

## WELCOME

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# WELCOME

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## University Children's Center Staff

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# WELCOME

Dear Families,

Welcome to the University Children's Learning Center (UCLC, also commonly referred to as the Learning Center). I am glad that you have chosen the Learning Center to be a member of your team in the care and early education of your child. While the UCLC provides a nurturing environment that will help your child feel safe when apart from you, the Learning Center is also dedicated to ensuring your child reaches his/her potential and is ready to enter kindergarten. One goal of the Learning Center is to provide your child with a strong foundation and a love of learning.

I invite you to attend a new family orientation. There is one scheduled at the beginning of each semester. However, please do not wait until the orientation to ask your questions. My door is open and I encourage you to ask any question you have; I never feel that questions are a bother.

The family guide you are about to read contains important information regarding your child's participation in the quality programming offered at UCLC. Families, teachers, caregivers, and the administrative team are equally responsible for familiarizing themselves with all of the policies that are outlined in this book. The expectation is that you will read its contents carefully refer to it as necessary.

I strongly encourage you to stop by my office and visit. My office is always open and I always have time to visit, whether you want to ask a question, share a funny story, express a concern, or just visit. I love to hear from you. I am looking forward to getting to know you and your child, as together we create an environment that will allow your child to blossom.

Sincerely,  
Dawnita S. Nilles, M.S.  
Director

## INTRODUCTION

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### University Children's Learning Center

UCLC is located on the North West corner of the UND campus. The Learning Center is dual license as a Child Care Center and a Preschool by the ND Department of Human Services. In addition, UCLC is approved as a pre-kindergarten site by the ND Department of Public Instruction. UCLC is licensed to provide services for up to 110 children between the ages of 18 months and 12 years of age. The Learning Center provides quality care and early education for children of UND Students, Faculty and Staff, and families from the Greater Grand Forks Community. The Learning Center welcomes children from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. The Learning Center is committed to integrating children with special needs. UCLC also provides educational training for UND students from a variety of colleges and departments on the campus.

The Learning Center is open 7:00 am until 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. The Learning Center is closed for official state and federal holidays. UCLC is also closed for one week in August for professional development. All care is provided on a full day basis. Parents may choose from one of three scheduling options: Monday through Friday, Tuesday and Thursday, or Monday, Wednesday and Friday. No care is offered on a part day schedule.

A very important element of the Learning Center's work is the attention and time given to providing quality care and early education to the children enrolled. The Learning Center strives to maintain high standards such as those put forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The Learning Center is licensed by the North Dakota Department of Human Services, which indicates compliance with State Health, Safety, and Fire Codes, and State Guidelines for Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Care. You may request to see these regulations from the director. UCLC is also approved by the ND Department of Public Instruction as an approved pre-kindergarten site, which indicates compliance with teacher education standards and the use of a research-based preschool curriculum.

The University Children's Learning Center strives to provide quality care and early education by:

- Enrolling child in a color area "family", allowing them to gain a sense of belonging to the community.
- Having classrooms staffed with a minimum of two teachers with an early childhood education background and student caregivers who have received training in the practices of developmentally appropriate early childhood education.
- Encouraging children to learn about themselves through active exploration of their environment and to develop friendships through group activities and sharing meals with one another.
- Providing high quality, USDA approved breakfast, lunch, and snack menu developed by a registered dietician and prepared using safe and healthy practices.

- Providing purposefully planned learning experiences based on teacher's observations and knowledge of children's interests, needs and abilities, including creative art, blocks, role-playing, books, toys, games, large motor equipment, water play, sand play, science materials, and cooking.
- Meeting the individual rest or naptime needs of each child.

Educational training for UND students is achieved by providing a site for them to experience high quality early care and education program for young children. The Learning Center strives to allow:

- Students majoring in early childhood education, elementary education, or special education :
  - An opportunity to observe children and be able to see the various theory taught in classroom lectures brought to life.
  - To be supervised by a highly qualified early childhood educators during their field experiences, which allows them to experience teaching and receive constructive feedback.
- Early childhood education majors to be mentored by a highly qualified early childhood educator during their individualized student teaching experience.
- For students from multiple departments whose career will involve working with young children to practice their skills and increase their knowledge under the direct supervision of an early childhood education professional. UCLC has provided professional experiences for students in nursing, dietetics, speech/communication disorders, social work, psychology, etc.

## **The University Children's Learning Center Teams**

The Administrative Team:

- A full time Director
- A 40% time Assistant Director

The Teaching Team:

- Ten experienced teachers with a degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field
- Student Caregivers – UND students employed through the Federal Work Study program or as in institutional employee who complete 15 hours of online early childhood training as part of their orientation process.

The UCLC team benefits from the assistance of volunteers (year round), Foster Grandparents (year round), Upward Bound Students (in June), Helping Hands (summers), student teachers, and field experience students from a variety of disciplines at UND and area institutions.

The most important quality of any member of the UCLC team is their warmth and sensitivity to the needs of young children and their families. The emphasis is on partner with families to provide a high quality early care and education experience for each child.

## **General Roles for various Team Member:**

**Director:**

- Supervise, support, and mentor UCLC teachers to create an overall positive working environment
- Responsible for fiscal, programmatic, and personnel management of the University Children's Learning Center

**Assistant Director:**

- Assist the director in creating an overall positive working environment
- Oversees UCLC classroom processes and procedures
- Management the day-to-day operating processes

**Experienced Teachers:**

- Assume direct responsibility for groups of young children, providing high quality early care and education for each child
- Prepare a purposefully planned learning environment and activities within that environment
- Be a resource to families
- Supervise student teachers, caregivers, foster grandparents and field experience students

**Caregivers:**

- Work under the direct supervision of the UCLC Experienced Teacher assisting in providing a high quality care and education program for the children.
- Food service and clean up

**Student Teachers**

This is a specific requirement for graduation from the T&L Department for any student majoring in Early Childhood Education. The student teacher works one-on-one with an assigned cooperating teacher from the Learning Center to put into practice the theory, guidelines, and teaching techniques learned as they progressed through their educational programming. The experience is designed to allow the student teacher to gradually assume responsibility in leading their assigned classroom, including the planning, implementation, and assessment of developmentally appropriate educational experiences for young children, classroom management, setting up the learning environment, etc. Throughout this experience the student teacher is receiving constructive feedback from their cooperating teacher and the Learning Center teaching and administrative team.

The student teacher works under the direct supervision of the ECE Services Supervisor (UCLC Teacher) in cooperation with an instructor of record for student teaching, gradually assuming the role of a UCLC teacher. All activities implemented with the children receive prior approval from the cooperating teacher and are carefully supervised.

**Foster Grandparents:**

The Foster Grandparent program is operated through the Department of Human Services. They match retired individuals with early childhood education programs to provide an intergenerational experience for the young children. Their primary role is to spend time reading

to young children, however, at UCLC you will see our beloved foster grandparents actively involved with the children providing a unique and special aspect to the Color Families they work in.

- Work under the direct supervision of the Experienced Teacher
- Primary assignment is to be involved with children and teachers

## Learning Center Policies and Procedures

### Hours of Operation

- Monday through Friday, 7:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
- Families are given a calendar listing the days UCLC will be closed for state recognized holidays and professional development
- The University Children's Learning Center reserves the right to charge a late fee for children not picked up by 5:30 P.M. Late fees will be charged according to this schedule:
 

01 to 05 min. late: \$5	16 to 30 min. late: \$30
06 to 10 min. late: \$10	31 to 45 min. late: \$45
11 to 15 min. late: \$15	46 to 60 min. late: \$60

### Special Note about Late Fees:

- Late fees are assessed separately from your regular bill and are due upon receipt of the bill
- Late pick up times will be determined according to the atomic clock located in the entry way of the Housing Building.
- Law enforcement officials may be notified if children are not picked up after 60 minutes.

### UCLC Closures

- UCLC is closed for State of ND recognized holidays, including: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, & Christmas Day.
- UCLC is closed the day after Thanksgiving.
- UCLC is closed Christmas Eve according to the schedule of the University of North Dakota.
- UCLC is closed for up to 4 days between Christmas and New Year's. The exact dates depend on UND's Official Holiday Schedule.
- UCLC is closed for up to 5 days in mid-August for professional development.
- UCLC is closed for any weather related emergencies that UND closes.
- Any date the UND or the State of North Dakota declares as a holiday.

UCLC is open between semesters and during Spring Break. Please refer to the calendar you were given and that is available on the website.

