

ACPC Parent Policies

920 Carroll Avenue

2016-17 Year

We are happy to welcome you to the Ames Community Preschool Center (ACPC) family. Please take a moment to read the following information to become acquainted with our policies. If you have any questions or would like further information, feel free to stop in the office.

Background

ACPC was established in 1968 as the first nonprofit daycare center in the community and initially served only preschoolers from three to five years of age. Over the years our programs have expanded. ACPC now provides care for preschoolers at 920 Carroll Avenue and at seven school-age sites in Ames.

ACPC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors which must include a majority of parents of children enrolled in the center at large. The Board members serve a three-year term and are involved in all facets of center life. The Board appoints an Executive Director to administer the center. Sue Wuhs is the Executive Director and Sandee Bodholdt is the Assistant Director

The professional staff of ACPC have degrees related to the education of young children. These staff members plan the programs with the knowledge of appropriate activities for a particular age level of children. In addition, the professional staff supervise the other staff in the room. Iowa State students comprise many of our part-time staff. These students are usually pursuing a degree in a child-related field.

Nondiscrimination Statement

“ In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Hours

ACPC is open five days per week, 12 months a year. ACPC is open 7:00 am to 6:00 pm at our Main Center. We follow the ISU holiday schedule and are closed the following days for the 2016-17 year: Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, December 23, 26 and January 2, January 16 (Martin Luther King Day), Memorial Day and July 4th.

Licensing

All ACPC centers are licensed by the Department of Human Services. There are state standards that must be adhered to, and yearly inspections are conducted at each location. Copies of these standards are available in the ACPC office. Each center is licensed for a specific number of children based on the space and staffing patterns. In addition, some of the regulations that we ask parents to observe are part of the state standards. We thank you for your assistance in doing your part.

Entering/Exiting the Building

We have two entrances for parents to use-the NW entrance under the canopy and the entrance from the parking lot. Both of these entrances have a swipe reader.

We ask parents to pay \$5 for each key fob. You can determine how many you wish to have.

Parents have access to the building from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. If you arrive after 6:00 PM, you will need to ring the doorbell for entrance AND you will be considered late and will owe a late fee.

Please do not let others in behind you as you go through the door UNLESS they are parents that you know. We have a doorbell on both north entrances for all others to enter the building.

Parents may park on the east side of the driveway in front of the building for easy access for drop off and pick up. Please use extreme caution and be aware of your child's whereabouts as you exit your vehicle or drive. If the driveway is full, please park in the lot.

The parking lot is used by both staff and parents and is not very large. If you take the bus from ACPC, you must park your car on the street.

Tuition Fees

- Tuition fees will be sent out via email at the beginning of each month to one email that you provided.
- Tuition fees are billed in advance of the month.
- **Tuition payments are due in the ACPC office by the 10th of the month.**

- **Making payments**
- Checks: You may mail your checks to the ACPC Office at 920 Carroll Avenue or drop off in the office.
- Cash: All cash payments MUST be made in person at the ACPC Office at 920 Carroll Avenue.
- Bill Pay through your bank
- Auto Pay through our bank
 - Please ask and we will provide you with a form to enroll in Auto Pay.
- If payment is not received by the 10th you will receive a reminder. If payment is still not received by the 25th you will be sent a second reminder.
- Childcare will be suspended at the end of the month if payment is not received before the end of the month.
- If checks or auto payments are returned to ACPC for any reason, we will charge \$ 20 and expect full payment to be processed again.

Tuition Discounts

- The tuition rate sheet shows discounts that are available through ACPC. We receive money from the City of Ames, United Way of Story County, Story County and ISU Student Government to help lower-income families pay their bills. We need tax verification of your income. ISU Students will need to show a current fee card or letter of intent.
- ISU students on the lower-income and student rate may not attend three times during the year as part of the discounted rate: Thanksgiving Week, the week between Christmas and New Years and Spring Break.
- Full-time children will gradually accrue vacation credits up to 4 days each year as follows: 1 day every 3 months from September to June and an additional day for children attending July and August. Credits will not roll over into the next year. Notify the office when you wish to take those free days. Your child must be absent to use this credit.
- Families with multiple children enrolled full-time in ACPC will receive a second child discount each month: \$ 25 for school-age and \$ 50 for preschoolers.
- If parents choose to withdraw their child, a reduction in fees for the month will be given if a two week notice is given.

