

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

5122 Fleetwood Drive  
Hickory, N.C. 28602  
Phone (828) 294-0235

Owner: Don Penland

[www.FootstepsNC.com](http://www.FootstepsNC.com)

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

### **Mission Statement**

Taking life one-step at a time. Each child's development is different. At Footsteps Child Care Center learning from experiences, both success and failure are essential in the healthy development of children. Our goal is to provide engaging activities that stimulate intellectual, social, and emotional development. Through praise and encouragement, we build confidence. Through routines, we provide structure and security.

### **Goals**

Children that attend Footsteps will have teachers whose primary concern is to:

1. Create a child-centered setting that has engaging activities that stimulate intellectual, social, and emotional development
2. Address the development of the whole child-centered
3. Encourage the children to practice self-discipline and independence
4. Promote a love of learning
5. Persuade children to explore their environment
6. Assist children in developing problem-solving skills
7. Provide opportunities for children to grow creatively
8. Provide children with situations that help develop self-help skills

### **Enrollment**

Footsteps Child Care Center provides care from birth to 12 years of age. Enrollment is open to anyone and is on a first come, first serve basis. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. Prior to enrollment, necessary forms need to be completed, a tour of the facility will be provided, and a handbook will be made available. A non-refundable registration fee of \$55 will be due at the time of enrollment. The registration fee will guarantee your child's placement the maximum of five business days.

A current physical and shot record must be provided within thirty days of enrollment. According to North Carolina State Law, every child must have immunizations kept up to date.

If there are any changes in phone numbers, addresses, jobs, or people allowed to pick children up, please notify the director and provide new information as soon as possible.

If a parent decides to withdraw their child from the center, a meeting with the director and a two-week notice is required. The director reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of any child for failure to follow the rules and guidelines of the center and for non-payment.

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

Upon enrollment, every family will receive a copy of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules. This paper will inform you of your rights and provide you with information on how to report suspected abuse or neglect. If at any time you have any concerns you may contact the Division of Child Development at 1-919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0289.

Footsteps and its employees are mandated by NC Law to report any suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829 and make an anonymous report.

*Please be aware that parents are not allowed to spank their children on Footsteps premises.*

### **Operating Schedule**

Our current hours of operation are 6:30 am to 5:45 pm, Monday through Friday. We will periodically assess the need of our population and make adjustments to our hours of operation. Each child should arrive at the center before 9:30 am. Your child may come up to 11:00 am, if they have a doctor's note and you have called to let us know they are coming.

Make sure you sign your child into the center using the computer system.

We are closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (If falls on weekend, we may take a third day at Christmas instead)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving day
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

If there will be a change in these days, we will give advance notice.

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

### **Safe Arrival and Departure**

An adult must accompany all children inside the facility. Staff must be notified of the child's arrival. **Each child's hands should be washed upon arrival at the center.**

Upon departure, an adult must come inside the facility to notify the staff that the child is leaving and to check them out on the computer. Your child will only be released to those persons listed in your child's file as authorized for pick-up. They will be asked to show a picture I.D. if we do not recognize them. If you receive child care subsidy from the state of NC, you must check your child in/out on our computer in the lobby and swipe your card in the machine outside of the office.

### **Fees**

Check, cash, and money order are acceptable forms of payment. All tuition is due on the Friday prior to the week of child care. We are a pay ahead center. Tuition is considered late if it is not collected on Monday by 5:00 pm. A late fee of \$25 will be added to the account. If tuition and late fees are not paid in full by the close of Tuesday, attendance at Footsteps will no longer be permitted until all fees are paid in full. There is a 5% discount for private paying families with multiple children. Full payment of tuition is expected regardless of attendance, holidays or teacher workdays. In the event of snow and absences due to illness or vacation parents are still responsible for full payment of fees.

