures).
- ◆ If there is not a copy of a court order or a copy has not been provided to the center then both parents will have equal access to their child. By law the center may not deny access to a child by parent without a court order.
- ◆ If there is a verbal or physical conflict the Center will contact the police.

Section 2 – FEES

1. Tuition

Fees are based on reserved time and not on actual time that a child spends at the center. There will be no reduction in the basic rate should a child not be in attendance at the center for the contracted time. Parents will also be billed for all days including holiday, sick, emergency closings, teacher training, and vacation days. Current tuition rates are posted on the website, as well as at the front desk. You are allowed one program change per year. Charges may be assessed for additional changes.

2. Late Payment Policy

Monthly tuition is due according to your FACTs agreement. If your tuition is not paid in full, a late fee of \$25 will be added to your tuition. Every week that the tuition remains unpaid a \$10.00 fee will continue to be applied to your account.

3. Annual Fee

Annual Fee is non-refundable, \$200 (50%) due at the time of registration, remaining balance may be enrolled into FACTS.

4. After Care Fees

After care (3:15-6:00pm) is available for preschool in the morning and extended day programs. Fees apply: \$20/day.

5. Checks and Returned Check Fees

Checks are gladly accepted as long as they are drawn on a local bank and the date on the check is the same date the check is written. Postdated checks will not be accepted. Please make all checks payable to Assumption ECLC. In the event your check is refused for payment or returned there will be a Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) fee assessed in the amount of \$40. Once a check is returned for NSF, checks will no longer be accepted as a form of payment at the center. In addition, child care will be suspended until all fees are paid in full.

6. Late Pick Up Fees

A late fee of \$2.00 per minute will be assessed for children who are not picked up by closing time at 6:00 P.M. Services may be terminated if this continues to be a problem. If a child is not picked up by 6:30 PM and every attempt to reach an authorized adult has failed, Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center will be forced to contact the sheriff's office to report child abandonment.

7. Holidays

The following are holidays recognized by the Center. The Center will be closed for the following days: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. No childcare will be provided for these holidays.

9. Attendance

Because you are paying for your child's spot in our program, full tuition is charged each month whether your child is present or not. The VPK attendance policy can be found in section 5.9 of this handbook.

SECTION 3 ATTENDANCE AT

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

1. Arrival at Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

Please leave your cell phones in your vehicles and give your child your full attention during the transition from home to school.

To help decrease the spread of viruses, please assist your child in washing his/her hands upon arrival. Please do not sneak away, but help your child become engaged in the ongoing activities in the classroom. This may require planning a few extra minutes each morning, but will greatly benefit your child's transition into the classroom.

2. Special Requests

Parents must follow the policy for Administering Medication if the child is to receive medication during the day. This should be taken care of during arrival time. Parents are requested to notify the teacher or Director if there are any special needs or instructions for the child's day. Special requests must be submitted in writing and may include, but are not limited to, health issues, family situations, alternative pick up person, early pick up time, or any other issues the center should be aware of to best meet the individual needs of the child.

3. Absences

Parents are requested to notify Assumption ECLC if their child will not be in attendance that day. This notification will assist us to more effectively maintain appropriate child-staff ratios. Parents are requested to notify the center if their child is ill. This notification will assist the center to track any illnesses that may occur at the center. Information regarding illnesses will be shared on a need to know basis.

DCF 7.5c states: "If a child does not arrive to the program or the agreed upon designated pick-up location, child care personnel must communicate as early as possible (within one hour of the child's scheduled arrival) with the custodial parent/legal guardian; if there was no prior communication from the custodial parent/legal guardian of the child's absence. If child care personnel are unable to reach the child's parent/guardian, emergency contacts must be notified."

Please communicate all absences to the front desk by 8:30am.

4. Illnesses

Parents are requested to notify the Director if their child has a communicable disease so that parents of children in the classroom/center may be notified. Only information about the communicable disease will be shared. The center will follow the center's Confidentiality Policy and procedures. The center conducts a health check on each child upon arrival to the classroom. A child may not be accepted into the center if

staff deems the child is too ill to attend or is contagious.

5. Termination/Withdrawal from Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center

The center reserves the right to terminate child care services at any time, with or without cause. Child Care services may be terminated for willful destruction of property, if the child poses a threat to the safety and welfare of other children in care, physical or verbal abuse by the parent upon the Center Staff, insufficient funds that are not repaid promptly, refusal to follow center policies.

