

# Welcome to the Shickley Early Learning Facility (ELF)

## **Definitions**

*Full-Time:* Monday through Friday anytime between the hours of 7:15 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

*Infant:* 6 weeks to 18 months

*Parent:* biological or adoptive parent, guardians, or anyone in actual or legal control of the child attending ELF

*Toddler/Playskool:* 18 Months and up

## **Program Director**

The Director for the Early Learning Facility is Sue Loseke, who can be reached at (402) 627-3375 or 402-759-2622.

## **Communication**

So we can provide the best possible care, please feel free to communicate any needs, wants and/or concerns regarding your child. It is only through good parent/provider interaction that good quality nurturing care can be achieved.

If you have questions or concerns about your child, please contact their teacher. If the teacher is not available you can speak with the assigned para in your child's room. The phone number and email is as follows:

**Infant Room:** Sue Loseke, Teacher

Phone: 402-759-2622

Email: [susan.loseke@longhornpower.org](mailto:susan.loseke@longhornpower.org)

**Toddler Room:** Caitlin Mosier, Teacher

Phone: 402-759-6967

Email: [caitlin.mosier@longhornpower.org](mailto:caitlin.mosier@longhornpower.org)

If you need to get further assistance, the order you need to proceed is:

1. Mr. Schroeder, Principal
2. Dr. Essink, Superintendent

**Billing Questions:** Sue Loseke at 402-627-3375 or [susan.loseke@longhornpower.org](mailto:susan.loseke@longhornpower.org)

## **Teaching Strategies, Curriculum, and Program Plan**

Early Learning Facility classrooms will utilize *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*. The curriculum was specifically designed to provide in-depth support for the unique demands of early learning programs. The curriculum

includes daily instructional tools, research-based objectives, and focus on routines and experiences. Modifications and deviations from the curriculum will be made in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

### **Termination Policy**

The first two weeks will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the contract without notice. After the first two weeks of enrollment, two weeks of written notice from parent or provider is preferred to end the services rendered, with the exception of gross misconduct on part of the provider, parent, or child. This is grounds for immediate discontinuation of service. In cases of non-payment, legal action may be taken.

### **Advance Notice of Terminating Service**

If you will no longer be needing our services, a two-week notice will be required. This helps us tremendously. Unlike a traditional childcare center, we are limited to a certain number of spots. If we have advance notice of discontinuation of needed services then it is possible for us to make future arrangements with new families inquiring about enrollment for their child. This helps to keep our open spots fluctuation to a minimum, and helps us be able to focus more on being the best providers possible.

### **ELF Hours**

The facility is open Monday through Friday 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with the following exceptions: see the attached sheet for date's ELF will be closed. These dates may change each year.

### **Fees for Infant-Toddlers - Beginning August 1, 2023**

Your child's spot in ELF is \$650.00 per month. The fee will be reduced during the month of December to \$450.00. During the months of June and July, the rate is \$32.00 for each day your child is at the facility. The fees will be due at the 1st day of the month or no later than the 20th. Please submit payment in check form or cash to Sue Loseke.

### **Fees for Preschool Age (days they are at the ELF building):**

The fee schedule for preschool age children will be \$250.00 per month. This serves as a holding spot and for expenses for each child. We will reduce the fee in the months of May and December to \$150.00. Care at the ELF building ceases after the date of preschool graduation. There is NO summer care for children who have been to a year of preschool.

### **Payment Process and Late Payment Policy**

All payments are due upon billing. Monthly statements will be delivered in person by staff by the 5th of the month or the next business day. All monthly fee payments are non-refundable. Checks or cash will be accepted.

Parents who are late paying their monthly bill will be charged a \$50 monthly late fee. After 30 days of nonpayment, the parent(s) must meet with the superintendent to discuss payment. Failure to complete payment as directed may result in termination of services at the discretion of the superintendent. The district reserves the right to use small claims court or debt collection services to recoup any outstanding balance whether or not the child remains at ELF.

