



2013-2014 Child Care Family Handbook

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The Basics

Commitment to Care

At Foundations for the Future, every person passionately participates in creating the best possible caring and learning environment for your child. We always strive to achieve the highest standards and emulate the best known practices in every aspect of caring for and teaching your child. The policies in this handbook help support this goal.

State License & National Accreditations

Foundations for the Future is licensed by Bright from the Start GA Department of Early Care and Education, and voluntarily accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS-CASI), now a part of the international AdvancEd accrediting system. A copy of the Bright for the Start Regulations is available by request at the front desk, as well as a printout of Georgia State Standards for Pre-K – 5th grade.

Ages of Children Served

Foundations serves children from six weeks old through twelve years old in our school day and extended day programs.

Months, Days, Hours of Operation

Foundations is open year round, from January through December, Monday through Friday, from 6:30am to 6:30pm. Foundations will be closed on the following days: New Year's Day, MLK Day, President's Day, Independence Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving & the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, weekends, and occasional other days as announced. Please refer to the online calendar at <http://foundationscorp.com/for-parents/familyevents> for an up-to-date calendar of events.

Inclement Weather Closings

For the safety of our teachers and students, Foundations will close if Cobb County schools close due to inclement weather conditions. Parents will receive email updates and can also monitor school closing updates to check the status of Cobb County School closings. Become a Fan of Foundations on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/FoundationsfortheFuture> to be alerted of inclement weather closings and other events. Foundations reserves the right to determine a closure is necessary even if Cobb County Schools are not closed, based on our assessment of being able to provide for the safety of the students and teachers, many of whom live and have children that attend school in other counties. Families will be notified by email in case of any closure not on the calendar.

Parking

Parents have several parking options in our parking lot. There are parking spaces with shelter from the rain and a ramp for stroller and/or handicap access on the side of the child care building and the front of the elementary/gym building. Please do not block traffic by parking on the curb in front of the child care building, marked by a red curb. Please be sure to come to a full stop at the stop sign, to ensure the safe crossing of families in transit between the parking lot and the building.

Building Access and Checking In & Out

Each authorized pick up person, including parents, will need to register at the front desk to have a personal profile entered into the security database. This requires a photo ID and an electronic fingerprint scan. (All fingerprint data is immediately converted and stored as a digital format and encrypted. Foundations does not store actual visual images of fingerprints.) You will also choose or be assigned a four digit door code that will work at both the child care and elementary buildings. This code should be treated like a PIN number. It is individual to your family, and allows access

to the school and to picking up your student. Please help us in maintaining the safety of the center by not sharing your door access code with anyone else.

Whether you are picking up or dropping off, you will use the same process to check your child in or out. When you come to the front door, enter your door code in, followed by # key (example: 0000#). To check a student in or out, proceed to the front desk check-in station located on the wall next to the office window and sign in using the registered fingerprint as a security validation. You can also check accounting information here, as well as messages and reminders. Parents can then escort their student to and from their classroom.

At least one front desk administrator is scheduled to be at the school from open to close, with the goal of greeting every person as they arrive and depart, along with providing assistance as needed. Visitors may be allowed access to the exterior lobby of the building by the front desk administrator, but they will not be allowed behind the front desk without being an authorized pick-up person, or without an escort. If a parent has difficulty with the second security checkpoint operation, the front desk administrator is there to assist in checking their child in or out.

Arrival & Pick-Up Times

Arrival is recommended before 9:00am for students to be able to fully participate in the main activities of the day. Arrivals are not allowed between 10:00-2:00, to limit disruptions in the classroom, with the exception made for late arrivals until 11:00am caused by a doctor appointment that morning, as long a doctor's note is provided to the front desk at arrival time. Children in the infant room are excused from the arrival restrictions, but a call prior to 10:00am is required to alert the classroom of a later arrival time.

Late fees will apply to any child picked up after the school closes at 6:30pm. Any child not picked up by 7:30pm may be released to the local police department. (It is required for Foundations to have an alternate option for late pick-ups, especially in a case where we cannot get in touch with any authorized pick-up person afterhours. However, we will make every effort to stay with your child as late as necessary should you experience an emergency care situation.)

Payment & Forms Drop Box

The Payment Drop Box is located just inside the Entrance gate, on the front desk. It is a black locked box where you can securely drop off payments. Many forms are available to fill out online or at our lobby iPad station, or you can complete and return them to a front desk administrator. Payment and charge receipts and statements are printed upon request.

Car & Booster Seats

You may leave car seats in the front lobby under the stairs, or under the cribs in the infant classroom. Please make sure your seat is easily identifiable with a label to prevent any accidental swaps. Foundations does not loan car seats.

Lobby & Front Porch

The lobby and the front porch play area are for the use of our families and visitors. Please feel free to lounge and play, and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. We pop free popcorn on Fridays at about 2:30 and 4:30, so help yourself to a bag when you come to pick up.

Gym Area Use

The gym floor, sports equipment, gymnastics equipment, and rock wall are only to be used under the direct supervision of a FFTF instructor or activity coordinator. We offer a variety of optional extracurricular activities for children two and up that take advantage of this unique facility. Please do not allow your student, siblings, or friends to use the equipment outside of specifically directed class times led by an instructor, especially during pick up and drop off times. Anyone that participates in a sports activity at Foundations is required to complete a Liability Waiver prior to participation.