Late Pick-Up Policy

A late fee (\$15 for any portion of 15 minutes late per child) is assessed for parents who do not arrive in time to be out of the building by 6:00 PM. If a parent is late, a late-fee notice will be completed with the minutes late and the amount due. The amount due will be added to the next month's bill.

If a parent is late more than three times in one school year, the fee will be \$30 for every 15 minutes. Discussions will then ensue about continued or suspended childcare—depending on the circumstances that caused the infraction.

Summer Care

If summer care is not needed, a reduced rate is offered to guarantee a spot at ACPC for the fall. This charge is a fee and will not be applied toward any childcare time or future bills nor treated as a deposit to be returned at a later time. For summer 2017, the fee will be one month of your regular tuition rate to be paid by June 10th. (This charge applies only to children who would return to a preschool room in the fall).

Emergency Closings

ACPC attempts to be open for all of our scheduled days, but emergency closings can happen due to snow, water leaks, etc. In that event, we will not reduce tuition for parents. Thank you for understanding.

Health and Safety Policies and Forms

The enrollment forms for your child give health and safety information about and for your child. The state of Iowa requires yearly updates on the master enrollment form and physical exam. We will distribute master forms in late summer each year for renewal. Yearly physicals for preschool-age children are required by the state of Iowa. We do not require a particular form. The clinic forms will work just fine. In addition, we require a Certificate of Immunizations. The Department of Health reviews these records every fall to ensure they are correct. You will be contacted if your child needs additional immunizations.

Special Medical Conditions

We will ask parents and physicians to complete different forms in the case of any special medical condition—including allergies, asthma or other chronic conditions. These are required for the protection of your child, and we appreciate your assistance. The forms are:

Asthma Action Plan	Medical Condition Treatment
Medical Transportation Plan	Epi Pen Treatment Plan

Screenings

ACPC staff does informal daily checks on the children to ensure the health of all. We will share with parents any concerns we may have on any issue including hearing or vision problems that may arise. In addition, ACPC will facilitate additional screenings for our children on a regular basis.

- Vision screening by the local Lions' Club will be conducted every two years
- Hearing screenings can be scheduled by parents who will take children to the AEA site
- Developmental Screenings will be conducted twice yearly by the ACPC staff

Accidents/Incidents

Accidents can happen with young children, despite our efforts to prevent them. ACPC staff are trained in First Aid and will treat minor injuries. On all outings, the staff is required to take lists of children, emergency numbers for the children, First Aid kits and cell phones.

If a child is injured with more than just a little bump or scratch, parents will be notified on Injury/Incident Forms. One copy is given to the parent after we make a copy to put in the child's file. Should a serious accident or illness arise, we will first try to contact a parent. If a parent is not reached, then we will try the emergency person provided for us on your enrollment forms. Should time be of the essence, we will proceed with the information provided on the release that you signed. We will take the child to get medical help or call 911 depending on the severity of the problem. You may be assured that we will always have someone with your child.

Illness

If a child is ill, he/she should not be brought to the center. If a child becomes ill during the day, ACPC staff will contact the parents, or the emergency people listed on forms for early pick-up.

Please call into ACPC if your child is not coming in—either due to illness or just for a fun day. We keep track of illnesses as a way of helping parents know what is going around. We would appreciate knowing what is wrong when you call in. We will then tell the teachers of the reason. Teachers track each child's attendance in their roll books. Please do not email absences. Sometimes we do not check emails until the naptime break.