### **Future Needs**

You must notify the Coordinator/Director at least 6 months prior to your expected due date and be willing to pay \$25 a week from the time you ask for a spot until you come to our program. Priority will be given to current families and in-district families.

### **Immunizations**

All ELF attendees must comply with the Shickley Public Schools' and other applicable immunization regulations. Within 30 days of enrollment, parents of all ELF children must provide:

1. Documentation of age-appropriate immunization;
2. Certification by a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant that immunization is not appropriate for a stated medical reason; or
3. A written statement that the parent or guardian does not wish to have the child immunized and the reasons for that decision.

### **Health Matters**

For the health and safety of your child and all of the children, do not bring your child to the facility when they are sick. Staff may then become sick making it difficult to care for the children at the high standards that we have set for ourselves. We can only care for children with mild cold or cold-like symptoms that are otherwise feeling and acting normally. Mild cold symptoms are a clear runny nose, slight cough, and a slight or no fever. If you are not sure if your child should be brought to ELF, please call and check with us. If a child becomes ill during ELF hours, the parents will be contacted to pick up their child.

Parents need to pick up their children within one hour of being notified. If parents are not available, the emergency contact person will be notified.

**Note:** Once the child is removed due to illness, they may not return until symptoms requiring removal are no longer present. The child must also be void of any contagious disease, unless accompanied by a doctor's note stating the illness in question is not contagious, and the child is otherwise feeling well enough to participate in our daily schedule.

### **Guidelines for Children Requiring Exclusion From ELF**

A child with any of the following illnesses must be completely free of any symptoms before returning. If the child is taking antibiotics for an illness, the child may return

after the initial 24 hours of beginning antibiotics for an illness, as long as he or she has a slight to no fever (under 101F under the arm), no longer contagious, and is otherwise feeling well enough to participate in our daily schedule. Signs of illness include the following; *unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying for no reason, runny nose (more than clear), cough (more than slight), difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting, mouth sores, rashes (note from doctor stating non-contagious is ok), pink eye, chicken pox, mumps, measles, rosella, hepatitis A, impetigo, lice, ringworm, scabies, strep throat, scarlet fever, tuberculosis, shingles, and any other contagious disease or rash.* Any child with a fever of 101 degrees or above, orally (in the mouth), or axillary (under the arm), may not attend. State law requires that we notify parents of children who have been exposed to certain contagious diseases. Please notify us if your child becomes infected, so a note can be posted.

**Note:** A fever in and of itself is not all bad (given that it is not too high). A fever is your body's natural way of trying to protect itself against whatever a virus or bacteria is attacking it. Illnesses that cause fevers cannot live in our body's abnormally hot environment. However, a fever is an obvious indicator that the child is sick and possibly contagious, therefore requiring exclusion from the facility.

### **Communicable Diseases**

We will notify parents of all enrolled children of any case of reportable communicable disease. The report will be made on the same day it is reported to us or we observe the illness, unless we are directed otherwise by an applicable health agency. We will post notices of an outbreak in a conspicuous place. The name of the affected child(ren) will not be posted without parent permission.

### **Child's Absences**

If your child is absent due to illness or other, please let us know as soon as possible so the day's activities won't be held up waiting for your child to arrive. Also, we need to know how many children we need to prepare meals for.

### **Medication**

We generally do not give medications to the children. If your child needs to be medicated in order to get through the day, and be able to comfortably participate in our classroom activities, then it is quite possible he or she may be too sick to attend.

We will administer certain medication consistent with state law, such as doctor prescribed medications to the children, given that they are no longer contagious, and only if the medication consent form has been signed. Examples of these would be: antibiotics for ear infections and Tylenol for teething or pain associated with bumps or bruises (not to bring down a fever). If you're not sure if we will administer a certain medication or not, please feel free to ask.