Gym Area Use Continued

All Ages:

- Line up at stairs in front of cross walk and look both ways; if any moving cars in parking lot, wait until they stop and acknowledge you to cross with group, or until they leave parking lot
- Use rope (preferably with hand-holds) or partnered hand-holding while crossing parking lot
- Children must be in direct sight of teachers at all times
- If more than one teacher is crossing with group, one teacher should be at front of line, and one teacher should be at rear of line.
- Do not cross the parking lot if there if lightning has been spotted in the area within the last 15 minutes, or if there are severe weather warnings active in the area

Age of Students (primarily)	# of children in group	# of adults required
Under 1	1-6	1 (use Bye-Bye Buggy to transport)
One Years Olds	1-4	1
	5-8	2
	9-12	3
Two Year Olds	1-7	1
	8-16	2
	17-21	3
Three Year Olds	1-8	1
	9-17	2
	18-24	3
Four Year Olds	1-11	1
	12-22	2
	23-33	3
Five and Up	1-15	1
	16-30	2
	31-45	3

Partnering with Foundations

Foundations' Mission

Our mission provides the focus for our school, allowing us to review current practices and pursue new ones that help us consistently attain our mission in a rapidly changing environment. The three key elements of our mission are geared towards enhancing the full development of potential in each child

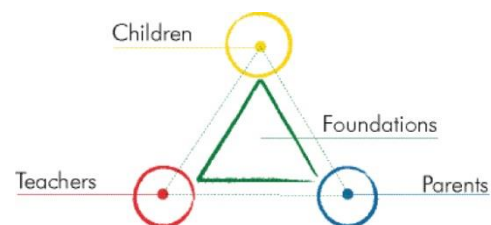
- To provide children with an integrated learning approach and natural environment to maximize early brain development & future potential
- To provide teachers with a collaborative teaching environment that encourages continual learning
- To provide parents with a community of families, teachers, and specialists to support their learning and growth as parents.

The Foundations Constitution

- *We, the creators of Foundations for the Future School, in order to form a more perfect school environment, establish a love of learning, ensure healthy and happy children, provide support for our teachers and staff, promote future potential and secure the trust and confidence of our families, do establish this Foundations' Constitution.*
- **I.** We believe that children learn and grow best when supported and surrounded by a community made up of caring teachers, involved parents and respectful friends. We strive to sustain this environment by facilitating parent/teacher communication through Discovery Reports and journal entries, hosting special events, distributing monthly family newsletters and doing semi-annual parent surveys. We facilitate a purposeful environment so that our families can come together as a community in our inviting spaces like our lobby and patio areas.
- **II.** We believe that young children are inherently creative, curious, and capable. We use their natural interests to form themes and projects that teach basic knowledge in an interesting manner that improves the retention of new information. We believe that curriculum and teaching methods should always be evolving according to the needs of the children and the most effective techniques for each classroom and age group. We strive to create curious learners who thrive on challenges.
- **III.** We believe that physical activity is an extremely important component of childhood development and should be incorporated into every day; both as free play as well as in support of learning objectives.
- **VI.** We believe that proper nutrition is one of the key factors in healthy physical growth as well as brain development and learning. We create menus that present children with a variety of delicious, healthy fresh foods to expand their palate and nourish their bodies.

Curriculum Guiding Principles

- Small group, multi-age community of learners
- Differentiated learning paces
- Movement boosts brain power
- Depth of knowledge instead of memorization
- Technology to enhance all subjects
- Critical thinking
- Social & emotional growth
- Teacher reflection/adaptation cycle
- Teachers and Parents work together with Foundations, while viewing children as partners capable of helping to direct their own learning experiences.



Daily Experiences

Each child at Foundations should frequently experience:

- Being intellectually engaged and challenged
- Applying developing skills in purposeful ways
- Developing confidence in their own abilities
- Extended conversations and/or interactions with adults and peers
- Taking initiative/responsibility; making choices
- Generating questions/predictions/hypotheses
- Sustained involvement in investigations of worthwhile topics
- Overcoming obstacles and set-backs
- Helping others
- Feeling a sense of belonging to the school community

Getting Involved

We love it when families are involved in school, and there are many different ways and times to accommodate the availability and preferences of most families. Children thrive when parents actively participate in their school functions. You can get involved with your child's class or other classes as well. Look for volunteer sign-up sheets on the Parent Communication board in the classroom and at the front desk for specific information on volunteer and involvement opportunities.

Here are some ideas to get you started, but let us know if there is something you would like to contribute:

- Participate in Conferences, Orientations, seminars and events
- Provide a framed family photo to add to the classroom
- Read or tell a story in the classroom
- Visit during lunch time and participate in family style dining
- Celebrate a birthday snack with your child on their special day
- Share special talents (Ex. musical instrument, art, etc.)
- Share a favorite family recipe in a cooking experience
- Share your cultural background: Provide multicultural items, like books, music, and clothes; Translate words, books, or thoughts into other languages; Share significant events with the classroom through photographs, artifacts and stories
- Help in organization of trips and special events
- Donate materials or money for wish-list items
- Help with library upkeep

Classroom Observations

We have an open-door policy, so you can visit your child any time during the school-day. In order to respect the classroom environment, we ask that you observe the following guidelines for visiting:

- Each room has a one-way observation window. Please look and listen before entering the room to ensure that the room will not be interrupted during an important conversation or a lesson.
- The best way to know how to help in the classroom is to ask the teachers how they would like you to participate. It may be through limited interaction and quiet observation, or helping with an activity.
- Please refrain from comments toward individual children that are directly related to their abilities, appearance, development, behaviors, or personal life, etc.

- Please do not discipline any children, but do let the teachers know of any concerns. Please do not pick up any other child other than your own.