A child with the following symptoms should not be brought to the center:

1. Communicable diseases - children may not attend who show any signs of a communicable disease. An outbreak of a disease at the center will be announced to the parents.
2. Any temperature 101 degrees or above- Physicians recommend 24 hours of fever/vomiting free
3. Vomiting with any signs of irritability, loss of appetite, fever, or vomiting more than once.
4. Frequent diarrhea or diarrhea with symptoms listed in number 3.
5. Rashes that are draining or symptoms of disease.

Children in attendance are expected to take part in all routine activities, including outdoor time. On occasion, ACPC is able to keep a mildly ill child indoors, but the usual staffing pattern does not allow for that. We also recognize that different illnesses have a varying impact on children. We hope to work with parents to allow children to remain with us—yet also be aware of the spread of germs in childcare centers.

State licensing standards require that staff post a *Notice of Exposure* for all communicable diseases.

Parents must sign a medication form to authorize ACPC staff to give prescription medicine. Medicine must be in the original container with the prescribed directions. In addition, you will be required to also send along a copy of the patient information form that comes with the prescription that describes possible side effects of a medicine. ACPC staff will not administer over the counter medications except in very limited situations. That situation will be addressed by the head teacher and parents but should not include medications to suppress coughs or reduce fevers. Parents will still need to sign authorization forms prior to dispensing the medication.

Reminder: You signed a release to allow us to apply sun screen and insect spray.

Safety

The information you provided on the main enrollment form will help us ensure the safety of your child. You gave us information about people who are authorized to pick up your child, names and numbers to call in an emergency and described your custodial arrangements if this applies to your child. Only people with written authorization are allowed to pick up your child. Please keep us current on information if there are changes so we are always able to reach someone in the case of an emergency.

Please sign your child in and out each day, and make sure that your child's teacher sees you arrive to take your child home.

Parents often ask for names, addresses, and phone numbers of their children's classmates for birthday parties, car pools, etc. Please make sure you tell us if you do not want that information given out to others.

Parent Chaperones

We enjoy having parents or other family members accompany us on trips away from the center or in any other capacity such as work visit or classroom talks. A parent cannot be alone with any child (other than your own) or be responsible for the supervision of any group of children. If a parent is driving for a field trip and wants to take other children in his/her care, we will ask them to call the other parents directly for permission to do so.

Discipline Policy

The ACPC staff work with parents and other staff to ensure that all children have a positive experience while at ACPC. We plan activities geared to the appropriate age level that are fun enough to keep a child's attention, as well as keep them busy. If children are engaged, we find discipline issues may not arise.

Techniques that we use to keep the children in hand include:

1. Interact positively with the children.
2. Speak in a quiet tone of voice.
3. Praise the children for appropriate behaviors.
4. Redirect children to other activities if necessary.
5. Focus on the behavior, not the child.

At times we may have calm down period for a child. Other times we will separate the child in a time-out situation if appropriate—usually for hitting or biting problems. It is not used as a frequent discipline technique. The more often time-out is used, the less effective it is. It is our last resort, not our first choice.

All employees of daycare centers are designated, by law, as mandatory child abuse reporters. We must report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities who will then conduct an investigation as warranted.

Parent Concerns/Behaviors

We have a procedure for staff, parents and administrators of ACPC to follow in the event of friction caused by repeated misbehaviors by children who cause harm to others or threaten the safety of that child or others. If a situation arises, we suggest you first speak to staff in the room. If necessary, you can then discuss concerns with the ACPC office staff. We may choose to follow up with a more formal procedure as described in our personnel policies. We reserve the right to suggest alternate placement of a child and will follow the correct procedures if that becomes necessary.

Food at ACPC

Preparation, serving and eating food while the child is in attendance at ACPC is an important part of our programming for children ages 18 months and up. Food is considered much more than just physical nourishment. ACPC prepares and serves the food in accordance with guidelines set by the Child Care Food Program, which is supervised by the Department of Education. Our policy states that food cannot be brought from home. If a child has food or milk allergies, a physician's note is required. We then will determine with the parent how substitutions will be handled. We will also adhere to dietary exceptions for religious reasons and provide substitutes.