### Eligibility

The Learning Center is open to children between the ages of 18 months and 12 years of age. Numbers of children enrolled will be in compliance with what is allowed by the Department of

Human Services Child Care Licensing Regulations and best practices as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Classroom openings are assigned as they become available and in accordance with the Learning Center's Waiting List policy. UCLC serves as a professional development center for field experience students and therefore reserves the right to limit the number of children with special needs. This practice allows the Learning Center to maintain an integrated setting for the benefit of all the children and the field experience students while ensuring the individual needs of all children are being effectively met. The Learning Center's goal is to serve a diverse population that includes children of varying needs.

## Enrollment

Once offered a classroom spot your child is not considered enrolled until all required documents are completed and returned to the Learning Center. Required documents include:

- ✓ Initialed and signed/dated UCLC Contract \*\*
- ✓ Initialed and signed/dated UCLC Policies form \*\*
- ✓ UCLC Emergency Classroom Information Sheet \*\*
- ✓ UCLC Demographic and Background Information Sheet
- ✓ ND State Form 847: Parent's Statement on Health of Child \*\*
- ✓ 2 documents as required by the USDA Child & Adult Food Program \*\*
- ✓ Official documentation of immunization OR signed and dated exemption (not required for school-age children)
- ✓ Copy of Official Documentation of Birth (Birth Certificate or Passport)

\*\* Must be updated annually

## Child Care Tuition

Child care tuition is subject to change the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1). Child care tuition is billed as a flat monthly fee. You will not receive a credit for regularly scheduled UCLC closure dates (as outlined above), with the exception of days UCLC closes in August and the dates in late December. You are also entitled to request five (5) vacation days (please see the vacation day's policy).

## General Tuition Policies

- Child care tuition bills will post to your online account on or around the 25th of the month preceding the date it is due.
- Child care tuition is to be paid on the first of each month preceding the care.
- Toddler rates will be assessed to children until their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
- No credit is given for holiday closures, weather related closures, or closures due to other causes over which we have no control.
- You will receive a credit to your child care tuition bill for the dates of closure for professional development in August and the dates in late December.
- All child care tuition fees must be paid to Student Account Services. You may pay online, or mail your payment to Student Account Services. UCLC is unable to accept any payment according to UND policy.

- It is your responsibility to retain all receipts for income tax purposes
- The Federal Tax Identification number for University Children's Learning Center is 45-600-2491. Year-end statements are not automatically generated. You may request one by emailing the Learning Center at [uclc@UND.edu](mailto:uclc@UND.edu). Please allow a minimum of five (5) days' notice to ensure you receive the necessary document.
- Failure to pay your child care tuition will result in a loss of child care services. Any outstanding bills will be sent to collections in accordance with UND policy.

### **Transitioning from the Toddler Room to a Preschool Room**

Children will transition from the Red Family (Toddler Room) to the Purple, Yellow, Blue, or Green Family on or around their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The following items are considered before moving a child from the toddler classroom to the preschool classroom:

- The child's chronological age
- The child's developmental readiness to move
- Availability in a preschool classroom

The decision to move a child will be made as a team between the Toddler Teachers, the proposed Preschool Teacher and the child's family. Tuition will change on your child's birthdate 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday regardless of when transition occurs.

Each transition is designed to meet the needs of the individual child. Some children are excited to move to the Preschool classroom and may enthusiastically join that new Color Family. Other children may require a longer period to adjust to the new environment. All transitions will begin with the child visiting the new Family for a brief time in the morning. The amount of time spent visiting will increase to include a meal time, to include time in the afternoon, and finally to include nap time. The length of this transition will, in large part, be dictated by the needs of the individual child. Parents and the teachers will work as a team to make this time of transition as smooth and easy as possible.

### **Changes in a Child's Schedule**

**Permanent Change to the Schedule:** If you wish to permanently change your child's schedule (either from full time to part time or part time to full time) you may request to do that by completing the Change of Schedule form, available online or in the office. Requests will be honored based on availability of space.

**Short term or One-Time Changes to the schedule:** If you wish to add a single day to your child's part time schedule or make a short term change to the part time schedule, please complete the Additional Care Days form available in the office or online. Requests will be honored based on availability of space.

### **Withdrawal from the Learning Center**

If you choose to withdraw your child from the Learning Center you must complete a Withdrawal form (available online or in the office) a minimum of four (4) weeks in advance of your child's

last day of attendance. You will be charged for four (4) weeks past the date of the submission of the Withdrawal Form or until your child's last day of attendance, whichever is longer.

### **Absentee Policy**

You will not be credit for days your child is absent due to vacation (unless you meet the vacation criteria outlined below) or illness.

If your child does not attend the Learning Center for two (2) consecutive weeks without verbal or written communication from you, your child care services will be discontinued and you will be charged for a minimum four (4) weeks of child care tuition based on your regular tuition schedule past your child's last date of attendance.

### **Vacation Policy:**

Each family may take one (1) week of vacation with a 100% child care tuition credit per fiscal year per child (July 1 through June 30). This vacation credit is not available to children enrolled in the Summer School-Age program. The credit will appear on the monthly child care tuition bill the month following the vacation, if all criteria is met. Criteria includes:

- Vacation credit applies only to a period of one continuous week of the child's regular schedule (i.e., five (5) consecutive days if your child is enrolled full time; three (3) days within a seven (7) day period; two (2) days within a seven (7) period).
- To receive vacation credit you must submit a dated and signed Vacation Notice (available online or in the office) a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of the vacation dates.

### **Storm Days**

UCLC closes for weather related instances when directed to by the University of North Dakota. While the Learning Center will be open when directed by UND, we highly encourage parents to consider safety when making travel decisions.

- The Learning Center does **not** close based on the Grand Forks Public School closure decisions.
- Listen to local radio and television stations for UND closing announcements.
- **No child care tuition credit is given for storm days or closures due to other causes over which we have no control (i.e., extended loss of power, water, etc).**

### **Arrival and Departure**

At arrival **you must sign in at your child on the attendance sheets located in each Color Area.** You must indicate the current time you are dropped off and we ask that you indicate your expected pick up time. The sign in/sign out sheets are extremely important because: **In the event of an emergency the attendance sheets are the only verification we have to know which children are currently in attendance.**

Once your child is signed in, UCLC assumes responsibility for your child. Once you sign your child out at the end of the day, you assume responsibility for your child. The University Children's Learning Center cannot be responsible for any child until he/she is formally signed in.

Please be aware of the following notes regarding signing in and out:

- **Consistent** failure to sign your child in and/or out may result in the loss of child care services.
- While signing your child in encourage him/her to put his/her coat and/or other belongings in his/her cubby and to wash his/her hands. Learning Center teachers will also help to direct your child to these complete these duties.
- Please be sure the Learning Center teacher in our child's classroom is aware of your child's arrival. You may do this by saying hello or in some other way making contact with the teacher. This is also a good time to let your child's teacher know any important information that may affect your child's day.
- At the time of pick up please be sure the teacher is aware of your child's departure by talking with the teacher or in some way making contact with him/her. This is a good time for the teacher to let you know any important information that may affect your child's evening.

### **Someone other than parent picking up child**

When someone other than parent/guardian is going to pick up your child please inform office personnel and your child's teacher. Please provide, in writing, the first and last name of the person picking up your child. It is your responsibility to inform the person picking your child up that a photo ID may be required before your child will be released from the Learning Center.

- Please Note: The Learning Center reserves the right to assess a late fee if the individual picking up arrives after 5:30. You may also be assessed a late fee if the person picking up your child is after 5:30 due to having to get their ID. **The Learning Center cannot and will not release a child to a person that does not have the proper authorization or the proper identification.**
- Also, please be aware that if the teacher or caregiver working in the classroom that has not met you, you may be very well be asked to show photo ID before we release your child to leave the Learning Center. The Learning Center's number one goal is your child's safety.

### **Health Exclusion/ Screening Policy**

Exclusionary decisions are guided by advice from Grand Forks Public Health and *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*. A copy of this manual is on file with the Center Director and is available upon request for review. Additionally, copies can be purchased for \$60.00 from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

Please know that the Learning Center Teachers and Administrative team know that you need to be at work and that it causes great stress on you and your family when someone has to stay home with a sick child. However, the Learning Center policy is in place because it is what is best for all the children and their families, as well as the teachers. The Learning Center team does their best to clean and sanitize surfaces, toys, door knobs, etc. in the facility. The whole team is diligent about handwashing; both the children and teachers washing their hands well. But you need to help us out by being sure your child is healthy when you drop him/her off.