Requested Materials Donations

Any of the following items that you donate will be used in the classroom or as art supplies: containers with or without lids, paper towel rolls, envelopes, scrap paper, clothing-for dress up or smocks, egg cartons, strawberry or fruit baskets, wallpaper scraps, string, ribbons, yarn, leather remnants, shells, sponges, seed pods, baskets, small machines that may be broken, wire, twine, and wrapping paper. We appreciate all of your contributions.

Communication

We continually seek ways to improve our communication to help our families to be actively involved and informed. Please let us know if you have any suggestions.

Email Notifications

We use email notifications so that we can be sure you get notified in a timely manner, and to improve our documentation and tracking. For anything that requires more immediate attention, we will also make contact by phone and/or in person.

- Discovery Reports (daily, except in infant room which is 2-3 times per week)
 - These reports serve as highlights of the activities of the day. They do not include all activities or feature all students. Reports generally include three to six pictures with brief highlights of some of the learning objectives that were addressed through the activities of the day. They also include important classroom and school reminders.
- Classroom Lesson Plans (weekly)
 - Lesson Plans are emailed typically on the Friday before each week begins, and they are done in narrative format with the goal of describing some of the planned objectives and ideas for projects. Lesson Plans are also printed out and posted on the Parent Communication board in the classroom.
- School Newsletters (monthly)
 - Newsletters typically include upcoming events, reminders, employee of the month, research summaries, updates about the school, communication resources, and many other important items.
- Journal Entries (emailed notification that journal entry has been posted on ParentsCentral account)
 - These communications are private between teachers and the family members on the email list. Journal entries may be reminders, questions, or individual observations about a child's learning and development.
- Menus (weekly or bi-weekly)
- Minor Injury Reports, Behavior Updates, Illness Notifications
- Field Trip forms
- Mid-term assessments (students will have three to four assessment periods during the year, and assessments will either be handed out, reviewed at conference times, or emailed)
- Other sign-up sheets and permission forms

Managing Your Email Accounts

For children in the child care and Pre-K classes, you will receive an email invitation that must be accepted in order to be added to the newsletter list. Children in the K-5th classes will automatically be added according to the email address(es) provided on the enrollment paperwork. Parents may request additions or changes to these email addresses at any time. Set your computer to allow emails from all @foundationscorp.com in order to be sure they will not be blocked.

Classroom & Curriculum Orientations

Orientations are held prior to or at the beginning of the school year. These Orientations are designed to allow parents to meet teachers and understand expectations for your child's development during the school year. The Orientation meeting is designed to allow parents to meet teachers and to understand the expectations for the school year, and it is a critical step in partnering with us in your child's education. In past years, we have surveyed parents that have attended, and even families that have been part of Foundations for several years commented that they learned something new, so we feel it is very important for even our expert families to attend the orientation each year. In addition, a curriculum booklet for either the Infant/Toddler/2s age group or the Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten age group is available at any time by request at the Front Desk. These informative booklets provide a summary of the curriculum framework at Foundations.

Assessments & Parent/Teacher Conferences

Attending Parent/Teacher Conferences is one of the most important steps in partnering with your teachers, as parents provide valuable insight into their student's learning and development. Parents can provide teachers with information that can help ensure assessment data is communicated in a way that values each family's culture, values, and home language. We strive to meet the needs of each individual student and use a variety of ongoing assessment methods to ensure each student reaches his/her target goals. Assessment information helps teachers identify students' needs and interests, which helps guide classroom teaching.

Full assessments are completed at three checkpoints throughout the year (typically October, January, and April). Informal assessment based on observation and children's work is ongoing throughout the school year. Most assessments occur as children engage in play-based learning, and the children are unaware they are being assessed. Should developmental and/or learning concerns arise, teachers may refer a family to a pediatrician or a specialist for further evaluation. All assessment information is confidential.

Your teacher will hold conferences twice a year to discuss your student's progress and achievement. Conferences will also be held whenever there is a learning or behavioral problem, as needed.

Daily Sheets for Infants & Toddlers

In addition to Discovery Reports, parents of young children in the Infant and Toddler classes will also receive a Daily Information Sheet specific to their child that specifies diaper changes or potty attempts/successes, snack and meal and/or bottle consumption, rest time(s), and daily notes. As children go into the older toddler and preschool classrooms, this information is kept on a classroom chart on the Parent Communication board and can be referenced during pick up time each day.

Administrators

The main administrative offices are located in the child care building, and any administrator can answer most questions, or direct your inquiry to the person best suited to help with it. We also have one administrative office in the elementary building, typically staffed during the school day hours of 8:30-4:30 each day. You can also reach any of the administrators by calling the main office phone number, 770-429-4799, or through Smile@foundationscorp.com (see the Communications section of the monthly newsletter for the specific list of primary contacts).

Check-In Screen

We use the check-in touch-screen for short messages for parents about their children, class and/or accounts, and general reminders. If you have messages, you will be prompted to check them when you check-in or out. Also look at the items placed around the front desk check-in screen.

iPad Forms Station

Look for sign-up sheets for events, seminars, field trips, wish list items, involvement opportunities, conferences, and helpful forms like our visitor log and our vacation credit form on the iPad at the front desk by the check-in screen.

Lobby Bulletin Board

The bulletin board in the lobby displays the school-wide Communicable Illnesses list for the month (lists all illnesses children at the school were diagnosed with), menus, policies, and various other notices.

Classroom Parent Communication Board

Be sure to check the Parent Communication bulletin board near the entry door of your classroom daily, where you will find: weekly lesson plans, learning goals and objectives overview, general classroom information, classroom daily sheet for potty/ing/meals/rest time, "Your Child Needs" reminders, current menu, "Special Dietary Needs" list for children with food allergies or preferences, Extra Curricular Activities schedule, Illness Notifications, and more.