Thirty day written notice is required from parents that are withdrawing their child from the center. Parents are responsible for any fees if proper notification is not provided. Any past due balances are due on last day of enrollment. Balances remaining after 30 days will be referred to the center's collection agency.

In the event that a child is absent for two consecutive weeks, without proper notification to the office, the child will be considered withdrawn from the program and the reserved classroom space will be filled. All tuition and any related charges are due and payable during this two-week period. To re-enroll, normal registration/supply fees will apply. The child will then be considered for enrollment upon space availability.

6. Program Change

The Assumption Early Childhood Program will allow for one program change each fiscal year (July-June). Beyond that, any additional program change will be assessed a \$50 program change fee.

7. Pick Up Policy

- ◆ All students will be picked up by an **authorized adult** through an outdoor dismissal at the front door of the lobby. Students will line up and dismiss promptly at their scheduled release time. Once the new ECLC parking lot is complete, pick up will be located under the covered area in front of the loading and unloading zone.
- ◆ Any morning student who is not picked up within 10 minutes will be checked into aftercare program. Parents will be contacted to arrange for pickup. Any child who remains at 12:20, will get ready for lunch and nap time.
- ◆ Any extended day student will be dismissed between 2:40pm – 3:00pm.

The **authorized adult is responsible for supervision of the child once the child has been signed out** of the center and must walk their child to the car. Parents are requested to handle any center business prior to checking the child out of the center.

When entering the center during napping hours (12:30-2:30), we ask that all adults and children be mindful and respectful of the children that are resting. All parents, siblings and family members are asked to remain in the lobby while the classroom is contacted to bring your child to the front office. If you are aware in advance that you will be picking up during napping hours, please contact your child's teacher and the front office prior to pick up.

Wednesday is early release day for Assumption Catholic School. If you are picking up early on Wednesdays, we ask that you communicate this with your child's teacher by completing the Wednesday Early Release Form. This will allow our teachers to have your child ready to dismiss at 1:30pm.

- ◆ Wednesday early release will begin at 1:30 for PK3 and PK4 students.
Authorized adults will check out the student in front of the PK4 classrooms between Kohl's Hall and the ECLC. Once the new ECLC parking lot is complete, pick up will be located under the covered area in front of the loading and unloading zone. We ask that you pick up the ECLC children first prior to older siblings, until the parking lot is complete.
- ◆ Any student who is not picked up by 1:45 will be escorted to the front office. Parents will be contacted. If the student is not picked up prior to 1:55, the student will return to their classroom.

8. **Authorized Pick Up/Emergency Pick Up**

Only authorized persons listed on the Authorized Persons for Pick Up Form are permitted to have access to your child and to remove your child from the center. The following procedures apply:

- ◆ It is the responsibility of the registering parent to notify the center in writing of all persons authorized to pick up your child from the center.
- ◆ Parents are required to complete the Authorized Persons for Pick up and emergency form at time of enrollment. Only persons listed on this form will be permitted to remove the child from the center.
- ◆ Persons on the authorized list, but are unfamiliar to the staff, will be required to show proof of identification with a picture I.D.
- ◆ Changes/updates to the Pick-Up list must be made on the original DCF form located in the office.
- ◆ **Authorized adults** must be at least 18 years of age in order to sign a child in or out of the center.

- ◆ In an emergency, the center will contact the parents first. If the center is unable to reach the parents, we will call the persons on the listed form until someone is reached.
- ◆ It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that an authorized person is available to pick up the child on time.

If a parent or authorized adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs we will attempt to contact the other parent or authorized adult on the pick up list. Assumption ECLC does not have the right to deny the parent access to their child but the staff will contact the police immediately if the center is not able to contact the other parent or authorized adult to pick up the child.

9. Attendance Policy for Voluntary Pre-K (VPK)

Parents/Guardians of children enrolled in VPK must comply with the attendance and tardiness policy. VPK hours are 8:00am - 11:00am. Monday to Friday for 180 days. Attendance during the scheduled instructional days is of utmost importance to remain in the VPK program. Not only is funding linked to attendance, but also the child's success upon entrance into Kindergarten.