Returned checks will be assessed a \$25 NSF fee. If there are two or more returned checks within a 6 month period, all tuition will have to be paid with cash or money order. If total payment is not made within 5 business days, Footsteps reserves the right to not allow your child to return to the center.

Late pick-up fees are a \$1 per minute per child picked up after 5:45 pm. Late pick-up fees are due the next day.

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$55 due upon enrollment. In June, a \$25 fee is due to update your files. In January and July, there is a \$15 activity due for each child over the age of 12 months.

### **Tuition**

Birth to 12 months	\$145
1 year old	\$135
2 year old	\$130
3 year old	\$130
4 and 5 year old	\$125

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

### **Care of Sick Children**

If symptoms indicating a child is becoming ill begin while the child is in care, or if the child's condition changes after arrival at the center, the child must be separated from the other children and the parent will be notified of the child's condition. The director will designate an area to be used until a parent or guardian can pick the child up. Parents/guardians are called to pick up children immediately when a child is sick. Parents must respect the well being of their child and other children when their child is sick. Assuring your child is well prior to bringing them to the center can help prevent breakouts of illnesses. If your child is too sick to participate in ALL daily activities, then they are too sick to attend school. Please keep them at home.

Children with any of the following must be excluded from care:

- Fahrenheit temperature over 100° underarm, 101° orally, or 102° rectally
- Strep throat, until 24 hour treatment has started
- 2 or more episodes of vomiting within a 12 hour period
- A red eye with white or yellow discharge until 24 hours after treatment
- Scabies or lice until they have received treatment
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional states that a child is not infectious
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
- Pertussis, until 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice
- Sudden onset of diarrhea, characterized by an increased number of bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern and with increased stool water
- When a written order states that the child be separated from other children

### **Medication Administration**

Footsteps Child Care Center's staff will not administer physician prescribed medication. All doctor prescribed medications need to be administered before arrival or a parent will need to come and administer medication. Asthma inhalers, EpiPens, and breathing treatments are exceptions to this rule. All prescription medications must be in the original prescribed container with the prescription label on it. Over-the-counter medications will be limited to diaper cream, teething gel and Tylenol. Written permission from the parent/guardian or health care professional must be on file before the medication may be administered to the child. All medication must be in the original container. Medication can only be given as authorized in writing by the parent/guardian, not to exceed amounts and frequency of dosage specified in the printed instructions accompanying the medication or on the label. No drug or medication can be administered after its expiration date. Please make sure there are no medications left in the child's diaper bag. In the afternoons during the summer, we will administer sunscreen and/or bug spray with written permission from the parent/guardian.

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

### **Personal Belongings**

Footsteps Child Care requires all personal items to be clearly labeled with the child's name on it. We are not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen. You should provide for your child a small book bag containing a weather appropriate change of clothing. This bag should be taken home every evening and brought back each day. You may provide your child with a small blanket for naptime. This blanket can be left in the class all week and taken home to wash on Fridays. If you choose to take it home each day, you must place it in the classroom each morning. Your child's book bag should not contain food, candy, money, toys, Chap Stick, or medications. Book bags are checked each morning and any of the previous items will be placed in office for you to pick up. Do not allow your child to bring toys from home unless the teacher has asked you to do so.

It is your responsibility to provide wipes and diapers/pull-ups. Infant room parents may choose to use the formula and food we provide or provide their own. Bottles must have lids and be labeled with date and child's name. Sippy cups and pacifiers must also be labeled.

Pacifiers, bottles and sippy cups will not be allowed in any of the classrooms except the Infant room.

If you want your child to wear sunscreen or diaper cream you will need to provide these items and sign a permission form.

### **Meals**

We provide a breakfast, lunch, and a PM snack daily. All food served meets the USDA qualifications. Breakfast is served between 8:30-9, lunch is served between 11:15-11:45, and snack is served between 2:30-3:30. We participate in the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program). At time of enrollment parents will be asked to fill out an eligibility and enrollment form for CACFP. This is a requirement and forms must be updated yearly. These applications are kept locked up and are only viewed by the state officials if audited.