Foundations on Facebook

Foundations uses Facebook to put out event reminders, photos, inclement weather closings, and links to interesting information we might not otherwise distribute. We highly recommend you become a Fan of our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/FoundationsfortheFuture>.

A Day at Foundations

What Should My Child Bring Every Day?

Please make sure that all items (including diapers) are clearly labeled with your child's name.

- Family photo in a plastic frame no larger than 5x7 that does not need to be returned (optional)
- 1-2 complete, weather-appropriate changes of clothes (shirts, pants, socks, underwear); also provide extra pair of shoes during potty learning stages
- Jacket w/hood & mittens in winter
- Rain boots & rain jacket (optional)
- Nap time security needs – small, soft items that can fit in cubby (optional)
- 4-6 diapers daily, and/or velcro tabbed pull-ups for potty learning stages
- Sunscreen and/or Bug spray with DEET (optional; 6 months and up only; applied only 1x/day)
- Enough labeled bottles for the day filled with appropriate amount of milk (in Tadpoles and Angelfish/Sailfish classes only)
- Baby food as needed (in Tadpoles and Angelfish/Sailfish classes only)

We encourage our children to think of the school as an extension of their home and family life. Children may bring in pictures of their family, and we often discuss family events and talk about different beliefs children may express about their life or the classroom. We use these conversations to lead us toward talking about other cultures and how they might think of similar situations.

Items to Leave at Home

Foundations is not responsible for any items your child brings into the center, so please only send items that can be replaced if lost. Do not bring toys, money, jewelry, valuables, or food (unless pre-approved for entire classroom). Any of these items that are brought to school will be taken up to the front desk and held for pick-up. They do not pass state regulations, and they are a source of contention between children. We donate items from the Lost & Found on a monthly basis.

What Should My Child Wear to School?

The children are exploring and experimenting with the world around them and using a wide variety of art tools and materials daily. In order to facilitate spontaneous play indoors and outdoors, children should wear clothing that is washable and may get dirty and even stained. Teachers will change children who get wet or excessively dirty, if they have changes of clothes from home.

Children should only wear closed-toed shoes or closed-toed sandals. They are easier to move in, help prevent injury, and are more comfortable for the children when playing in the bark. Children should be able to remove and put back on their shoes without essential teacher support. Please do not send your child with shoes that have laces if they cannot tie their own shoes. Velcro, buckles, or slip-on shoes are preferred.

General Daily Classroom Schedule

Your classroom Welcome Packet has detailed information specific to your child's classroom, including teachers & schedules, what to bring each day, general activities, and more. There are also many elements that are similar in most classrooms, and those are reviewed here. Please consult your child's class schedule and lesson plans for more specific times and information.

- Arrival—Please accompany your child inside the lobby, check them in at the touch screen, and accompany them to their classroom.
- Naptime—Naptime generally falls between 11:30 and 2:30, depending on the age of the children in the classroom, and generally lasts for about 1.5-2 hours. Any authorized pick-up person can visit the school at any time, but please be respectful of this quiet time.
- Meal Times—Meals and snacks are offered periodically during the day. Breakfast is served to full day students between 7:15 and 7:45, and lunch is served between 11:30 and 12:30, depending on the classroom. Snack Times—A mid-morning snack is served at 9:30am, and an afternoon snack is served after nap time, generally around 3:00. A simple late afternoon snack of crackers and water is served to students around 5:30 to help them feel comfortable until dinner.
- Departure—Please go through the front desk station to check out your child, and pick up your child from their classroom. Be sure to check your child's folder outside their classroom door for important information. (We cannot bring children out to a car or lobby, as the front desk check-in system is a required authorization point.)

Morning Meeting

Morning meeting takes place approximately from 9:00-9:30am in every classroom, except the infant room. It is a very important time of the day for each classroom, and we ask for no interruptions at this time. Some examples of Morning Meeting items: class roll, Pledge of Allegiance, music and movement, calendar review, weather review, project work, and introductions of new concepts.

Family Style Dining

During lunch, children participate in family style dining, where the children and teachers sit down together in a setting created for a casual dining experience. Teachers dim the lights and often have soft music playing in the background to encourage calm behavior. The teachers prepare in advance so that children can transition smoothly from outdoors to washing hands before sitting down at the table. After children are done with their meal, they can leave to scrape their plates, wash hands, potty, and go rest on their cot.

Children will learn self-help skills, as appropriate, like:

- Setting of the table
- Saying a blessing before beginning to eat, to encourage patience and respect for mealtime
- Assist in pouring their own drinks and serving themselves portions of food
- Passing items to other children when requested
- Scraping their plates into trashcans and placing their plates, cups, and utensils in bins to go to the kitchen

Art Work

Children are given frequent opportunities to create art in the classroom using many different materials. We also often offer a specialist-taught weekly art class as part of the Premium Services activities included in your tuition. You may not see artwork come home with your child every day, but you will see it displayed in the classroom. We use your child's artwork as part of the curriculum to act as a focal point to study multiple facets of one topic.

Additional Play Areas

We use our facilities to the fullest to provide your child with many different opportunities for exploration throughout each day and week. Exploration of the school may include areas such as the lobby, the Homelife rooms, the outdoor covered areas, the big hill, the Pre-K, School-age, and toddler playgrounds, the nature trail areas, Discovery Park (with permission slip only for Pre-K & younger), and the Oak Tree area.

- Infants have at least one hour of play outside daily, and toddlers and older have at least one and half hours of outdoor play daily.
- It is important to note that we use our covered areas for play on rainy days, wet days, and overly hot or sunny days. We will take them outside during rainy weather if it safe to do so.
- Please bring sunscreen or bug spray if you would like us to apply this during outdoor play time.