We understand that it is occasionally unavoidable to be "running late", however more than three times a month will not be acceptable and could be a cause for termination from the VPK program.

VPK Attendance:

1. Your child must arrive in the VPK classroom no later than 8:00am daily and not leave early unless it is due to illness.
2. You must call the school or send an email to the teacher if your child is going to be late or absent.
3. If your child is absent, a written note, from the parent, will be required. The note must include the days in which the child was absent.
4. **A child may NOT miss more than 20 school days per school year for any reason or 20% of days per calendar month.**
5. Parents must complete and sign an attendance verification form EACH month. These forms will be distributed on the last instructional day of the month and must be signed and returned the same day.
6. Vacations need to be scheduled in accordance with the school calendar.

VPK Tardiness:

Arrival for the VPK program is between 7:30am – 8:00am. The instructional day starts at 8:00am and children are expected to be settled in the classroom ready to start the day. We understand that it is occasionally unavoidable to be "running

late”, however, more than three (3) times per month will not be acceptable and could be a cause for termination from the VPK program

Absences and tardiness may be excused under “extraordinary circumstances” if appropriate documentation is provided. These include:

- a) Hospitalization of the child, his parents or guardian (must provide a doctor’s note).
- a) Illness of the student or the illness of the parent or guardian that requires the ill person to remain at home (must provide a doctor’s note).
- b) Death of a member of the student’s, parents’ or guardians’ immediate family (obituary or death certificate required).
- c) Court ordered visitation (court documents must be provided).
- d) Parent or guardian’s military deployment (military documentation must be provided).

Pick Up:

The VPK portion of the day ends at 11:00am. A late fee of \$5 will be assessed if your child is not picked up by 11:10am. An additional fee of \$15 will be assessed for every additional 15 minutes the child is in attendance. Late pick up in excess of three (3) times will be cause for dismissal from the VPK program.

SECTION 4 – PARENT INVOLVEMENT

1. Parent/Guardian Volunteering

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center has an open door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents are not only welcomed, but also highly encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom.

All visitors are required to sign in at the front desk before proceeding to the classroom. The Discipline Policy (see 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17), Standards of Conduct (see 5.18), and Visitor Policies (see 5.20) will apply to all volunteers at all times. Siblings of children in the program may not attend when a parent is volunteering in the classroom.

Parents may be asked to help with certain tasks such as cutting out items for the classrooms, sharing information about their job, hobby, culture, chaperoning on field trips, donating items, and reading to a group of children.

Any adult who will be interacting with the students and/or supervising a group of children must have fingerprints with DCF and the Diocese and have completed the Protecting God's Children course.

2. Take Home Activities

Although Assumption ECLC does not assign "homework" for preschoolers, we do send home suggested activities to enhance the learning taking place in the classroom. We encourage all families to spend a minimum of 10 minutes each night reading to their child.

All PK4 students are required to participate in "Book Sharing." Your child's PK4 teacher will provide you with more information about book sharing during the first month of school.

3. Parent/Guardian Teacher Conferences

All parents/family are invited to attend scheduled formal parent/guardian/teacher conferences to review child's progress and needs and set goals for the child. Conferences will be scheduled two times throughout the year for preschool children (PK2, PK3 and PK4). Other conferences may be scheduled as needed or as requested by parent or teacher.

4. Parent Surveys

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center is interested in your feedback. Anonymous parent surveys will be distributed at least once per year. Your responses will ensure we are meeting the needs of our families.

5. Parent – Teacher Communication

Assumption ECLC encourages parent and teacher communication. Your child's teacher

will send home a monthly calendar and newsletter to share with you what your child is learning in school along with any events or activities happening in your child's classroom.

If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will provide you with their email address. Your child's teacher has 24 hours to respond to your emails during the week days. Your child's teacher is not required to respond to emails during the weekend.

If you need to get in contact with your child's teacher during the day, please contact the front office at (904) 518-4880. Teachers are not allowed to use their cell phones during the day. Please do not call or text message your child's teacher, they are responsible for teaching, playing, and supervising the children.