You will be contacted and asked to pick your child up from the Learning Center if your child develops any of the following conditions:

- Your child's health prevents him/her from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the child's teacher and someone from the administrative team.
- Your child's health requires a greater need for care than is typical resulting in other children not having the necessary supervision and care they deserve, as determined by the teacher and someone from the administrative team.
- Fever: as defined by a body temperature above 100 degrees F. when taken by using a thermometer that measures a child's body temperature by swiping it across the child's forehead. For safety reasons, UCLC will not use oral or rectal thermometers. Child must be excluded from child care until 24 hours fever free without the aid of fever reducing medications.
- Vomiting: 2 or more episodes in the previous 24 hours or one episode if other symptoms (fever, lethargy, extreme tired, etc.) are present or if the child has a recent history of head injury. Child must be excluded from child care for 24 hours past the last time they vomit.
- Diarrhea: defined as a stool that is not contained in the diaper or is causing accidents for toilet trained children or if the frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above the normal (for each individual). Child must be excluded from child care until 24 hours after the last incidence of diarrhea.
- Blood in stools
- Rash with fever or behavior change. Child must be excluded from child care until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Impetigo: child must be excluded from child care for 24 hours past the beginning of treatment.
- Strep Throat: child must be excluded for 24 hours past the beginning of treatment.
- Any communicable disease: a child must be excluded until a physician provides written verification they may return to the Learning Center.
- Evidence of head lice or nit: the "no nit" policy is for control and prevention of head lice outbreaks. Children can return to the Center with a re-admission slip from Grand Forks Public Health Department or family physician, stating the child is nit free.

Please remember that the policy is that your child must be fever free (without using any fever reducing medications), have not vomited or had diarrhea for a full 24 hours before they come to the Learning Center. Fever free because they have had medication, is not the same as being fever free, they are still contagious and need to be at home.

Teachers will conduct ongoing health screening as they observe the children. You will be contacted, but not necessarily required to pick your child up if the following symptoms are noted and seem to be causing the child a great deal of discomfort or interfering with their ability to actively engage in the classroom:

- Runny nose
- Extreme lethargy
- Extreme inexplicable irritability or persistent crying
- Any signs of difficulty breathing and/or wheezing
- Complaints of a headache
- Persistent cough, especially one that interferes with the child's ability to rest
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms

#### Illness notification:

- If a child becomes ill during the day the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.
- If after three (3) attempts (home, work, cell phone) the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, the person(s) listed as an emergency contact will be notified.
- If determined necessary prompt pick up of your child is expected. UCLC is not equipped with medical staff to provide care for sick children.
- If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease a note will be posted by the sign in/out sheets and an email will be sent notifying all families of the possible exposure (including symptoms and period of incubation). Your child or family will not be identified in the notification.

Children in attendance are expected to be able to participate in all daily activities (for instance, a child may not remain indoors during outdoor play). Please make certain that your child is feeling well enough to fully participate before dropping him/her off at the Learning Center for the day. The Learning Center is not staffed to allow an individual child to stay indoors during outside time. One guideline is to ask yourself: "Would my child feel better at home or are they able to fully participate in the daily schedule at the Learning Center?" It is very important for you to have alternate child care arrangements for instances when your child is not well enough to attend the Learning Center.

Families are also asked to please call the Learning Center if their child will be absent due to illness or for other reasons.

### **Minor Injuries**

All Learning Center Teachers maintain current certification for First Aid and CPR. All are trained using a DHS approved program. Beginning July 1, 2017 all Student Caregivers will also be complete an approved CPR and First Aid training program within the first three (3) months of employment.

While UCLC teachers and caregivers are diligent about providing a safe and healthy environment there are going to be situations in which your child receives an injury. While we are staffed to provide a safe environment there are going to be incidents where your child may receive an injury. Young children are learning to control their emotions and behaviors and the children at

UCLC are in all stages of this development. Most often these injuries are quite minor. However, they are scary for any child.

Following is the process each Learning Center Teacher and Caregiver will follow if your child receives an injury:

- The injury will be evaluated for severity. If the injury appears to be minor the appropriate first aid measures will be taken, starting with ensuring the child feels safe and secure. Following this the teachers and caregivers will treat the injury including washing the area with soap and water, applying a band-aid, and/or applying an ice pack.
- If the injury appears to be severe, the teacher or caregiver will alert the director, assistant director or supervising teacher in charge (in that order). The injury will be evaluated and appropriate measures taken which may include calling the parents/guardians or seeking immediate medical treatment or both.
- A parent/guardian will always be notified, regardless of severity if a child sustains an injury to their head or genital area.
- The teacher or caregiver that witnessed the incident will complete an incident Report (ND SFN 438). The parent will sign the form and be given a copy.
- The director or assistant director will report the incident to the UND Safety Office by completing a UND Incident Reporting Form.
- The original SFN 438 and the UND Incident Reporting Form will be kept in the child's file according to the UND Records Retention policy.

UCLC understands that it is frustrating to learn your child sustained an injury while in our care. The frustration is compounded because the teachers will only talk to you about the injury itself, not the circumstances that surrounded the injury (i.e., you will not be told the name of the other child involved). Please be assured that all UCLC experienced teachers have received extensive training in early childhood guidance and are working to teach all children the appropriate self-regulation skills and how to make safe choices. No incident is overlooked and all incidents have consequences that are based on the developmental level of each individual child.

## **Medication**

If your child is taking a prescribed or over-the-counter medication the Learning Center teachers are more than happy to help you out. The definition of “medication” is very broad and includes anything that is taken orally (prescription medications, fever-reducing or pain relieving medications) or used topically (including insect repellent, sunscreen, chapstick, etc). The Learning Center’s policy regarding administering any medication to a child includes:

- No medication, orally or topically, will be administered or applied to any child without written permission and specific, detailed instructions from a parent/guardian or medical professional.
- Permission forms (found in your child’s classroom, the office, or online) must be filled out for a specific medication or topical treatment, with a specified amount to be administered and specific time of administration. Nothing may be given (with the exception of the use of Epi-Pens or other treatments for emergency medical situations) on an “as needed” basis.

- Prescription medications will be administered only to the child whose name is typed on the official prescription label applied by a pharmacy.
- All medication will be stored in the refrigerator in the staff area or in a locked cabinet in the classroom. Only experienced teachers or members of the Learning Center administrative team will administer medication.
- All written medical authorizations are posted in a secure and discrete location within the Color Area.

It is very important that you do **NOT** leave medication of any kind in your child's cubby, backpack, or pocket. This is extremely dangerous for your child and the other children at UCLC.

### **Emergency and Medical Information**

In accordance with best practices as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), you will be required to update all your enrollment paperwork on an annual basis. This is also required by child care licensing. However, it is crucial that you make the Learning Center aware of any changes:

- In your telephone contact information
- In your physical address
- In your marital status
- In the legal parental custody of your child

**The Center will not be responsible for anything that may occur as a result of false information given at the time of enrollment or from the use of outdated or inaccurate information.**

In case of a medical emergency, doctors will not normally treat a child until a parent or legal guardian arrives and gives permission for treatment. The Learning Center Administrative Team, Teaching Team, and caregivers will take whatever steps may be necessary to obtain emergency medical care, if warranted. These steps may include, but not limited to the calling 911. In the event that emergency personnel are called:

- The Experienced Teacher most familiar with the child and/or the director/assistant director will accompany the child to the nearest emergency medical center. UCLC/UND employees are not allowed to transport a child in their personal vehicles.
- Teachers at the Learning Center will make continued attempts to contact the parent/guardian and/or the emergency contacts listed on the child's most current enrollment paperwork.
- Teachers will follow the instructions of medical and emergency professionals.

**Any expenses incurred in the event of a medical emergency or accidental injury will be borne by the injured child's family.**

### **Intoxication Policy**

The University Children's Learning Center's first obligation is the safety of children. Teachers and caregivers are instructed not to release a child to an adult who they believe is intoxicated

with alcohol or other substances. However, if that person is the child's parent the Learning Center Teachers are required to release the child. If a UCLC Experienced Teacher suspects (using the indicators listed below) that a parent or guardian of the child is under the influence of alcohol or other substance he/she will:

- Make every attempt to detain that person from picking up the child
- Call the child's other parent/guardian

If the parent/guardian that is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or other substance does leave the Learning Center property with the child, particularly if he/she leaves in a motor vehicle, law enforcement will be called and given the name of the adult, make/model/color of the car, and license plate number, if possible. A report will be filed with Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Protection as mandated by North Dakota law.

If a person that is authorized by the parent or guardian to pick up the child appears to be intoxicated, the child will not be released and parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

Visible indicators of intoxication:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| • Difficulty with fine motor skills     | • Speaking incoherently           |
| • Balance and coordination difficulties | • Slow verbal response            |
| • Loud speech                           | • Bloodshot eyes                  |
| • Slurred speech                        | • Flushed face                    |
| • Boasting                              | • Alcohol smell from their breath |
| • Stumbling                             |                                   |
| • Crude behavior                        |                                   |

If, at any time, an individual becomes angry, hostile, belligerent, and/or individuals at UCLC feel threatened the University of North Dakota Campus Police will be contacted.