Transitions

We have taken a broad view of the meaning of children's transition to mean any occurrence where the child is having to cope with potentially taxing change, including progressing from one developmental stage to another, entering or leaving the school, or even moving from one area of the center to another (ex: from one classroom to another, or from inside to outside, even between activity centers within a classroom). Transitions are opportunities for children to learn and grow, but of course such milestones in children's lives can cause anxiety too. We purposely attempt to minimize unnecessary transition. We do this by trying to keep consistency with the teachers and scheduling, larger age ranges in a classroom and group move-ups in order to facilitate strong and stable relationships, and by using transition songs and music during challenging times of the day, like clean up time and the transition to nap.

Here are some tips to help make you and your child's transition into starting school easier:

- Be enthusiastic about the upcoming change. If you are excited and confident, your child will be too.
- Prepare yourself. Take note of how your child reacts to separation. If possible, visit the school with your child prior to their first day. Introduce your child to the new teachers in advance.
- Start daily routines that will add to continuity. Let your child become involved with laying out clothes and preparing for school. Also, begin an earlier bedtime several weeks before if you will be waking earlier than normal.
- Put aside extra time, particularly on the first day, for chatting and getting ready together.

- Always say good-bye to your child. Be firm, but friendly about separating. Instead of looking negatively at a child crying, make supportive statements like, "it's hard to say good-bye." Comments like "I am going to work and I will come back and get you after nap (or other activity)" help your child to know what to expect and build their trust in you.
- Bring a family photo and/or a small comfort item to have in the room in your child's cubby, accessible to them if they feel that they need it during the day.
- Provide your teachers with any information specific to your child's needs.

Classroom Guidelines & Procedures

Keeping Everyone Healthy (Illness Policy)

Because certain symptoms could be symptoms of infectious or communicable diseases, children will not be allowed to attend if they have had any of the following symptoms within 24 hours of check-in, including but not limited to: fever of 100° or more, vomiting, diarrhea, raised or blistering rash, discharge from the eyes and/or nose, head lice, and or sore throat.

60 Minute Pickup Deadline - In the event that your child shows any of the above symptoms while they are at the center, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child, or to arrange for authorized transportation of your child, within one hour of being notified of the illness symptom. Children will be made comfortable until picked up. Because of the risk to other children, your child must be picked up within one hour. There is a \$1/minute late pick-up charge that will be assessed for children that are not picked up within one hour.

Removal from classroom – Any child that is too sick to remain in the classroom will be taken into another area to await their pick up. They will remain there with a teacher or an administrator. This does put a strain on the staffing balance while also not entirely eliminating a possible contagion from the class environment, which is why we stress the importance of picking up as quickly as possible.

Summary of Illnesses in School - All verified reportable infectious or communicable illnesses are posted on the Illness Notification sheet on the front lobby bulletin board near the check-in screen.

In Case of Emergency – In the rare case where a child seems to be in unusual distress, Foundations will call 911 for assistance. Foundations does not wait for parent approval when a child's condition seems to be escalating, such as in the case of a seizure, very high fever, etc.

Medication Authorizations

Foundations can dispense medications to children in our care, with some limitations.

Parents are required to fill out a Medication Authorization form. Name, date, dosage, prescription number (if a prescribed medication), times to dispense medication, dates to dispense medication, and expiration date of medication are all required. All medications must be properly labeled with your child's full name and have an appropriate dispenser, when applicable. The completed form and the medication must be left with a front desk administrator. For non-prescription medication, a dosage that parents list must correspond to the dosage listed on the label otherwise a doctor's note is required. Non-prescription medications must also have the child's age and dosage listed. We cannot dispense medication if the dosage is not listed on the label or if the corresponding dosage for the child's age/weight reads "ask a doctor".

A Foundations employee or administrator will dispense medicine within 15 minutes of 10:30am and/or 2:30pm, as selected on the medication authorization form. We must strictly adhere to this time schedule so that medications are not missed.

If adverse reactions to the medications occur, appropriate action will be taken, including calling parents and/or emergency medical assistance, and it will be documented on the medication authorization form.

Diapering

Parents should supply diapers, Velcro-tabbed pull-ups, wipes, and diaper rash cream (optional). Monitor the parent communication board to know when these supplies need to be refilled. Foundations will provide physician's paper & gloves for every diaper change as deemed appropriate by the teacher. We follow the most rigorous standards for diaper changing, including wearing latex gloves and washing hands throughout changing. A bleach water solution is used to sanitize on the changing table after each child is changed. If parents choose to bring cloth diapers, only cloth diapers that have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material are allowed. Both the diaper and the outer covering will be changed as a unit, and parents will need to provide an individual diaper receptacle to hold soiled diapers that are taken home at the end of the day.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is one of the easiest and most effective ways to help stop the spread of germs. Please assist us by having your child wash their hands when entering the classroom, and washing yours as well. The teachers will help children wash their hands prior to eating meals or snacks, after using restroom or diapering, when coming into the classroom from outdoors, and as needed in addition to these times. Teachers wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

Learning to Go Potty

We often refer to this process as potty learning rather than training, because children are taught how to go potty quickly, but they must learn and be intrinsically motivated to be self-sufficient on the potty. Ultimately, no one but the child can control their bowels, either to go or not go. Rushing this stage can cause children to refuse to go potty even when they know how, so we do everything we can to keep this process neutral and avoid the repercussions of power struggles.