6. Parent/Guardian Rights and Responsibilities

We believe that parents' concerns are reasonable and important, and they have the following rights:

A Healthy Learning Environment

- ◆ Parents have the right to know that their child will be safe at school, both physically and emotionally.
- ◆ Parents have the right to know that all children will be treated fairly regardless of race, creed, national origin, economic status, gender, or age and that each child will be treated as an individual.
- ◆ Parents have the right to know that the staff is experienced and trained in child development.
- ◆ Parents have the right to know that any negative or cruel behavior among students or between students and staff will not be tolerated.

Clear, Courteous Communication

- ◆ Parents have the right to be treated with courtesy by all members of the staff.
- ◆ Parents have the right to participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's school progress and welfare.
- ◆ Parents have the right to visit schools and classes.
- ◆ Parents have the right to know that they can approach a staff member with a concern and that the staff member will listen carefully and will do everything possible to address the issue.

Information on School Policies

- ◆ Parents have the right to information on academic requirements of the school program.

- ◆ Parents have the right to inspect their child's record and respond to any statement.
- ◆ Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal school policies.
- ◆ Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal administrative decisions.

Your Responsibilities are to

- ◆ Be involved in your child's education and learning.
- ◆ Let the teacher know you are concerned and interested in your child and his progress.
- ◆ Set goals with the teacher and share in decisions about your child's care.
- ◆ Share information about the child and home that may affect behavior.
- ◆ Discuss problems and concerns with the teacher first.
- ◆ Show appreciation for teachers.
- ◆ Continually upgrade your parenting skills and understanding of children.
- ◆ Volunteer to assist the teacher in some way.
- ◆ Follow program policies and reread contract and parent manual regularly.
- ◆ Keep your child home when sick.
- ◆ Read to your child and spend time talking and playing together.

SECTION 5 – HEALTH & SAFETY

1. Child Abuse and Neglect

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center has the responsibility for the prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse and neglect (sexual, physical, emotional). Under Florida Law, cases of possible child abuse and neglect are reported immediately to the Department of Children and Families. The abuse hotline is **1-800-96-ABUSE**.

2. Confidentiality of Records

The Center maintains the policy that all records of children and families are confidential. At no time will the center discuss any information regarding children in our care without the written permission from the child's parent/guardian.

3. Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather

If the threat of a natural disaster such as hurricane, tornado, flooding, etc., is imminent, we will follow the Duval Public School System for closure guidance. Once the storm passes and is out of the area, we will assess the center for damage and re-open as soon as possible.

The following steps must be confirmed before opening the center:

- ◆ The center must have power and any physical damage must be repaired.
- ◆ There must be available staff in the center to provide appropriate and required staff to child ratio.

Parents are responsible for child care tuition even in the event that the center is closed due to natural disaster.

4. Child Health Services

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center is required by the Department of Children and Families to have on file for each child a Physical and an Immunization Record. **You have ten (10) days after enrollment to bring in the original forms: Physical Examination – Form 3040 and Immunization – Form 680**

5. Child Health Emergencies

In the case of accidents and incidents, staff will contact parents and complete an incident report in which both staff and parents sign. This serves as documentation that parents were informed of the accident/incident and any necessary follow-up. It is very important that you make sure that your child's teacher is aware of changes in phone numbers or emergency contact persons. Please keep this information up to date.

6. Insurance/Child Accident Procedures

We take all pre-cautions to insure the safety of your child while under our care. However, in the event that a child is hurt at our center, the following procedures will be followed:

- ◆ An accident report will be filled out by a staff member and depending on the type of injury, the parent may be called.
- ◆ The parent will be asked to review the accident form and provide a signature. A copy will be given to the parent upon the parent's request.

7. Medication Administration

All medication administered by the center staff must be authorized by the child's parent or guardian by first completing an Administration of Medicine form. **Only medicine that has been prescribed by a doctor may be given at the center.** All medicines must be in the original container.

If non-prescription medication is to be given, a note from the physician, stating the name of the medication and the dosage instructions, must be attached. Staff will inform parent/guardian immediately of any noticed side effects or changes in behavior.

Parents are strongly encouraged to give all medications at home. If this is the case, please notify your child's teacher so that any behavioral changes and/or allergic reactions may be noted. Medication will be stored in a locked secure area inaccessible to children.

NO MEDICATION MAY BE PLACED IN THE CHILD'S CUBBY/BOOKBAG OR LEFT UNATTENDED IN THE CLASSROOM.