## **Outside Food Policy**

**No outside food items can be brought into the Learning Center.** This is to protect children that may have food allergies or intolerances. All of the food serviced at the Learning Center is prepared specifically for the children at the Learning Center by UND Dining Services. Each semester the menu is developed in conjunction with a UND registered dietician. Any special dietary needs of individual children are planned for and alternative meals or portions of meals are delivered to the Learning Center. All food sent to the Learning Center is peanut/tree nut free.

Any food prepared at the Learning Center as part of a learning activity will meet the dietary needs of all children engaging in the activity. All food related activities will adhere to the no peanut/tree nut policy.

No food is used for playing purposes because we teach that food is necessary for our health and is not a toy.

## **Toys from home:**

Young Children are learning to share the toys they are playing with at the Learning Center. Sharing is very difficult under that best circumstance but it is extremely difficult with the item is your own personal toy from home. For this reason, personal toys should stay at home in order to prevent loss, accidental damage, and not wanting to share something personal. If a child does bring a toy from home, even if they leave it in their cubby, the Learning Center is not responsible for any loss or damage that may occur.

If your child wants to share a special book or CD/cassette with his/her friends, please give it to the teacher so it can be kept in a safe place. However, please understand that UCLC will not be held responsible for lost or damaged books.

### **Birthdays**

The Learning Center is proud to have children from all over this great world. The teachers work hard to ensure that everyone feels special, welcomed, and a sense of belonging in their Color family and at the Learning Center in general. The teachers, caregivers and administrative team respect each family's beliefs, traditions and practices. Therefore, the Learning Center does not celebrate individual birthdays of children by providing a gift or special treat. If an individual family chooses to bring a "gift" for members of their child's classroom in honor of his/her birthday, please discuss appropriate options with the teachers (gifts such as stickers, special art material, bubbles, game, book, or puzzles are common suggestions).

Please remember that outside food is not allowed at the Learning Center.

### **Outdoor Play**

In October 2015, UCLC proudly opened two certified Nature Explore Outdoor Classrooms. The outdoor classrooms extend the learning that occurs all day long to the outdoors. The Outdoor Classrooms contain learning areas similar to what you will see in the indoor classrooms. The teachers purposefully plan and implement learning experiences that encourage the children to explore and experiment with nature.

Please be aware and understand that:

- UCLC teachers believe outdoor play is an important and integral part of each day.
- The children will play outdoors for part of each morning and afternoon.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has clothing appropriate for the season which will allow them to freely explore in the outdoor classroom.
- Please remember that that this exploration in the outdoor classroom may result in the child getting dirty.
- Please remember: Children who are not well enough to play outdoors are not well enough to be at UCLC.

### **Insect Repellent and Sunscreen**

The Learning Center will provide sunscreen and insect repellent. You will be required to sign a permission form authorizing the Learning Center to use it on your child. At the beginning of the summer season you will be made aware of the brand that will be used at the Learning Center that year. You are welcome to provide your own if you so choose.

## Dress Code

- Children should be dressed in wash and wear clothing because many learning activities are messy (paint, paste, glue, clay, etc.).
- Children will need a full change of clothing in a labeled Ziploc bag. Remember to bring new clothes as your child grows and as the seasons change.
- In cool and fluctuating weather it is helpful to dress children in layers, such as a sweatshirt and/or a windbreaker, so they can remove a layer as the day gets warmer or add a layer as it gets cooler.
- In winter, a snowsuit (coat and pants are acceptable), warm boots, mittens, and a cap are required (extra socks and mittens are helpful).
- Label all clothing because the Center will not be responsible for lost clothing.

## Emergency/ Fire Drills

Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis to allow children the opportunity to practice safely exiting the building.

- In the event that the Learning Center must actually evacuate the building, children and teachers will evacuate to Community High School (east of UCLC across Stanford Road).

## Field Trips

Children may go on field trips on and off campus during the year.

- When teachers plan an on campus field trip, a note will be posted by the sign in sheets to make you aware of their planned departure and arrival times at least two (2) days before the event.
- Teachers may take children to playgrounds in the immediate area surrounding the Learning Center. They will leave a note by the sign in sheets letting you know which playground they are at and how to get there. The note will also have the time they intend to return.
- If the teachers plan a field trip that takes them off campus, they may walk (if it's a reasonable distance) or use a rented UND/ND State Fleet vehicle. You will be notified and asked to sign a permission slip a minimum of one (1) week in advance. Parents are required to provide an appropriate child restraint for their child.
- If you chose to have your child not participate in the field trip, you will need to make alternate child care arrangements. Your child may visit another classroom, if there is space, but this is not guaranteed.
- Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to participate in field trips if your schedule allows.

Please note that the Learning Center strictly adheres to the North Dakota State Law requiring that children under age 7 ride in a car seat or booster seat. The car seat or booster seat must be installed and used according to manufacturer's instructions. A seat belt may be used if the child is over 80 pounds and taller than 4'9". Children over 40 pounds may use a lap belt if the vehicle

does not have lap/shoulder belts, or all of the lap/shoulder belts are in use, because booster seats cannot be used with lap-only seat belts.

## **Rest Time**

The Learning Center stresses healthy practices. One of these practices is allowing one's body to rest during the day. Each teacher is offered a minimum of a 30 minute break each day. By the same principle we stress to children that they need to rest their bodies to help it grow and develop properly. Parents and teachers will work together to determine how much rest a child needs. We offer one of two options:

- Option One: children may take a nap for one to two hours (12:00 - 2:00). We allow the child to wake up naturally but ensure that every child is awake by 2:00. At parents request the teachers will gently wake a child after a desired amount of sleep. The children from the Purple, Yellow, Blue, and Green Families will go to the gym at 12:00 and have an individual cot on which to sleep. Children in the Red Family will sleep on their cot in their classroom.
- Option Two: children may rest for 30 minutes (12:00 - 12:30). These children will have an individual cot to lay on quietly as they rest their body. They will be in one of the classrooms in the Learning Center.

Regardless if your child is a restor or napper we ask that you provide a small blanket stored in a covered container with a locking lid, no larger than 18 1/8 L x 12 1/4" W x 7" H. You may also provide a small, soft stuffed animal or pillow to help your child relax and rest. Please be certain that all items fit in the covered container and are labeled with your child's name.

For sanitation reasons we ask that all blankets be taken home and laundered at the end of each week.

## **Biting Policy**

Biting is a behavior, often resulting from limited language skills and an inability to control one's own actions, that is frustrating for families, teachers, and children. Please understand that it is a common developmental stage that some children experience. Please also realize that it is rarely an act of aggression but instead usually the result of frustration. The Learning Center teachers and caregivers will be diligent in their supervision of all the children, keep frustration to a minimum, and create a classroom environment that encourages cooperation, mutual respect, and safe decision making. But the reality is that sometimes biting happens.

Young children are learning impulse control and tolerance of frustration. Children with emerging language skills may be frustrated because they cannot communicate their wants and needs. They are learning how to wait for something they want, how to share, and how to take turns. Consequently, most children will display unacceptable behaviors of one kind or another, such as screaming, hitting, kicking, pushing, hair-pulling, scratching, or biting. While it can be extraordinarily frustrating for an adult, this is a common stage during early childhood development.

The issue of biting is more complicated than other early childhood behaviors because young children bite for reasons other than anger or frustration. Other reasons children may bite include the following:

- To explore the world around them.
- Because they may be hungry.
- To express affection, especially if they have observed adults who kiss with their lips parted.
- To get attention.
- As a result of teething or an earache.

When a classroom is experiencing an inappropriate behavior, especially biting, screaming, hitting, etc., while the teachers are being diligent in their supervision and attempting to prevent the behaviors they are also trying to determine the cause. Regardless of the cause of the behavior teachers will respond with appropriate guidance techniques. For example, if a child is trying to express affection, the teachers will teach the child how to use gentle touches and to give hugs. If the child uses the inappropriate behaviors out of frustration, the teacher will actively help the child learn appropriate ways to handle negative emotions, and redirect his/her attention to another activity. If the child is biting to get attention, after a verbal reprimand and redirection of behavior, teachers will monitor the child closely and offer a lot of purposeful praise and attention when the child makes appropriate choices while withdrawing attention for inappropriate behaviors.

A child who is struggling to learn more appropriate behaviors will be shadowed as often as possible by a teachers, student teachers, or caregivers so they can give the child immediate, hand-over-hand practice in using appropriate actions. Words teachers may use to speak to a child who has bitten include the following: biting hurts, biting is not ok, and it is not okay to hurt. The child who was bitten is always comforted and attended to first (appropriate first aid will be administered as necessary).