We will never give more than the recommended dosages; we won't give any medication which has expired. Any prescription medication given or applied on an

“as needed” basis and any medication administered by a route other than oral, topical, or inhalant must be accompanied by a written statement from the licensed health care professional who prescribed it. The written statement must describe the route and what symptoms need to exist in order for the medication to be given or applied. Please be sure your consent form (your written instructions) and the medication you bring meet these requirements. We will report any medication errors to the parents.

### **Child’s Records**

Regulations require each child to have a Record kept current by the Early Learning Facility. The documents and data in each child’s Record may be maintained in multiple formats, including digitally. The Record will contain at least the following:

1. Name of child;
2. Birthdate of child;
3. Enrollment date;
4. Date care ceased, if applicable;
5. Parent or guardian’s home address and telephone number;
6. Parent or guardian’s employment address and telephone number;
7. Individual(s) to whom the child may be released by the caregiver;
8. Individual(s) who will take responsibility for the child in an emergency when the parent or guardian cannot be reached;
9. Consent to contact a physician in an emergency;
10. Current health status of the child; and
11. List of child’s allergies and intolerance to food, insect bites, or stings, or other factors that result in a medical reaction, and clear instructions in the event of an exposure to the factor.

Other state and federal records laws and retention requirements may apply. If you have any questions about records, please contact the Coordinator/Director.

### **Staff Qualifications**

All teachers will be certificated by the Nebraska Department of Education, including having passed all applicable screenings and background checks. Other staff will pass appropriate background checks and receive training as required by NDE regulations. At least one staff member per classroom will be age-appropriate first aid and CPR trained.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

All staff are required by law to report *any* suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect whenever they have reasonable cause to believe such abuse or neglect may have occurred or observe circumstances which could result in abuse, regardless of whether it occurs at ELF or elsewhere. Your child may be questioned by child protective services at any time without your consent consistent with applicable law.

### **Sex Offenders**

Staff will not knowingly allow any individual who is a registered sex offender on the premises. Exceptions may be made for parents who are registered sex offenders to drop off and/or pick up their children at the discretion of the Coordinator/Director and consistent with Shickley Public Schools policy. Any parent who is a registered sex offender and wants to drop off or pick up students must secure written permission from the Coordinator/Director, and such consent may be revoked at any time for any reason. Law enforcement will be contacted immediately upon any unauthorized presence of a sex offender.

### **Medical and Dental Emergency Procedures**

Emergency information is kept on file at our facility. In case of illness or injury, this information will be used to notify you or the person designated by you, on your child's status. If your child is injured while at our facility, first aid will be administered. If treatment by a doctor is necessary, every effort will be made to contact you or the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. In all cases, an injury report is completed, and a copy is given to the parents. Authorization for emergency treatment must be signed at the time of enrollment to ensure that in the event of an emergency, we can make sure your child receives the necessary emergency treatment he or she needs. It is very important that all emergency contact information is kept up to date and correct. Please inform us immediately of any changes to keep your information current. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

**Note:** In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring immediate medical attention, the following procedures will be followed.

1. A phone call to 911 is made.
2. Child's parents (or emergency contacts) are called.
3. Child is separated from the other children and appropriately cared for.
4. Parent, provider, or ambulance takes the child and health records to the doctor or hospital.

### **Emergency Preparedness, Evacuation Procedures, and Reunification**

Shickley Public School has written policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies, natural disasters, and reunifications. We will perform drills as required by law. Evacuation plans are posted in the facility. In the unlikely event, the children will be evacuated to an emergency location, and you will be notified as soon as possible.

### **No Smoking, Smokeless Tobacco, Alcohol, or Controlled Substances**

Tobacco products (cigarettes, chew, etc.), including alternative nicotine products like e-cigs and vape pens are not permitted on the premises at any time. Alcohol and

controlled substances are not allowed on the premises at any time. Parents or any other individuals authorized by parents to drop off or pick up children may be excluded from the premises for violating any aspect of this policy.