8. Conditions of Short Term Exclusion

A child will be placed on short-term exclusion, which may include non-admittance, when the illness and/or injury is contagious and/or poses a significant health and/or safety risk to other children and staff.

9. Notification of Illness

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to inform staff if their child becomes ill from a communicable disease and of any other health/safety concerns.

If a child appears to have a communicable disease, teaching staff should isolate the child away from the other children and immediately contact the child's parent/guardian.

Children will not be allowed to return to the center until all symptoms have ceased. Depending upon the condition, children may not be allowed to return to the center without a physicians' authorization. **Parents/Guardians will be asked to immediately pick up their children if the following signs, symptoms, or conditions are present:**

- ◆ Fever, sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.

Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100⁰ F or higher taken under the arm or 101⁰ F taken orally.

- ◆ Diarrhea - runny, watery, or bloody stools.
- ◆ Vomiting - two or more times, vomiting that contains blood, or vomiting followed by severe cramping.
- ◆ Severe coughing - child gets red or blue in the face or to make a high pitched whooping sound after coughing.
- ◆ Eye discharge - thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye
- ◆ Difficult or rapid breathing
- ◆ Ear Discharge
- ◆ Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- ◆ Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool and yellowish skin or eyes.
- ◆ Head Lice (including nits)
- ◆ Conditions that commonly require parameters from a physician detailing when a child may return include, but are not limited to, chickenpox, strep throat, scabies, impetigo, meningitis, and Hepatitis A.
- ◆ Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than staff can provide without jeopardizing the health and safety of the other children.
- ◆ Any other unusual signs, symptoms, or conditions.

10. Dress Code

◆ Infants, Toddlers, PK1, PK2: We request that children arrive at school in comfortable, easy to launder clothing. While we make every effort to protect their clothing, children can experience accidental spills during planned activities. Please label all clothing items with the child's first and last name. **For the safety of the children, we do not allow open-toe shoes, flip flops, or sandals either in the classroom or during outdoor activities.**

◆ PK3 and PK4: These students will wear the Assumption uniform. Boys may wear light blue, white, or gray Assumption polos shirts along with dark navy pants or shorts. Girls may wear light blue, white, or navy Assumption polo shirts along with the Assumption plaid skort or shorts. Girls may also wear the Assumption plaid dress; with modesty shorts underneath.

Shoes should be solid white, navy, black, brown, or gray. Shoes should have non-marking rubber soles; tennis shoes, top siders etc. Shoes should easily stay tied. No character or light up shoes allowed. **For the safety of the children, we do not allow**

open-toe shoes, flip flops, boots, dress shoes, shoes with heels or sandals either in the classroom or during outdoor activities; this includes non-uniform days.

- ◆ Students should wear white, black, or navy socks.
- ◆ Jewelry
- ◆ Girls may wear small post earrings. No hoops or dangling earrings.
- ◆ For safety reasons, no necklaces, bracelets or watches should be worn.

In case of accidents, we request every child keep a change of clothes at the center. Label each item with the child's first and last name and place the items in a sealed bag to be given to your child's teacher. This can be any change of clothes.

11. Toilet Training

Children enrolled in the three or four-year-old classes (PK3 and VPK/PK4) must be fully toilet trained. A child is fully toilet trained when, without reminders, can independently walk to the potty, pull down his/her pants, urinate or pass a bowel movement, wipe/cleanse him/herself, and pull up his/her pants. Three (3) toileting "accidents" in any one day constitutes not being toilet trained. If your child's teacher or extended day/aftercare staff find that your child is not completely toilet trained, they will confer with the Director. The parents will be asked to pick up the child and postpone bringing the child to school until the toileting process is mastered. Children in PK3 and PK4 will not be allowed to wear Pull-Ups at any time during the school day including naptime.

12. Meals

Infants

- ◆ All formula fed infants must bring premixed formula bottles labeled with first and last name daily.
- ◆ Breast milk may come in breast milk storage bags labeled with first and last names daily. Teachers will pour breast milk into bottles labeled with first and last names. All breastfeeding mothers are encouraged to nurse their babies at any time during the day in the center.
- ◆ Parents are to be the first to introduce solid foods to their children. All foods containers must be labeled with first and last names.