The reasons children bite and use other inappropriate reactions to frustration are many and varied. Therefore there is no “one size fits all” solution to correcting such behaviors. Teacher’s actions will completely depend on the reason the child is biting and on the individual needs and temperament of the child. Some possible steps we may take include:

- One-on-One caregiving providing the child with hand-over-hand practice of more appropriate strategies.
- Careful observation of the child including careful document of incidents to attempt to determine the causes for the behavior.
- Assessment of the child’s individual temperament, strengths, challenges, and preferences to guide the development of an appropriate intervention.
- Careful analysis of the environment (including the daily schedule, room arrangement, toys and materials) that may be possible triggers to the behavior.
- Parents may be asked to observe their child and assess their child’s environment outside the Learning Center to provide additional input.

Once this information has been gathered a face-to-face meetings with the parents will be held to develop a comprehensive plan that will best meet the individual needs of the child.

Regardless of why a child is biting, biting is always taken very seriously. The Learning Center works diligently to keep everyone safe. However, biting can happen so quickly that it is impossible to prevent every incident. If a biting incident occurs the families of the child who bit and of the child who was bitten will be notified. Please note that the name of the child who was bitten and the child who did the biting is confidential information and will not be disclosed. It is a licensing requirement to maintain confidentiality.

## **Aquatics Policy**

At times children at the Learning Center will have the opportunity to be involved in activities that include water. Following are examples of activities and the safety policies that are in place as precautions to injury.

- **Sprinklers:** When sprinklers are set out a designated teacher will canvas the area to ensure that there is no debris that could cause injury to children running. Additionally, sprinklers will only be placed in open areas that provide adequate space for the number of children choosing the activity. Department of Human Services (DHS) child/teacher ratios will be followed at all times.
- **Wading/Kiddie Pools:** One teacher will be designated as the leader of that pool. That teacher will at no time leave the side of the pool, unless the pool is emptied. If more than one pool is filled a separate teacher will be designated as the leader of each one. The number of children allowed in each pool will be limited to ensure the teacher can adequately supervise the activity. Additional teachers/caregivers will be assigned to ensure appropriate supervision is maintained at all times.
- **Public Pool:** At times the Learning Center may take a field trip to a local public pool. Parents will be required to complete a permission form, in which parents will provide the Learning Center with information about their child's swimming abilities. If parents request that a child use a lifejacket or other swimming aid, the parent will be required to provide it. The child/teacher ratio will be determined based on the number of children participating and their parent's disclosure of swimming ability. Lifeguards and other pool personnel will NOT be included in the child/teacher ratio.

If you chose to have your child not participate in a field trip to the public pool, you will need to make alternate child care arrangements. Your child may visit another classroom, if there is space, but this is not guaranteed.

Each family will be required to complete an Aquatics permission form at the beginning of each summer.

## **Internal Waiting List**

UCLC families may fill out a waiting list application as soon as they know they may have another child they wish to enroll. If you have a child currently enrolled at the Learning Center your child will be placed on an internal waiting list This will give you priority over individuals on the external waiting list.

## **Cellular Phone Policy**

Cellular phone use in the classroom is prohibited by all children. The follow policies will be adhered to at all times:

- If a cellular phone is brought to the Learning Center per a family member's request it must be kept in a back pack in the child's cubbie.
- Failure to follow the cellular phone policy may result in confiscate on of the phone.
- Confiscated phones will be placed in the office, available for pick up by a parent/guardian only.
- The University Children's Learning Center will not be responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal cellular phones.

## **Electronic Device Policy**

Use of electronic devices such as MP3 players or hand held games are prohibited for use in the toddler and preschool classrooms. The following policies will be adhered to at all times:

- If an electronic device is brought to the Learning Center it must be kept in a back pack in the child's cubbie.
- Failure to follow the policy will result in confiscation of the device.
- Confiscated devices will be placed in the office and available for pick up by a parent/guardian only.
- The University Children's Learning Center will not be responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal electronic devices

## **Social Media Policy**

Social media is something that many families use. We ask that all families following the policies as outlined below.

### **Families Use of Social Media**

Although the University Children's Learning Center cannot prohibit families from using social media sites, we respectfully request adherence to the following policies:

- No discriminating, derogatory, or otherwise negative remarks be made against the University Children's Learning Center, enrolled children or families, teachers, caregivers, student teachers, or another person connected in any way to UCLC.
- If the content of the post is questionable we ask you to err on the side of caution and not post it.
- University Children's Learning Center families are given the option of allowing photographs to be taken for use in the classroom, the UCLC website, and/or classroom social media sites. From time to time group photographs may be taken and shared with families. While we cannot prohibit families from sharing these photographs on social media sites, UCLC advises caution.
- Please do not "tag" photographs, which will help keep photos more secure.

## **UCLC's Use Of Social Media**

UCLC Color Families may decide to use social media as a way to communicate with families in their classroom. If your child's color family decides to create a page, you will:

- Be notified in writing and asked to sign an acknowledgement form.
- The privacy settings will be as restrictive as the site allows.
- No child or family will be tagged in a photo.
- The page will not be searchable.
- Parents will be invited to join the page and will not be able to view the page without "administrator" (the experienced teachers, director and or assistant director at UCLC) approval.

## **Family Involvement**

UCLC strives to be a partner with families in providing high quality care and early education for children. To help us achieve that goal family involvement and interaction with children is welcomed and encouraged throughout the day. Some simple ways for you and your family to be involved at the Learning Center include:

- Visiting the Learning Center to play with children or join in a group activity; no reservations or advance notice is required.
- Join your child for breakfast, lunch, or snack with their child's "family". Please make a reservation at least 2 days in advance to ensure we can have an extra meal ordered. There is a small fee that will be charged for your meal.
- Join your child's family on field trips or when a special project is scheduled; volunteer help by a member of the child's family will be very much appreciated.
- Come and share special hobbies, interests, and talents you may have. Please let your child's teacher know because we would love to have you share that with the children in your child's color family.

Two to Three Family Nights will be scheduled throughout the academic year. These events will occur in the evening and provide a chance for families to enjoy some time together at the Learning Center and for teachers to interact in a more relaxed setting with the family. If you would like to help organize one this would be a great way to get involved.

## **Communication**

On a daily basis, families and teachers are encouraged to chat upon arrival or departure to share important information with one another. While it is difficult for teachers to answer a telephone call during the day, please feel free to schedule a time for your child's teacher to call you or to sit down and visit if you want to address a specific concern or question. You are also welcome to email your child's teacher (email contact information is available on the website). Parents of toddlers will receive a daily written report of their child's day.

## **Family-Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are held two (2) times per year. These are times set aside to discuss strengths, concerns, or answer questions. In the fall, teachers and families share information about the child's interests, strengths, and set goals for the upcoming academic year. Parents will receive a

written report that includes the goals set and the teacher's plan for reaching those goals at the Learning Center. During the Spring Family-Teacher Conference, goals are reviewed noting successes and addressing challenges. A written report generated by the teacher from the documentation gathered throughout the year will be provided to parents. Parents or teachers can request meeting with one another at any time. The director and/or assistant director will participate as requested.

If a teacher or you as the parent/guardian have a concern about any aspects of your child's growth and development a meeting may be scheduled. This provides an opportunity for an in-depth, focused discussion about the noted concerns. Both the teacher and parent/guardian will have an opportunity to share their perspective of the child's strengths and challenges; together a plan to help the child succeed can be developed.

### **Parent Advisory Board**

The Parent Advisory Board consists of a minimum of one parent representative from each Color Family, one experienced teacher and the assistant director. The purpose of the group is to provide advisory support to the Learning center about a variety of matters. Such matters may include working with budgetary concerns, specific policies or procedures of the Learning Center, and generally to offer the parent perspective on decisions that impact the Learning Center. The Parent Advisory Board has a page on the UCLC webpage that includes their contact information.

### **Addressing Various Concerns and/or Questions**

#### **General Concerns and/or Questions**

If you have general concerns about the Learning Center, please feel free to email one of the Parent Advisory Board members, email the Director, or speak with your child's teacher. In whatever manner you choose to communicate concerns, questions, or successes please know that the teachers and administrative team at the Learning Center want to hear from you. Your feedback is what makes the University Children's Learning Center a high quality program.

UCLC offers the Parent Advisory Board as a way to bring general concerns up for discussion. Whenever possible families, teachers, and caregivers are asked to voice their concerns to one another directly; in a manner that displays respect and an attitude that displays confidence in our ability to work together to effectively address the concern.

#### **Specific concerns and/or Questions about your child:**

Arrange to talk with your child's teacher at a time that is convenient for both of you. Please remember that it is difficult for teachers to give their full attention at drop off and pick up time because this time of transition is often very busy. Your concerns are important and the teachers want to be able to give you the attention and time that is required to fully address your concern. If your concern requires immediate attention from your teacher please tell the teacher about the urgency and arrangements will be made for the teacher to step away from the classroom for a few minutes. However, provide enough time for arrangements to be made to ensure the safety of all the children in the classroom.