### **Diaper Policy**

It is the parent's responsibility to provide diapers, wipes, and diaper cream for your child. It is also the parent's responsibility to check periodically to see if or when your child needs more diapers, wipes and cream, (not providers). Each child has his or her own space for its diapers and supplies.

Wet or soiled diapers will be checked frequently and changed immediately. Diaper changing stations will be cleaned after each use or by changing the cover on the surface. Staff will wash their hands after each change.

### **Toilet Training**

We are more than happy to encourage toilet/potty training as long as the child is ready (typically between 2 and 3 years old). Parents will be required to supply pull-ups and wipes. Communication between parents and staff is imperative for a successful transition from diapers to toilet. When parents begin toileting, they must contact their child's teacher and agree to a toileting plan before it will be implemented by any staff.

### **Toys**

We have well organized, separate, age appropriate toys for the toddler and infant class. Infants will not be allowed to be around or play with small objects and toys. During the initial adjustment period, we encourage your child to bring a piece of home with them; a special blanket, toy, or teddy can be very comforting. Photos of family members, neighbors, and pets can be left with them to help remind your child of familiar people if he or she feels lonely during the day. However, please do not bring your child's toys except on designated sharing/show and tell days. As much as we try to encourage sharing, this seldom works when it is the child's own personal toy. It only causes problems between them and the other children. Never send your child with toy weapons.

### **Miscellaneous**

- At the Early Learning Facility, we do not transport any child by car or any moving vehicle unless a medical emergency requires us to do so.
- Understand that your child may be included in classroom evaluations by the Nebraska Department of Education and other agencies.
- Understand that your child may be included in pictures connected with our program.

### **Open Door Policy**

Please feel free to come and go at any time throughout the day to visit your child. However, please keep in mind that in doing so it can prove to be disruptive to the

other children in our care. During times like these, the other children have a hard time listening and following adult directions. For safety reasons the doors to the facility will be locked between 8am and 3pm. When coming to the facility during these times be sure to ring the bell or call.

### **PBIS/Pyramid Behavior Management & Discipline**

We believe the discipline of a child is achieved through patience, consistency, and positive reinforcement. We also try to teach the children in our care manners, kindness and to be respectful to others. One of the ways we do this is by the example we as providers set. We understand our actions and reactions speak much louder than our words. The children are explained the ELF rules frequently, so they will know what's expected of them. Once a child is old enough to understand the rules and disobeys them by exhibiting inappropriate behavior (hitting, aggression, etc.), hurts others, or damages property, the following developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used. These techniques are as follows:

1. Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.
2. Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
3. Time-Out: The child is separated from the group for an age appropriate amount of time (one minute per one year of age). This technique is only used when a child repeatedly will not follow our directions or listen to our words, is exhibiting temper tantrum type behavior, or hurting oneself, others or equipment. When the child shows that he or she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, they are encouraged to join the rest of the group to try again.

ELF staff will only discipline students when parents are not present to do so.

**Aggressive Behavior:** It is considered normal and common for a child to act out during the toddler age by biting, hitting, scratching, etc. Oftentimes children will act out for various reasons such as, but not limited to, the inability to communicate their needs, someone is in their space, or they think they are just playing. Regardless of the reason, we do not tolerate or allow aggressive behaviors. If a child becomes aggressive, staff will intervene as appropriate. This may include some incidental touching and in extreme cases, brief restraint. The child will immediately be taken to time-out and talked to about how it hurts others when we (insert behavior). The child will then be closely monitored for recurrences. If the behavior continues to happen, the child will be separated from his/her peers if possible.

*Note:* Sometimes if both a parent and a provider are both in the same area (examples would be during drop-off and pick-up times) a child may forget the rules or test the boundaries. Please help show your child that you respect us, the rules of our house,



and our property by reminding them that the rules still apply when you are around. We will also remind them of the rules and correct them if needed.