Toddlers

- ◆ Once your child is 1 year old our toddler teachers will begin the transition from bottles to straw or sippy cup. All cups must be labeled with first and last names.
- ◆ We encourage parents to purchase bento style lunch boxes and send pre-cut food so that your child can easily finger feed themselves.
- ◆ Parents are to provide all snacks and lunches for their toddler.
- ◆ All items must be labeled with first and last names.

PK1

- ◆ FIRST and LAST names on cups, lunchboxes, and containers within the lunchboxes.
- ◆ Please have lunches in ready to serve “bento box” containers.
- ◆ All lunch items should be cut and ready for your child to eat. As a safety measure, DCF requires all food served to children under 24 months be cut into ½ inch pieces to prevent choking. Also, please do not send whole grapes, nuts, cheese cubes, popcorn or whole/round cut hotdogs (DCF 3.9.3c).
- ◆ Please have your child’s water bottle filled with fresh water daily. Upon entering into the classroom please place (labeled) water bottle in the water bottle basket.
- ◆ If you are bringing milk for your child’s lunch, it may be stored in the lunch box with a cooler pack.
- ◆ You may also order milk for your child. If you would like to order milk, please contact the front office to request a milk order form.

PK2, PK3, and PK4

- ◆ We ask that parents provide a morning nutritious, healthy, and filling snack and water bottle daily. **Labeled with first and last names.**
- ◆ Lunch can be purchased from the Assumption Catholic School cafeteria. Lunch menu’s will be posted on the website and sent home monthly. Lunch accounts will be set up using MySchoolBucks
- ◆ Lunch can be sent from home. Lunches should be well balanced, nutritious and include necessary items such as napkins, utensils, etc. No lunches will be heated up and must be **ready to eat** from the lunchbox.
- ◆ Some classrooms will be “nut-free” classrooms. Your child’s teacher will provide you with more information if their classroom is a ‘nut-free’ classroom.
- ◆ All students who stay past 3:00PM will have an aftercare snack provided.
- ◆ Assumption Early Childhood Center offers a milk program. You may sign your child up to get white milk daily with lunch. If you are interested in the milk program, please ask the front desk for more information. Otherwise, children will drink water at meals. Please do not send juice, soda, or any other sugary drinks.
- ◆ Please do not send gum or candy in your child’s lunch box.
- ◆ For safety reasons, please do not send any breakable containers, such as glass.

13. Dietary Restrictions and Allergies

Please discuss any special dietary needs for your child with the director. Immediately inform the director and your child's teacher if your child has any severe allergies. During classroom celebrations; if your child has an allergy and requires a special snack please discuss options with your child's teachers. Your child's teacher will provide you with a few examples of allowed treats. Treats cannot require refrigeration or the use of freezers.

14. Classroom Celebration / Treats

According to DCF 3.9.3E.3, teachers are required to inform parents in advance of any activities or events that include food consumption. In order to stay in compliance with this rule, all parents must ask for the classroom teacher's approval 48 hour prior to bringing in a special treat for the class. The classroom teacher will post the celebration and/or cooking project on the class calendar, as well as, on the classroom door. If you object to your child consuming any of the food items, please inform the teacher and discuss possible alternatives.

15. Discipline Rationale

Discipline is the effective management of children's behavior with the goal of self-disciplined children. The management technique to be used in any particular situation will be based upon consideration of the particular situation and the individual child. All staff, volunteers, and parents will use the positive guidance methods listed below:

16. Discipline Procedures

1. Plan ahead to prevent behavior problems. Anticipate problems that may occur and provide intervention or directions in advance. (Ex: Limit number of children in centers. Have activities prepared so children do not have to wait.)
2. Establish clear and simple rules that are age-appropriate. Consistent reminders help reinforce limits. Rules should be stated in a positive way. (Ex: If a child is running, say, "Please use your walking feet. Running feet are for outside", instead of "Don't run!")
3. Be a model for the desired behavior. Treat all children with respect and politeness. (Ex: The teacher has a leaky paint container in her hand. She needs to get to the sink. She asks the children who are in line at the sink if she could please use the sink out of turn, rather than simply cutting in front of the children. They agree, and she remembers to thank them.)
4. Help children to learn problem-solving skills. Give them the language they need to communicate feelings and needs to others appropriately. Work with them to come up with solutions to conflicts.
5. Give hugs and caring. The key to discipline is establishing a nurturing relationship with each child. Children need to know they are accepted and loved no matter how they behave.
6. Reinforce positive behavior. Remember to focus on the specific behavior you wish to see repeated. (Ex: "Jessie, you have worked so hard to put all the blocks neatly on the shelf. Fantastic job!")