### **Specific health and safety concerns about the Learning Center**

If you have an immediate or specific concern please share it with the Director. Every effort will be made to address the concern as quickly as possible. If the Director is unavailable, please leave a written note indicating the urgency of the contact and the Director will call you as soon as possible, hopefully within two hours.

You can also call Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Care Licensing at 701-787-8540 to report any health and safety concerns. See also Abuse and/or Neglect.

### **Specific Concerns about the Leadership of the Learning Center**

If you have concerns regarding the leadership, please contact the director supervisor of the Learning Center: Connie Frazier, Executive Director of Housing and Dining; [connie.frazier@UND.edu](mailto:connie.frazier@UND.edu), 701-777-3775

### **Abuse and/or Neglect**

With physical and sexual abuse so prevalent in our society, The University Children's Learning Center wants families to be assured that a background check is completed on each person (teacher, caregiver and volunteer) that may be in contact with children. The following process is completed with each hire, including caregivers:

- The individual must complete the Criminal History Records Check Authorization form. UND completes a background check BEFORE an individual is authorized to be hired.
- On or before their first day of employment the individual must complete an ND SFN 508: Authorization for Child Abuse and Neglect Background Check. This form is immediately submitted to Grand Forks County Social Services. Upon receipt, a child abuse and neglect record check is completed for Grand Forks County. Following this a State of ND check is completed.
- On or before their first day of employment a ND and/or MN State Court Public Records check is completed by the director.
- Within one week of being hired the individual must be fingerprinted and complete ND SFN 831: Personal Authorization for Criminal History Background Check Inquiry – Early Childhood and SFN 377: Criminal History Background Check Address Disclosure/Release of Information. The fingerprints and appropriate forms are submitted by the director to the Department of Human Services Criminal Background Check Unit. The fingerprints are processed through ND Bureau of Criminal Investigation as well as the FBI. An individual is NEVER left unsupervised with children until the letter with the fingerprint results are returned to the Learning Center.

In addition to this initial background check process, all UCLC personnel complete the SFN 508 on an annual basis. The director completes a State of ND Court website check annually on each individual that works at UCLC. Every teacher and caregiver must resubmit the fingerprint background check paperwork every five (5) years.

While the background check process is extensive it is not a guarantee that a person is always going to behave appropriately and make safe choices with regards to young children. Therefore,

it is the exception for a staff member to be alone with a child. For children's protection and for our teacher's and caregiver's protection, teachers and caregivers work together in full view of one another, and are rarely, if ever, alone with a child. All the classrooms are open. Everyone is able to see into each classroom and hear what is occurring as well. The bathrooms are located between two classrooms and the half door on the changing rooms allows for the person in there to be seen and heard by others.

The Learning Center takes your child's safety and security very seriously. If a family should ever suspect physical or sexual abuse, they are asked to please discuss their concern with the Director immediately. Any suspicions of abuse or neglect can and should also be reported directly to Grand Forks County Social Services by calling 701-787-8540.

- Any staff person accused of abuse or neglect will be summoned for a consultation with the Administrative Team.
- The staff person will be relieved of his/her duties to meet with a Social Service Investigation team as needed after University Children's Learning Center has been notified of allegations.
- If this individual is found guilty of alleged accusations, the person will be immediately and permanently relieved of all duties at the University Children's Learning Center.

**All early childhood education professionals (teachers, staff, student teachers, etc.) are mandated by ND Law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. We at the University Children's Learning Center take this mandate seriously and are dedicated to protecting all children.**

1. Any suspicion of a child being abused or neglected (words of the child, incidental bruises, or marks that cannot be explained) will be recorded in Observation Journals and discussed with the Color Area teachers and Director.
2. Color Area teachers and Director will decide which of the following step(s) are most appropriate:
  - A. Further observation and recording.
  - B. A meeting of family member(s), teacher(s), and Director.
  - C. Report to Social Services.

### **Accountability Policy**

Children who would normally arrive that Learning Center unaccompanied by the parent, does not arrive at that appointed time, parents will be called immediately. Parents are responsible for taking the necessary steps to locate the child.

## ABOUT US

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### Mission Statement

The mission of UCLC works on multiple, intersecting levels: to provide quality, educational childcare in keeping with the best practices in the field of Early Childhood Development; to provide interactive, experiential learning opportunities for UND's students; to provide a research site that will increase national knowledge about families and young children; to contribute to a vibrant campus climate by supporting cultural diversity, by offering a summer program that brings school-age children to the UND campus, and by supporting the recruitment and retention of faculty members, students, and international scholars.

### Philosophy

The University Children's Learning Center objective is twofold:

- To provide quality early care and education for young children
- To provide student teachers with an environment in which they can acquire learning experiences in the field of Early Childhood Education

Curriculum focus:

- Developmental needs of the children - based upon research on how young children learn
- Adhere to guidelines set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for developmentally appropriate practice for young children
- Activities and teaching methods are planned to be age-appropriate and responsive to the needs of individual children
- Values diversity and children's individual differences
- Children become members of a caring classroom community

### Emergent Curriculum

Design and Purpose:

- To promote children's physical, social, emotional, language, intellectual, and aesthetic development.
- Environment is prepared/organized based on close observation of children and professional knowledge of Early Childhood Education
- Children are encouraged to make decisions, explore, solve problems, discover, and be creative
- Curriculum focuses on the many values/benefits of play, rather than on formal paper, pencil and workbook approaches
- “Emerging Curriculum” activities are developed/based on observations of individual/groups of young children at play
- Curriculum is based on teacher’s skilled observations/knowledge of his/her group of children and individual (child/teacher) common interests/needs
- Diversity/individual differences are valued
- Each child is respected as a person
- Each child be a member of a caring community

- Families are encouraged to appreciate diversity. Families are invited to join their child's classroom for activities, introduction of a special interest, and share a part of their culture. In the past, families have made tortillas, performed Native American Dances, and seen their names written in languages such as Japanese. Families' interactions and special presentations have exposed children to a highly diverse group of people whom they've come to know, appreciate, and respect.

### **Assessment and Teaching Strategies Gold**

The University Children's Learning Center utilizes a valid and reliable online assessment tool, Teaching Strategies Gold (TS Gold), to document and record observations of individual children on an on-going basis. TS Gold utilizes identified objectives that meet state early learning guidelines. The guidelines are used to assess individual children's growth on a developmental continuum. The objectives are focused around four (4) main domains: social/emotional, cognitive, physical, and language. Additionally, TS Gold allows for five (5) specific content areas to be assessed: literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts.

Teachers at the Learning Center utilize the developmental continuum on TS Gold to effectively plan and implement lesson plans for the class and learning goals for each individual child, which may be discussed at family/teacher conferences. Individual progress reports are generated using TS Gold, and will be given to families once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester. The progress reports will provide an overview of each child's current level of development in the four main domains, and some of the content areas.

All experienced teachers are required to successfully complete an online Inter-Rater Reliability Training and assessment to ensure the validity and reliability of their decisions regarding each child's growth and development. This training is repeated every three (3) years.

### **Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom**

UCLC has two Nationally Certified Nature Explore Outdoor Classrooms. One is designed for the preschoolers and one for the toddlers. You will see logs for climbing on, walking across, and jumping off. You will see stumps for rolling around, walking along, and building. We have tree cookies – round chunks cut from trees and branches of various sizes that allow the children to carry heavy loads and build unique structures. Our outdoor classroom has an Akimbra or a Marimba for creating wonderful music. You will also see children pounding real nails with real hammers.

Teachers are often asked about the children getting hurt in our Outdoor Classroom. The reality is that children can get hurt doing any activity. The key is providing as many safety nets and securities as possible. We do this in a number of ways, particularly in having a sufficient amount of supervision at all times. Hammers and nails are never taken out unless one teacher is able to devote his/her complete attention to this activity. A teacher is always on hand to walk beside a child practicing walking across a log to hold their hand or just offer encouragement, as well as monitor how many children are on a given log or how closely they are walking to one another.

The Outdoor Classroom serves many purposes, such as helping children learn about the world through play in a natural setting; planting, growing, nurturing, and eating healthy foods they have grown themselves; and teaching children to take risks appropriately. The immediate benefits of taking appropriate risks is the self-confidence that is built. The children are so proud of themselves when they accomplish something that is really hard and little bit risky. During the activity, the teacher is asking a lot of questions. Questions like, what do you think could happen if you... do you think you could get hurt if you continue to ... how could we play like this in the safest way possible... is there a safer way this could be done... Teachers are encouraging children to think through their actions before they do it. Such as when they are hammering nails, the teacher is talking about how close someone is standing and what would happen if they swing that hard and miss the nail. The long-term benefit is that children are learning to process through the risks of an activity. They are doing it when it is safe because they have a teacher right there helping them to think of the possibilities and assess the type of risk that exists. Allowing children to practice this type of risk assessment will hopefully instill the importance of assessing decisions and outcomes when they are older and don't always have an adult helping them think of the possible consequences.