Foundations does not have any restrictions on moving a child into the next aged room that are dependent on toilet use. We respect you and your child and want only the best for them, realizing this is a developmental skill that cannot be determined by age. It takes teamwork between the family, child, and teachers. Success depends on patient, understanding, and consistent adults, and a child who is physically and mentally ready.

Parents must be helping child potty while at home and away from home in order for the process to be consistent and successful. Diapers, pull-ups, or rubber pants must be worn (not underwear) until the child has gone two weeks without an accident. This is an essential step in keeping the classroom sanitary for all students.

Children need to exhibit all of the following signs of readiness at Foundations before teachers can begin helping with the process. The child must:

- Understand and follow simple directions
- Dress and undress themselves
- Run and climb easily
- Have a dry diaper for at least two hours at a time during the day
- Express interest in using the toilet
- Express interest in bowel movements
- State or signal the need to use the potty

Teachers will assist and encourage potty learning by:

- Prompting children to go to the potty as often as every hour, as appropriate for the stage of learning (sometimes it will be longer if they are at the stage of needing to self-regulate bathroom timing).
- Acknowledging successes and accidents neutrally, without overemphasizing, and explaining and discussing them to encourage their interest.

Nutrition Program

- Meal Time—It is very important that we maintain the correct food temperatures for serving food, so we will not be able to serve food outside of times for meals that are listed on your class schedule.
- Portions—Your child will be served the FDA recommended portions. There is almost always enough food for seconds if your child requests it.
- Special Dietary Needs—Special dietary needs will be accommodated if possible. Parents may need to provide meals if the frequency of meals is greater than we provide for or if special foods are required. Vegetarian meals are available.
- Bringing in Food—Because of dangers associated with food allergies, the food available in the center is closely monitored. Bringing extra food is not allowed unless medically necessary and/or approved in advance by the center.
- We use real dishes and silverware as part of our meal program, for environmental and self-help reasons. We understand that some may dishes may be broken, and those instances will be used as learning experiences. We do acknowledge that there is some danger inherent in using real dishes, but we will maintain the safest possible practices when we use them with the children.
- Menus are located in the Red Communication box in the lobby, and are emailed in advance of each week.
- Late Afternoon Crackers—Free crackers are available at the front desk for students who have late afternoon pick up times.
- Popcorn Fridays—Fridays are “Popcorn Fridays,” where we offer fresh-popped movie popcorn starting at about 2:00. Foundations will not serve popcorn to children but does offer it to parents if they would like to enjoy some or offer it to their child after they are picked up for the day.

Special Dietary Needs

Due to the numerous children at Foundations with various food allergies, we must limit the types of food that are brought in by parents solely to those that are medically necessary. Parents must provide a physician’s note stating that a child is allergic to a food, or that it is medically necessary for another reason, in order to bring in a food substitution. Complete the Allergy Action Plan for all food allergies and return to a front desk administrator. Once the documents have been provided to Foundations, parents can bring in an alternate food item to replace the one the child cannot eat. Parents are responsible for bringing in food substitutes for any items their child is allergic to.

Vegetarian lunch substitutes are the only food substitutes that Foundations provides. The vegetarian lunch option is for children who do not eat meat due to preference or a meat allergy.

Foundations serves whole or low fat milk with breakfast, lunch, and occasionally with snacks according to current USDA guidelines. Foundations offers a milk substitution option for parents that would like their child to have organic soy milk or organic milk instead of the regular milk normally offered.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations in the classroom are limited to a special snack and singing Happy Birthday during regular classroom snack time. To maintain healthy eating habits for all the children at the school, we do not allow any food to be brought in from outside the center. Foundations’ chef will prepare a special healthy snack (typically a special muffin) to be served on each child’s birthday. Parents can choose to provide any of the following to enhance the birthday snack: birthday candles, a Mylar birthday balloon (no latex balloons), and/or goody bags for the children in the class. All of these are optional. If parents bring in goody bags, they must be placed in the children’s cubby for them to enjoy at home.

You may birthday invitations in children’s folders outside the classroom. We strongly recommend inviting all of the children from the class to strengthen friendships.

Sleeping & Resting Guidelines

Children under one year of age or non-walking

- Cribs and mattresses are disinfected at the end of every day.

- Crib sheets are washed daily.
- Infants are always placed to sleep on their back in the cribs; if they roll over onto their stomachs, they will not be moved
- Infants cannot sleep in any location other than their cribs, so if they arrive asleep in a car seat, they need to be transferred to their crib by their parent. If they fall asleep in a swing or bouncy seat, they will be transferred to their crib.
- No items will be allowed in the crib without a doctor's written permission on file.
- Blankets are not allowed in cribs; infants can be dressed for nap in sleep sacs.
- Infants will be removed from crib as soon as possible after they awaken.

Toddlers and Up

- Cots are individually assigned, with sheets provided by Foundations and washed weekly or more frequently if needed.
- Pillows cannot be used for children under two. They can be brought in by parents as a comfy item, but all personal items must be able to fit in the child's cubby.
- Children that do not nap will not be required to lay down for more than 1 hour.

Television & Movies

We do not use television shows for entertainment purposes on a regular basis. Occasionally, we may supplement our learning with an educational program or announce a G-rated movie viewing. Movies over 20 minutes long will require a signed permission slip.

Student Computer Use

We begin teaching basic computer skills in Pre-K, but computers are made available in all the classrooms for the teachers to use in their programs at their discretion. All internet access is filter through a CIPA approved internet filter.

Religious Expression

We are not affiliated with any church or religion. We support learning about many cultures and traditions. You may see an influence from Christianity in activities such as holiday celebrations and lunch time blessings. We will celebrate holidays like Easter and Christmas, as well as recognize other cultures' traditions and celebrations. Please feel free to share your family's traditions with your child's classroom. We do not allow expression of anything that promotes hatred or violence.