7. Overlook small annoyances. Sometimes when a behavior is overlooked, not reinforced by attention, it disappears. Unless the behavior is aggressive and someone is in danger of getting hurt, the teacher/caregiver might be wise to let the children work out the problem on their own.
8. Offer positive alternatives to a negative behavior. If a child's behavior is unacceptable, suggest alternative choices. (Ex: If a child is throwing blocks, the teacher intervenes by telling the child that blocks are for building. If the child wishes to throw something, he/she can throw a bean bag, or a ball.)
9. Re-direct or divert the child. Substitute an appropriate activity for the unacceptable one. Some behaviors that are inappropriate are temporary, or situation specific. In these cases it is best to alter the environment by redirecting the child to another activity. (Ex: Two children who are good friends have begun to get irritated with each other. Intervene before things get out of hand by engaging them in a new activity.)
10. Help children see behavioral consequences. Since young children are self-centered, it is hard for them to see beyond their own needs. Help them to move from thinking only of themselves, to thinking of others by analyzing the consequences of their actions. Discuss their behavior in a non-judgmental way and encourage them to think about its impact on people, objects and events.
11. Provide renewal time. When a child is too upset to talk or listen, it may be necessary to remove the child from the situation for a period of no more than 2 minutes. The teachers stay with the child to discuss what happened and to help the child regain composure.
12. Implement Behavior Intervention Policy when necessary.

17. Discipline Guidelines

1. Time out. There will NOT be any identified space, or chair, reserved for "time out". Children are not to be isolated indefinitely due to behavior problems. "Time out," "cool down" or "rest" may be used to help a child calm down and regain composure.
2. Physical punishment. The use of physical force with children is prohibited. This includes pulling by the arm, grabbing children by the arm/shoulders/neck, hitting, pushing, shoving, etc.
3. Threatening. Children will not be threatened with physical punishment, or with a phone call to parents.
4. Ridiculing or Degrading. There will be no name-calling, belittling, or comparison to other children.
5. Withholding of meals, snacks, or water. Children will not be denied food, water or any other basic need as a means of discipline.
6. Denying a rest. Children will not be denied rest as a means of discipline.

In the event that a child is exhibiting **extreme challenging behavior**, follow the Behavior Intervention Procedures:

- ◆ Provide renewal time.
- ◆ When a child is too upset to talk or listen, it may be necessary to remove the child from the situation for no more than 2 minutes. The teacher is to stay with the child in the classroom to discuss what happened and help the child regain composure.
- ◆ If necessary, the child may be removed from the classroom if two staff are available to remain with the child at all times.
- ◆ If the child is unable to regain control within 30 minutes, the parents or authorized persons may be contacted to pick up the child.

18. Standards of Conduct

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center has guidelines of acceptable conduct that all parents, volunteers and visitors must abide by while on premises. It is expected that all parties will follow these guidelines and sign this form. We strive to provide a safe learning environment for you and the children. Volunteering in the classroom is strongly encouraged however; the “Standards of Conduct” must be adhered to at all times.

- ◆ Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family. Refrain from stereotyping on basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.
- ◆ Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.
- ◆ Supervise children at all times. Children will not be left alone or unsupervised while in the center or under the center's care.
- ◆ Use positive methods of child guidance. Any use of corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse or humiliation is prohibited. Methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as a punishment or reward, time out or the denial of basic needs are prohibited.
- ◆ Refrain from the use of any threatening physical contact or verbal abuse towards individuals connected with the program, other parents or volunteers.
- ◆ Refrain from smoking on the premises and during all center or parent activities. Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center adheres to a "Smoke Free Environment."
- ◆ Refrain from illegal activities while on the premises or in attendance at center activities. Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center prohibits theft, firearms, alcohol, explosives and illegal substances on the premises and during all center or parent activities.
- ◆ Refrain from harassment. Any cause of disharmony of any kind will not be tolerated.