Additionally, children are going to be digging, planting and playing in dirt and mud. As parents, we understand the inconvenience of the really dirty clothes. But as educators, we understand the important learning that occurs when getting dirty. The National Wildlife Federation put out a written report in 2012 that outlines the many benefits of getting dirty when playing including to the child's immune system, their cardiovascular system, their mental health and many other health benefits.

The UCLC teachers ask that you send your child dressed to play and get dirty, because chances are they will get messy on a daily basis.

## **HOW YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN**

- Young children learn through doing. They are active human beings, and they learn best when they are totally involved and have space in which they can be active.
- Young children learn through a concrete, hands-on, manipulative approach; through handling objects, children discover relationships of their everyday world.
- Young children learn through actual experiences such as a trip to the post office or a visit to a pet store, and in so doing, discover what their world is like.
- Young children learn through their senses; through opportunities to touch, to taste, to hear, and to see. Children learn to understand their world through exploration.
- Young children learn through play. Play is the most complete of all educational processes. It is the young child's way of learning, exploring, and understanding the world, as well as a source of pleasure. Concepts are developed, along with a background information, as teachers plan activities, which capitalize on children's natural curiosity and interests. In this environment of play, children test new ideas, practice new skills, and begin to see relationships.

## **General Goals**

- To create an environment that promotes discovery, divergent thinking, continual growth in abilities, and positive self-image.
- To provide an educational program to meet the needs of each individual child with concern for his/her interests, special needs, and special talents.
- To provide opportunities for children to grow and develop through exploration and experimentation with various learning materials and activities.
- To provide stimulating activities that are developmentally appropriate.
- To foster cultural awareness and appreciation.
- To provide a nurturing environment in which each child is respected as a person and encouraged to be a member of a caring community.

## Specific Goals

**Physical Development:** The Learning Center pledges to help children develop physically by:

1. Structuring a clean and pleasant environment.
2. Providing for rest, sleep, and nutritional needs.
3. Encouraging self-help skills in the areas of toileting, washing, eating, and dressing.
4. Promoting healthy habits conducive to good physical health.
5. Developing children's knowledge of the necessity for safety habits.
6. Providing opportunities for large and small muscle activities that enhance coordination, dexterity, balance, rhythm, strength, and endurance.

**Social and Emotional Development:** The Learning Center pledges to help children develop socially and emotionally by promoting:

1. A positive self-concept in regard to physical appearance, worthiness, gender identity and skills.
2. The ability to trust others to meet needs, as well as the ability to be independent and meet their own needs.
3. Acceptance and expression of feelings.
4. Sensitivity to the feelings and views of others.
5. Play activity with peers (observation, parallel, associative, and cooperative play).
6. The ability to resolve conflicts with peers in positive ways.
7. The ability to feel comfortable and to contribute when in a school family and eventually to enjoy being part of that school family.
8. The acceptance and appreciation of individual differences and cultural differences.

**Language Development:** The Learning Center pledges to help children develop language by offering children opportunities to:

1. Hear basic vocabulary and an enriched vocabulary used in a meaningful context.
2. Express needs and wants.
3. Talk about meaningful experiences with adults and with peers.
4. Describe objects, events, places, and relations.
5. Express feelings in words (happy, sad, angry, lonely, frustrated, scared, etc.).
6. Have one's own language written down by an adult and read back.

7. Encounter and use print in a variety of natural ways.
8. Have fun with language: rhyming, making up stories, singing, listening to poems, songs, and stories.
9. Maintain the family's native language.

**Intellectual Development:** The Learning Center pledges to help children develop intellectually by involving them in a process that provide opportunities for:

1. Developing curiosity, wonder and the asking of questions.
2. Exploring actively with all the senses (observing, touching, tasting, hearing and smelling).
3. Discovering cause and effect.
4. Making decisions -- choosing materials, activities, and purposes.
5. Developing creativity, imagination and original idea.
6. Problem solving.
7. Representing thoughts and ideas, objects and actions.
8. Understanding number and time concepts.

### **Basic Rules at UCLC**

There are three (3) basic rules at UCLC (for children, families, teachers, student teachers, caregivers, volunteers and guests):

1. Show respect for other people. Hurting others (peers, teachers, caregivers, family members, or guests) physically or emotionally through our words or actions is unacceptable.
2. Show respect for indoor and outdoor environment. Hurting, damaging, destroying, carelessly or destructively using toys, equipment, or our building is unacceptable.
3. Everyone (teachers, caregivers, volunteers, guests, children, and parents) must work together to ensure the safety (physical and emotional) of everyone (teachers, caregivers, volunteers, guests, children and parents).

Respectful, appropriate, safe words and actions are expected of any individual that enters our doors or our outdoor classroom. There will be consequences for any individual not adhering to these rules.

### **Encouraging Children to Meet Our Expectations**

Methods used to encourage children to meet the Learning Center expectations:

1. Plan and prepare to prevent conflict by:
  - A. Carefully preparing the environment
  - B. Thoughtfully planning activities
  - C. Making necessary modifications in the environment and activities offered
  - D. Establishing a predictable, yet flexible, daily routine
2. Communicate expectations for children's behavior by:
  - A. Being consistent
  - B. Getting down to the child's level and using eye contact while stating the expectation

- C. Using tone of voice, facial expression, body language, and physical guidance, as well as words
  - D. When appropriate, repeat expectations and give children time to comply
  - E. Use when/then statements; explaining that when the child does what is expected then the result will be...
  - F. Sharing accurate, logical reasons for the stated expectations
  - G. Giving children recognition when they do meet expectations
3. Give children choices when appropriate, and make it distinctly clear to the child when there is no choice.
  4. Allow children to experience the natural or logical consequences of their actions. Example: Legos are thrown; child will not be able to play with the Legos. The child will need to pick up and put away the Legos and chose another activity. However, they are invited to continue with the Legos when they can remember the rules.
  5. Remove the child from the situation (to cubby or safe space) or remove the child from the area (to office) to help him/her to relax and regain composure.
  6. As a last resort, restrain a child when necessary to protect him/herself or others.

Teachers at the University Children’s Learning Center strive to become acquainted with each individual child by talking and playing with him or her. On occasion teachers may have serious concerns about a child’s behavior. If this occurs, teachers address the concerns by recording detailed observations, conferring with the Learning Center’s Director and the child’s family member or guardian(s). The teacher may request a conference regarding the child in order to give a clear picture of child’s behavior and to determine if referrals to other services may benefit the child.

(Recommended resource: *Discipline* by Jeannette Galambos)

## Discipline and Guidance

University Children’s Learning Center’s definition/core beliefs about discipline:

- Helping a child change random, impulsive, mistaken, and testing behavior(s) into more controlled, purposeful, and constructive behavior.
- Sound knowledge of a child’s developmental level forms the basis of all guidance techniques.
- A young child’s strengths and vulnerabilities in language, logical thinking, perception and memory all affect his/her relationship with others and the degree to which a family member or teacher’s guidance is effective.
- Development of self-control, pro-social behavior and competence in young children is accomplished in part by demonstrating respect for each child as a unique person, developing trusting relationships with him/her, and demonstrating warmth and enthusiasm.
- Teachers act as role models for the children by using language and demonstrating appropriate ways for children to express their feelings and emotions.
- Discipline is about teaching appropriate behaviors and actions. The Learning Center believes teaching appropriate behaviors and actions cannot be done through physical pain or fear.

### Methods of Discipline:

- Use as few guidelines (rules) as possible
- Tell the children the expectations
- Provide opportunities for children to make choices and to be responsible for their choices and actions
- Appropriate behaviors are acknowledged by the teachers on a daily basis
- Ignore the mistaken behavior
- Redirect a child's interest, giving choices, discussing and/or reasoning through the problem, are examples of responses made by a teacher when inappropriate behavior arises
- Temporarily separate the child from the group if preventative methods and problem solving methods were not successful - use the safe place in the classroom
- There is no ONE discipline or guidance technique that Learning Center teachers or caregivers use because there is no ONE way in which children learn.

If you have any questions regarding the methods of discipline used by the classroom teacher please feel free to approach the teacher at a convenient time to discuss any concerns you may have.