Field Trips

Your permission is required before transporting your child anywhere, even on walking field trips to non-regular areas, like the Elementary Discovery Park area.

- Permission slips must be signed by parent before a child is allowed to participate in a field trip
- Driving field trips are taken only on the FFTF school bus which includes 4 point safety harnesses to ensure children are secure within their seats at all times.
- There is always an additional person on the bus along with the driver, and no more than 14 children on the bus on any trip. We follow NAEYC ratios even during field trips
- The First Aid Kit is included as a mandatory part of the pre-driver's check list and must accompany children.
- The school bus has regular quarterly fluid and mechanical checks plus annual inspections as required by State Licensing. Drivers also carry cell phones for emergency communication needs.
- For trips off campus, children are all issued an arm band with Foundations' contact information.

- The primary field trip teacher carries a binder with all children attending the trip so they can take attendance at various times during the day. This binder also contains emergency contact information for all children.
- The bus does not leave the location and groups do not move to new parts of the facility until all students have been accounted for.
- Meals, when required, are packed and taken with the group and follow all regular dietary guidelines.
- If your child has any disabilities that make traveling on a field trip difficult, please inform administration so that we can help make accommodations for transportation.

Toddler Biting

Foundations for the Future has developed a plan for proactively reducing the reasons for children to bite, as well as an active plan for addressing biting when it does happen. This plan is based off of years of experience of knowing what works well, and from great resources, like the book “No Biting: Policy and Practice for Toddler Programs” by Gretchen Kinnel.

Biting or being bit is an “unfortunately not unexpected” part of many toddlers’ lives. Biting normally occurs in classrooms with children in the 12 month to 30 month age range. Toddlers bite for many reasons, which fall into three main categories:

- Developmental issues (teething, sensory exploration, cause & effect experimentation, imitation, need for attention)
- Expression of Feelings (frustration, anger, tension, anxiety, excitement)
- Environment or Program not working for child (too stimulating, not stimulating enough)

We follow a consistent method of dealing with children after a biting incident occurs. By following this or similar practice at home, you will help reinforce the teachers’ ability to handle these situations, and use them as teachable moments. Every time a toddler bites, whether it is the first or a multiple time, teachers:

- Convey through attitude and actions that biting is not the right thing to do
- Help the child who is bitten, by comforting them and helping them express their feelings about the bite

Teachers help the child who bit, by:

- Responding to them within 1-2 minutes
- Stating briefly and clearly what happened, for example “You bit him with your teeth. He doesn’t like it. It’s not OK to bite people.”
- Respond with action. Depending on the reason they bit, it may be appropriate to demonstrate gentle touches, or to ask them to help care for the bitten child by applying ice or rag.
- Redirect them to another toy, person, or area.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviors

When behavioral issues occur, our goal is to help children learn values, problem solving skills, and responsibility. We will always use love and encouragement to positively affect a child’s behavior. We strive to minimize inappropriate behavior while creating a positive environment for all our children through the following techniques, as age appropriate:

- Classroom Management—individual attention and low ratios; modeling and reinforcing appropriate behavior; setting reasonable expectations based on developmental levels; providing an interesting, challenging, and age-appropriate environment.
- Neutral Reaction—some negative behavior is produced by a child to get attention. This kind of behavior can often be stopped by not giving the child the desired attention in response to behaviors or actions. We will utilize this technique only if no safety issues are involved, if overlooking a tantrum or other negative behavior.
- Redirection & Distraction—we will offer alternatives to children by engaging them in play with a different toy, suggesting a new activity, facilitating play with another child, or by suggesting independent play.

- Verbal Intervention—the teacher explains to the child the inappropriate behavior and shows the appropriate way to handle the situation.
- Logical Consequences—the teacher helps the child understand the logical consequences of actions by removing the object, activity, etc that is causing the problem.
- Cozy Corner—the child is separated from the group to allow time to relax and clam down and to separate themselves from the group.
- Class Rules & 1, 2, 3 Magic—for children generally about three or four years old and up, class rules will be stated and/or written and posted in the classroom. If a child breaks a class rule, they will be warned by being told that was “1.” If they are disruptive again within a natural time segment of the classroom (generally no more than a 60 minute segment), they will be warned again by the teacher stating “2.” If the child is disruptive again within that same time segment, the child will be told “3” and will be removed from the area or activity. Once a natural segment of the day has passed, the count resets. For instance, one disruption at circle time will get a “1,” but then if another disruption happens after nap time, it will start back over at “1.” See ParentMagic.com for more information and recourses on this method.
- Persistent Inappropriate Behavior—if inappropriate behavior continues repeatedly after the guidance steps have been used, or if behavior threatens the health or safety of other children or staff, parents will be asked to participate in an immediate parent-teacher conference. In situations where Foundations teachers are not able to provide the individual attention the child needs in order to overcome the persistent inappropriate behavior, continued attendance at Foundations may require, at the parents’ expense: consultations with experts, an additional teacher, suspension, or withdrawal. Please see the Disruptive Behavior Policy for more detail.