Breakfast, lunch and snacks are prepared at set times for most of the children who attend ACPC.

All meals are family style where a staff member sits at the table with the children. The older children dish themselves from serving bowls, and they learn to pass the food around the table. We encourage the children to try the foods. Meals are relaxed and personal, and we try to teach some table manners and quiet conversations. The children also learn to clean up spills and bring their plates to a central area.

Menus are posted on the parent board as you enter the building and are also available in the room and on the ACPC website.

Communications and Conferences

We want to initiate regular dialogue with parents to ensure that questions and concerns are addressed. Talking with each other is fun as we share little or big strides that the children experience. More formal conferences are available in the fall and spring when the staff completes the developmental profiles on the children. We strive to look at each child in an individual manner, but we can also reflect how the child performs in the group when doing the profiles or checklists.

We welcome parents to visit anytime and to be directly involved in their child's program. ACPC staff will communicate with parents via e-mail or whiteboards in the room to ensure that parents are kept abreast of other news.

It is ACPC policy that we do not "friend" parents and staff on Facebook. This policy is intended to keep work and personal lives separate. We also ask our staff to not post any child photos on their phones or computers.

Part-time Schedules

Each class is a mix of full and part-time children. Part-time schedules are arranged to complement each other and to help reduce your child care costs. Because we schedule staff to meet ratio requirements, we need you to keep to your child's schedule. If you must change your part-time schedule let us know and we will try to accommodate you, but this is not always possible.

Weather

The center will make every effort to open in times of adverse weather conditions. Staff are expected to work as safety allows. Children will be accommodated as staff and space allows. ACPC may not open or open later than usual. **All weather-related announcements will be uploaded on our website—www.acpc-childcare.org. In the case that all sites do not open, we will contact the local radio station (KASI 1430 AM/KCCQ 105 FM.** When you see a closing

announcement, please remember that ACPC has school-age sites that follow a different procedure. The Main Center will often be open when public schools are closed.

If ISU cancels classes due to bad weather, ACPC will be cancelled as well with notice called into the same radio stations. If bad weather dictates that we close early, we will also post a notice on our website. We ask parents to pay attention to impending snow storms in the winter to help us out. If necessary, we will call parents as warranted.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable “play” clothing and bring a **complete change of clothing** to keep at the center. Please dress your child in tennis shoes or other closed toe shoes (**not flip-flops or crocs**). Parents need to bring diapers and wipes for children still in diapers. Check your child’s cubby daily for soiled clothing, or more fun things like art work, and other important papers.

Naps and Quiet Time

Licensing standards require that all children who spend the day at a child care center rest or nap on a cot or mat. The children must bring a **crib-size blanket to keep on the cot**—we supply pillows, pillow cases and sheets. Resters do not need to bring a blanket.

Items from Home

We discourage bringing any toys or items from home because they can become lost or broken or be sources of friction in sharing. Children may be asked to bring a toy from home for a special day. No play guns or weapons of any kind may be brought to ACPC.

Birthdays/Holidays

You are welcome to bring in something to help celebrate your child’s birthday. We encourage healthy snacks. We will serve what you bring after lunch or at snack. **Please make certain that you bake or purchase totally nut and peanut butter free items. Nut-free items will also apply to holidays such as Halloween or Valentine’s Day.**

If you wish to send invitations for a home party, we ask that you refrain from passing out invitations at ACPC to just some of the children. We want to avoid hurt feelings. Please mail invitations home instead unless you are inviting the entire group.

Television/Videos

We have a video policy to limit the video viewing and will restrict the video content to G ratings.

Restrooms

We have three bathrooms for parents to use as needed. Two of them are at the south end off the lunch room. The other is inside the Main Office area. Come in and turn left as you enter the office.

Further Information

Please inquire in the ACPC office for complete classroom policies if you wish.