### **Acts of Aggression or Violence Resulting in Injury to Others**

At the University Children's Learning Center (UCLC) every effort is made to keep children, teachers, caregivers, volunteers, and guests safe and free from danger and harm. Positive discipline techniques are used to encourage children to meet our expectations of appropriate behavior (Refer to Encouraging Children to Meet Our Expectations in Teacher Guide and Family Guide). Along with these stated expectations, teachers at UCLC encourage and teach children to take control of their voice, body, and actions when angry, and to use appropriate language and actions to express anger or frustration.

If a child's behavior is deemed extreme or excessive by the Administrative Team, the following step(s) may be taken:

1. Teachers will confer with Co-Teacher, Color Area Teachers, and the Director to review documentation.
2. UCLC teachers will confer with the child's family member(s) and may decide to conduct a conference with the child's family.
3. UCLC staff and the child's family member(s) may confer with consultants from the UND Early Childhood Education Department, Special Ed. Department, Grand Forks Public Schools, and/or local child evaluation treatment programs.
4. Resulting recommendation(s) will be followed and a written record of behavior will be maintained, with modifications being made in the program as needed.

If, after an appropriate length of time of implementing recommendations and all available resources have been exhausted, there is not significant improvement in behavior(s), then the Administrative Team may notify the family that their child must be withdrawn from the Learning Center.

If a child chooses not to listen to the teacher and their actions result in bodily harm, or poses a threat of serious harm to another child, teacher, caregiver, volunteer, or guest or uses materials and/or equipment in a dangerous or destructive manner, University Children's Learning Center reserves the right to take the following actions:

- The offending child will be restrained and/or removed from the immediate area to a place of safety.
- The offending child will be suspended from UCLC for the remainder of the day and the following day. The child's family member will be expected to pick him or her up within one (1) hour.
- The incident will be documented in a written report. A copy of the report will be: given to the families involved; placed in the child's file; and submitted to the UND Safety Office. If serious injury occurs, which results in the need for medical attention, a report will be filed with Grand Forks County Social Services, Child Care Licensing.
- If the above actions continue to occur on a regular basis, then the Director will notify a family member that the child must withdraw from the Learning Center.
- If physical damage to property happens repeatedly, families will be expected to compensate, in whole or part, the Learning Center for the materials and/or equipment.

### **Equal Opportunity**

The Children's Center is operated on a nondiscriminatory basis. Equal treatment and access to service is given without regard to race, color, creed, religion, disability, gender, national origin or ancestry.

### **Respecting Diversity**

At the University Children's Learning Center diversity is valued and respected. During a staff meeting the following concepts were listed to discuss with children in an attempt to recognize similarities and differences in their ethnic backgrounds:

- How "family" is defined
- Art
- Care of extended family - young and old
- Music
- Homes, architecture and décor
- Foods
- Language
- Traditions and holidays
- Special talents
- Dress
- Educational systems, philosophy
- Concept of time
- Parenting style and discipline
- Games
- Ways of showing respect, customs

Ways children can be taught about the above:

- ✓ Have multicultural crayons and markers available
- ✓ Have little people of different cultures available in Lego and Block areas
- ✓ Talk with children, observing and describing likenesses and differences
- ✓ Talk about holidays/birthdays and customs/traditions that become evident in the classroom

- ✓ Display, observe, and talk about family photographs
- ✓ Display and share books that show the diversity among cultures
- ✓ Study visuals in the Color Area to be certain they represent diverse cultures
- ✓ Post language charts which will help children to learn each other's languages
- ✓ Talk about/learn each other's languages
- ✓ Sing songs in each other's languages, chart songs
- ✓ Cook food, taste foods from different culture
- ✓ Invite families to participate in the activities listed above

### **English Language Learners**

Because The University Children's Learning Center is on a large university campus, the Learning Center has families from around the world. Often, there are many cultures and languages represented at the Learning Center. Families who enroll their children at the Learning Center want their child(ren) to become fluent in English. Teachers will endeavor to learn a few words in each represented language. Children who come to the Learning Center with little or no English will be encouraged to participate as fully as possible. UCLC also wants to honor the child's native language and provide enriching experiences for native English speakers.

Some children who are raised in bilingual or trilingual homes show language delays until they are about 4 or 5. These delays are not unusual and are to be expected. Children are organizing the languages in their brains and sorting through different syntax structures. When this occurs, the teacher is expected to gently name the missing English word by repeating what the child has said with the appropriate English word.

### **Serving Children with Special Needs**

The University Children's Learning Center often has children who have been identified through screening and testing processes as having special needs. Experienced Teachers will attend any meetings that impact their work with the child, such as an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) or IEP (Individual Educational Program), called by the child's team of specialists.

Experienced Teachers will include recommendations developed in such meetings in their lesson plans and programming for the child. The child will be included in all Learning Center activities and reasonable accommodations to the environment will be made to best meet the individual needs of the child. The program will accept all children with special needs if it is deemed to be an appropriate placement for the child by the child's team of specialists.

In order to gain an understanding of the child's individual needs, UCLC requests a written Health Care Plan from the child's medical provider and/or family member(s) with information related to the child's special needs. Information may include a description and/or definition of the diagnosis, general information for emergency, and required care such as usual medications and procedures.

### Typical Pre-school Daily Schedule

<b>7:00-8:30</b>	<b>Arrival and Center Time</b>
<b>8:30-9:00</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>
<b>9:00-9:30</b>	<b>Circle Time</b>
<b>9:30-10:00</b>	<b>Family Time</b>
<b>10:15-10:45</b>	<b>Outdoor Play</b>
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>11:30-11:45</b>	<b>Quiet moments of Reading</b>
<b>11:45-1:00</b>	<b>Nap/Rest Time</b>
<b>1:00-3:00</b>	<b>Afternoon Center Time</b>
<b>3:00-3:30</b>	<b>Snack, Circle Time</b>
<b>3:30-4:00</b>	<b>Family Time</b>
<b>4:00-5:00</b>	<b>Outdoor Play</b>
<b>5:00-5:15</b>	<b>Center Time (only one or two areas are open)</b>
<b>5:15</b>	<b>Gather in the Book Areas of Select Classrooms</b>
<b>5:30</b>	<b>Center Close</b>

### Typical Toddler Daily Schedule

<b>7:00- 8:30</b>	<b>Arrival and Center Time</b>
<b>8:30- 9:00</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>
<b>9:00- 9:30</b>	<b>Diapering and Transition to Outdoor Center Time</b>
<b>9:30- 9:50</b>	<b>Outdoor Center Time</b>
<b>9:50-10:50</b>	<b>Indoor Center Time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer reading or read with children who ask to be read to</li> <li>• Offer children an opportunity to participate in a Family Time Activity</li> <li>• Diapering as necessary</li> </ul>
<b>10:50-11:00</b>	<b>Clean the Classroom and Wash Hands before for Lunch</b>
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<b>Lunch Time and Diapering as Necessary</b>
<b>11:30-11:45</b>	<b>Transition to Nap Time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put on soft music</li> <li>• Lay out cots and blankets</li> </ul>
<b>11:45- 2:00</b>	<b>Naptime</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As children awake they are encouraged to play away from the sleeping children</li> </ul>
<b>2:00- 2:30</b>	<b>Diapering as necessary and Center Time</b>
<b>2:30- 3:00</b>	<b>Outdoor Center Time</b>
<b>3:00- 3:30</b>	<b>Snack</b>
<b>3:30- 5:00</b>	<b>Center Time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer reading or read with children who ask to be read to</li> <li>• Offer children an opportunity to participate in a Family Time Activity</li> <li>• Diapering as necessary</li> </ul>

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF HISTORY

Dawnita S. Nilles	2015 – present	Director, Child Care Services
Jo-Anne A. Yearwood	2015 - present	T&L Liason
Jo-Anne A. Yearwood	1998 – 2015	Director, Child Care Services
DeLaine (Lizakowski) McGurran	1978- 2016	Administrative Assistant
Dr. Michael Gallo	2012 - Present	ECE Advisor to UCLC
Dr. Glenn Olsen	2000 - 2012	ECE Advisor to UCC
DeLaine McGurran & Dr. Sara Hanhan	1998	Interim Co-Directors
Dr. Sara Hanhan	1986 – 2000	ECE Advisor to UCC
Gayle Nelson	1992 – 1998	Director, Child Care and Family Services
Susan Block Moe	1991 – 1994	Education Coordinator
Lorna Greene	1990 – 1992	Director, Child Care and Family Services
Lee Hulteng	1989 – 1991	Graphics
Laurel Hulteng	1988 – 1991	Educational Director
Debi Furches	1987 – 1988	Educational Director
Gayle Nelson	1983 – 1987	Educational Director
Wayne Kuklinski	1978 – 1983	Educational Director
Mae Marie Blackmore	1972 – 1990	Administrative Director