Emergency Procedures

Accidents & Incidents

- As children grow there will be bumps and bruises. Injuries other than the most minor will be documented and sent to parents by email. We will also call if your child encounters anything other than a minor injury. For anything requiring medical attention, we will call for medical assistance before calling or emailing parents.
- We require current First Aid and CPR classes within ninety days of employment for 50% or more of current employees, so our staff is prepared to handle many situations.
- We take the utmost care with your child by rigorously following the best safety standards. Foundations also carries accident insurance coverage for all of its students so that proof of insurance from the parents will never be an issue.
- When urgent emergency medical care may be needed, Foundations will call 911 for assistance from a medical EMT unit. Parents should understand that we have a policy to call if there is any chance that their child may need medical attention, even if that medical attention is not urgent or serious.
- If you receive a phone call from Foundations for an injury that may require medical attention, rest assured that it is after the EMTs have already been called and are on their way. Once the EMTs have evaluated your child we will let them speak with you directly regarding their observations, if possible. They will inform you of their opinion on whether or not any further medical care is needed. At the EMTs discretion they may decide to the injured child to the best facility to care for them. A Foundations teacher or administrator will travel with the child in the ambulance if parents are not with them.
- In case of any of the following events: any emergencies; medical care; severe weather; fire; gas leak; bomb threat; facility problems, such as power failure, that affects climate control, or structural damage; the procedure for notification will be to immediately contact the parents or guardians by phone if possible. If the parents or guardians are not available, we will attempt to contact the emergency contacts. Please be prepared to arrange for authorized transportation of your child in case of such emergencies.
- **Evacuation**
 - In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation including but not limited to those listed above, Foundations will remove the children from the campus to Mt. Paran Christian School at 1275 Stanley Road, where they will wait for authorized pick up. If the bus is unavailable or full, emergency transportation will take place in employee vehicles in order to have the evacuation completed as quickly as possible.

- **Severe Weather**
 - Foundations monitors severe weather using a NOAA weather radio and/or an online weather service. In case of severe weather or emergencies not requiring evacuation; we will protect the children by gathering them into the interior of the school, using duck and cover procedures, and other safety procedures as recommended by the NOAA.
- **Physical Plant Problems**
 - In case of physical plant problems that do not require evacuation, we will continue to operate as normal while sectioning off any potentially hazardous areas. We will work diligently to correct the problem before the next school day.
- **Loss of Child**
 - Wanders away from class group—The Foundations campus is completely fenced around the perimeter with many divisions for various play areas. If a child wandered away from his group, remaining group members will be taken back into classroom and all available administrators will immediately begin searching for the missing child. One person will be posted at the front of the campus to make sure the child cannot leave the fenced campus area. The others will begin searching in the last known location. Authorities and parents will be notified immediately.
 - Gets lost on field trip—One teacher will immediately contact the authorities and begin searching in the last known location of the child while the other teacher stays with the other children.

Parent Guidelines

Authorization Forms

Parents are responsible for providing all necessary Parental Authorization forms as stated in the enrollment contract.

Parent Responsibility for Notifications

- Parents must inform Foundations in writing immediately of any allergies, diet restrictions, or physical activity restrictions.
- For the safety of everyone at the center, parents must notify us if your child has an infectious or communicable disease.
- Parents must provide at least one emergency contact in writing that has transportation.
- You must present any updates to contact information, pickup info, emergency contacts, allergies, family status changes (divorce, separation, etc), etc. as necessary to keep all information current, and updates must be in writing.

General Policies

Items from Home

Please do not allow your child to bring items from home. They will not be able to play with them during school and Foundations cannot take responsibility for their safe keeping. These items can also cause disruption in the classroom. Items brought to school will be kept at the front desk until child is picked up at the end of the day. Any items left at Foundations after a child is no longer enrolled will be donated to MUST Ministries or used at the center.

Hygiene

Please help your child establish good hygiene by bringing them prepared for an active school day. They should arrive dressed and with brushed hair and teeth. They should wash their hands upon entering the classroom in the morning.

Damaged Property

If your child damages items or property belonging to Foundations, another child, or a teacher, Foundations may require payment or replacement at our discretion.

Profanity & Adult Conversations

Please refrain from using profane words or gestures on the Foundations' campus. Please be aware of the sensitive nature of some topics and what adept listeners children are. Please do not include adult topics in your discussions with teachers or other parents while on Foundations' campus.

Weapons Policy

No weapons of any kind are allowed on the Foundations campus. Do not bring them into the center or allow your child to bring them into the center, even if they are only a toy replica of a weapon.

Tobacco Policy

There is no smoking or chewing tobacco allowed on the Foundations campus at any time.

Dealing with Differences between families and program staff

Foundations goal is to have 100% parent satisfaction with our level of services. We expect to serve our families with appropriate compassion and resolve all issues no matter what the challenge is. We understand that some situations can be emotionally difficult, but we ask that parents approach all situations calmly so that an acceptable solution can be reached as quickly as possible.

Families are encouraged to bring up questions or concerns immediately with the front desk administrator who can then make sure they are routed to the appropriate person for resolution.

If a parent does not feel satisfied with the response their questions or concern, please bring the concern or question directly to the owners to find a resolution.

Policy Changes

Foundations for the Future reserves the right to periodically make changes to the policies. A current copy of the handbook will be available for review at the front desk.

Privacy Policy

Foundations for the Future collects personally identifiable information, like names, mailing addresses, email addresses, etc., when voluntarily submitted by our customers during registration and periodic updates. We will not sell or rent this information to anyone. We will not share your personally identifiable information with anyone outside of Foundations, other than by your request, as necessary to provide affiliated programs and/or services, and/or as required by law. At any time, you can request to see what data we have about you and you can change/correct any data we have about you. After your withdrawal date, you may opt out of any future contacts from us at any time by contacting us by phone or email. We take precautions to protect your information through physical security measures as well as online data protection measures. Only employees who need the information to perform their job are granted access to personally identifiable information. If you feel that we are not abiding by this privacy policy at any time, you should contact us immediately.

Thank You and Welcome to Foundations for the Future!

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