19. Biting

Biting is a typical and unfortunate part of child development. It is developmentally appropriate for children under the age of 2 to bite out of frustration, lack of communication skills, fear, attention and lots of other reasons. Children bite because it gets immediate results. While biting is developmentally appropriate we do not condone biting. We will work with parents to create a plan to decrease the likelihood of biting incidents.

20. Visitor Policy

All volunteers and visitors shall check-in at designated area for check in and obtain permission for the visitation and a visitor's pass. Visitation by a non-enrolled child unaccompanied by his/her parent(s) or legal guardian is prohibited unless prior approval has been granted by the Center Director.

Only persons with legal authority to do so shall be allowed to question a child on the property without the consent of the child's parents or legal guardian.

Because staff, children, and parents should at all times feel that the school and work environment is safe and not hostile, all visitors to the property shall comply with all policies while on property and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is not disruptive, threatening or abusive.

- ◆ Any parent, volunteer or visitor who is disruptive, threatening or abusive will be asked to relocate to a location in the facility where children are not present and where the matter can be discussed and resolved in a professional manner.
- ◆ If the person refuses to relocate or continues to act in an inappropriate manner, the person will be asked to leave the premises. If the person refuses to leave, staff will notify appropriate law enforcement personnel. Should the person subsequently return to the property and again act in a manner that is disruptive, threatening or abusive or if the initial incident is so extreme that the teachers are concerned about the person returning to the facility, the person shall be informed in writing that he/she may be prohibited from returning to property.
- ◆ Any person who believes that he/she has wrongfully been asked to not return to the property, must first leave the property as requested, but may subsequently appeal the decision in writing to the Center Director.
- ◆ A final decision will be made and the person will be notified in writing that he/she may not return to the property except under expressed conditions.
- ◆ Notwithstanding the above, center personnel shall always have the authority to notify appropriate law enforcement personnel should any person or property violate criminal statutes.

SECTION 6 – CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Curriculum

The preschool curriculum includes, not is not limited to, Happily Ever After, Learning without Tears, Stories of God’s Love, Nemour’s Bright Start and The Creative Curriculum.

2. Field Trips

Due to DCF 2.5.5; Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center will not be participating in field trips in which the students must travel by bus. Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center will bring “field trip” events to our center to enhance the children’s learning opportunity. They are a great way to extend the curriculum and provide children with hands-on experiences. Teachers have specific goals and objectives when planning a “field trip.” Parents will be provided at least two weeks notice for each upcoming “field trip.” Each child must have a signed “field trip” permission slip in order to attend each event.

3. Toys from Home

To prevent special toys from home being lost or broken, we ask that toys not be sent to school with your child. On certain days throughout the year, we allow children to bring personal items and/or toys to share during a special part of the day’s activities. Your child’s teacher will inform you about these “Show-N-Tell” days.

Children may bring one small snuggle stuffed toy for nap time. If the toy becomes a disruption, the toy will be placed in their cubby until dismissal time.

4. Screening and Assessment

Screening is a process to determine whether or not a child has any developmental concerns that may require further evaluation and follow-up. Screenings conducted at the center may include vision, hearing, speech/language, nutrition, dental, and overall development. Screening and assessment tools used by Assumption Early Childhood Center may include, but not limited to, The Ages and Stages Questionnaire, The Get Ready to Read, and Florida’s VPK Assessment.

Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings. At home activities may be recommended based on the results of the screenings. If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians. Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

5. Transitioning Children from Class to Class

If it becomes necessary during the year to move a child up to the next class, Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center will strive to make as smooth a transition as possible for the child, the parents, and the teachers. Parents will be informed both verbally and in

writing. The child will transition slowly over the course of a few days.

6. Transitioning from PreK to Kindergarten

Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center will provide activities to aid in the smooth transition of preschool children to kindergarten. These activities may include one or more of the following: the distribution of kindergarten registration and transition packets, a visits to the Assumption Catholic School kindergarten classrooms, a mini-workshop for parents, and an end of the year ceremony.

SECTION 7 – RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

7.1 Receipt of Parent Handbook

(This page to remain on file in the center.)

I have received a copy of Assumption Early Childhood Learning Center’s Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies.

Parent of _____(child’s name).

Parent Signature _____Date _____

Director Signature _____Date _____

School’s Right to Amend

The administration reserves the right to amend polices and inform parents of these changes.