### **Cleanliness**

We take the well being of your child very seriously and work hard to provide an environment that is as healthy as possible. We are committed to keeping our facility and the children in it as clean as possible, in order to help minimize and/or prevent the spread of germs. Our facility is kept clean and disinfected at all times. We thoroughly clean surfaces that children come in close contact with using soap and water. The high chairs are cleaned between each use, and the diaper changing tables are cleaned and disinfected between each diaper change. Toys are cleaned and disinfected often. Hand washing is the single most effective practice in preventing the spread of germs. We wash our hands many times throughout the day, as well as the children's hands before and/or after engaging in a thorough list of activities.

### **Arrival and Departure**

Please send your child clean, dressed (no pajamas, unless you don't mind your child wearing their pajamas all day), fed and ready for the day, as well as all of your child's necessary supplies needed for that day. Please do not send food (i.e. half eaten breakfasts, breakfast bars, candy, etc) or gum with the children. Please make your goodbye brief (no more than a couple of minutes): the longer you prolong departure the harder it gets for both parents and especially for your child. Never leave without telling your child goodbye. Please be in control of your child during drop-off and pick-up times. No one other than the parent or person designated by you will be allowed to pick up your child without advanced written permission indicating the person's name and relationship to your child. We may ask for identification of anyone picking up a child. If there is a court order keeping one parent away from the child, we must have a written note from the custodial parent on file to that effect. Otherwise, we cannot prevent the non-custodial parent from picking up the child.

### **Supplies Needed**

Parents are responsible for supplying the following items: diapers/pull-ups, wipes, diaper creams, toothbrush, weather appropriate clothes and a change of clothes, jacket, shoes that lace-up or Velcro and/or stay on feet (no flip-flops please), and pacifier (if needed). We supply and apply sunscreen to children when playing outside. For the older children sleeping on a mat, a crib sheet, blanket, and a pillow are needed. If necessary a comfort object for rest-time, and anything else your child may need. Staff will clean your child's crib sheet, blanket, and pillow at the end of every week. There is a good possibility your child will get dirty throughout the day because of food, paint, markers, dirt, bubbles, etc. So please dress your child accordingly for play. We will wash the children's clothing, or you may take your child's clothing home to be washed, whichever you prefer. We are not responsible for replacing stained or soiled clothing. For those who have children that are using a bottle, formula and a preferred bottle must be supplied by the family as well. We would ask if you have a toddler if you could provide 2 sippy cups. We use one for

milk and one for water. It is easiest if you bring them the kind they prefer. Please mark with their names.

**Note:** Please periodically check your child's locker/cubby to make sure they still have all their necessary items. Furthermore, as the weather changes throughout the year, so do your child's items needed. We greatly appreciate your adherence to this subject, as it helps ours and the children's day run more smoothly to have all of his or her necessary belongings with them. This way we can care for your child in the best possible way.

### **Meals/Snacks**

Each day we provide three nutritious and well-balanced meals consistent with applicable state and federal guidelines. Weekly menus are available upon request. We provide breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Milk or juice is served with all the meals and snacks, and water is offered throughout the day. We also provide baby food for infants. The meals and snacks for each week constantly vary in order to ensure the children receive a well-balanced diet. The children are offered the food, but they will not be forced to eat. It is our goal to offer nutritious meals and snacks to the children in our care, as nutrition is a vital part of a child's health. Children need to eat well-balanced meals in order to meet his or her daily energy needs and to help them build a strong body and mind. We know that the good food habits that a child develops will help them prevent cavities, iron deficiency anemia, and obesity, etc. – all common nutritional problems in young children.

### **Breast Milk and Formula**

We support your decisions related to nursing, providing expressed breast milk, and/or using formula. If you plan to nurse your child, please talk with your child's teacher so we can be prepared for the plan that you have for your child.

All formula or breast milk must be refrigerated and clearly labeled with the child's name, date received, and date expressed or frozen, if applicable. Unused prepared formula will be discarded as indicated by the label. Unfrozen breast milk will be discarded after 48 hours. If your feeding plan includes frozen breast milk and it is agreed between you and your child's teacher that frozen breast milk will be given to your child, it will not be kept for more than 3 months.

### **Special Diets**

If your child has any particular dietary needs resulting from being allergic to certain foods we must be informed. We ask for a doctor's note verifying the needs and guidelines to ensure that we cover the bases as much as possible.

### **Daily Schedule for Toddlers**

Activities may vary depending on time of the year, weather, age and temperament of the children. Age appropriate activities are scheduled with the flexibility allowed to respond to the needs of each individual child and their various ages.

### **Daily Schedule for Infants**

Throughout each day we practice on reaching, grasping, rolling, sitting, crawling, standing, walking, climbing, throwing, catching, kicking, cooing and talking; whichever developmental stage your child happens to be in at the time. Napping for the infant room is based on the child's needs.

7:15 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. cuddles, love and affection, eat, poop, and sleep.

### **Guidelines – What is Asked of Children**

1. All food and drinks must be kept in the kitchen area.
2. No playing in the bathroom.
3. No coloring on anything but paper.
4. Name-calling and foul language or yelling is not allowed.
5. No hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching, biting, spitting or pulling hair.
6. No pulling or picking of plants, grass, trees, or flowers.
7. No picking-up, pulling, poking or squeezing of babies.
8. All kitchen and bathroom cupboards are off limits to children.
9. Take turns and share.
10. Help clean up.
11. Laugh, smile, play and be happy.

**Scheduling of your child at ELF:** Contact Sue Loseke for Infants and Toddlers.

### **A Final Note**

It is important you feel comfortable with our policies and procedures. If you do not understand something, have a concern, or feel uncomfortable with one or more of our policies and/or procedures, it is important you express it to us before enrolling your child. We are always open to suggestions and feel communication is a very important part of offering a quality program. If there are any problems or concerns in the future, we encourage you to talk to us about them. If a lengthy discussion is needed, a time that is convenient for both of us will be scheduled, as the other children still need our attention during business hours.

<b>ELF SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Reminder</b>
August 10, 2023	TEACHER INSERVICE	ELF/School Closed
August 11, 2023	TEACHER INSERVICE	ELF/School Closed
September 4, 2023	LABOR DAY	ELF/School Closed
September 5, 2023	COHORT	ELF/School Closed
October 6, 2023	FALL BREAK	ELF/School Closed
November 22, 2023	THANKSGIVING BREAK	ELF/School Closed
November 23, 2023	THANKSGIVING BREAK	ELF/School Closed
November 24, 2023	THANKSGIVING BREAK	ELF/School Closed
December 22, 2023 1:00 dismissal	CHRISTMAS BREAK	ELF/School Closed
December 23-31, 2023	CHRISTMAS BREAK	ELF/School Closed
January 1-2, 2024	CHRISTMAS BREAK	ELF/School Closed
January 3, 2024	COHORT	ELF/School Closed
February 9, 2024	TEACHER INSERVICE	ELF/School Closed
March 1, 2024	SPRING BREAK	ELF/School Closed
March 8, 2024	SPRING BREAK	ELF/School Closed
March 29, 2024	EASTER BREAK	ELF/School Closed
April 1, 2024	EASTER BREAK	ELF/School Closed
May 27, 2024	MEMORIAL DAY	ELF/School Closed

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and care for your little one. We look forward to a future of keeping your child smiling and safe.

**[THE NEXT PAGE IS A SIGNATURE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE]**

# SIGNATURE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I agree to the following:

1. I have received and reviewed this handbook;
2. I have had an opportunity to ask any questions or seek clarification on any aspect of the handbook prior to signing it;
3. I will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, rules, policies, and handbook provisions of the Early Learning Facility or applicable to it, including the lawful directives of staff and all such rules and policies of Shickley Public Schools.

Parent Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b><i>For Office Use Only</i></b></p> <p>Date Received: _____</p> <p>Person Who Received It: _____</p>
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