We serve nutritious meals that include fresh fruit, vegetables, fruit juices and milk. Lunch menus will be posted in each classroom. If your child has any food allergies, we must have a doctor's statement saying that the child is allergic and cannot have a particular food, and you must describe in writing the child's allergic reaction to that food. This is a requirement by the CACFP. We will supply a substitute that is equivalent in nutrition value.

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

### **Children with Special Needs**

Federal Law guarantees special education and related services to children with disabilities from birth to age five. Special services such as speech and physical and occupational therapy are available at the center so that children with special needs can be included in regular care settings. Please feel free to talk with the director or your child's teacher if you have any concerns about your child's development.

### **Biting**

Biting is a normal behavior that happens frequently with some children 12 months to 3 years of age. Staff will work with children and families to stop the biting. If a child continues to bite over a period of time and other children are suffering, we will be forced to ask that the child be removed from the center until the biting is no longer occurring.

### **Our Cleaning Procedures**

Our staff cleans their classroom regularly. We have a daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning schedule. Daily duties include disposing of trash, sweeping, vacuuming, mopping, cleaning bathrooms, sanitizing toys, and sanitizing tables before and after breakfast, lunch, and snack. On a weekly basis, teachers wash sheets, dress up clothes, and stuffed animals. They also weekly sanitize cots, and immerse each toy in a disinfecting solution. On a monthly basis, teachers are required to clean windows, vents, and rugs. Floors are buffed monthly.

### **Emergencies/Fire Drills**

Our center has written policies for dealing with emergencies. Building evacuation procedures are reviewed and practiced during monthly fire drills. If you are at the center during a fire drill, the law requires that you participate in it. We also conduct a yearly tornado and lock-down drill.

In the event of a water or power failure lasting longer than 1 hour, we will have to contact you to pick up your child/children. We will have to close the center until these outages are corrected.

### **Photographing Children**

Teachers photograph children regularly in order to document developmental milestones and child's accomplishments. The teachers may use them for the classroom displays or other teaching purposes. For staff members attending college classes, they may also use photos in work related to assignments by their instructors. Photos may also be used in community-wide displays featuring our childcare facility, including but not limited to newspapers, display boards, brochures, etc... Parents will sign a permission form for photographs to be taken of their child.

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

### **Discipline Policy**

We encourage positive redirection. Positive discipline teaches children where limits are set, how to maintain control of their bodies, and how to problem solve in the event of the conflict. We encourage children to empathize with one another's feelings and see the results of their actions. We discourage inappropriate behavior. We use "Time Out" as our last resort. Any child that is put in time out is always supervised by a teacher and shall remain in time out only 1 minute per age of the child. When time out is over, it is explained to the child why time out occurred and what correct behavior is expected. No child is subjected to corporal punishment or physical discipline at any time. Discipline shall never be related to food, rest, or toileting.

We will make every effort to work with parents of children having difficulties in child care. Behavior of children, which disrupts normal classroom group activities on a frequent or extended basis, may indicate physical or emotional problems requiring the attention of a professional specialist. The teacher and/or Director, with parental consent, will take the necessary steps to refer the child to the Public Health Nurse, a Mental Health Consultant, or other appropriate places for a professional evaluation.

Children displaying chronic disruptive behavior, which is upsetting to the physical or emotional well being of another child, may require the following actions:

1. Parents of the child will be called in for a conference. We will discuss the issues and identify some possible solutions. A plan of action will be developed and agreed upon by the parents, staff, and a health/behavioral specialist.
2. If the plan of action is not working, the parents will be called in for another meeting. We will discuss what is not working and develop another action plan.
3. If no progress has been made towards solving the problematic behavior, the child may be suspended from care. This suspension may range in length from the rest of the day to indefinitely.

Footsteps reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Nonpayment or excessive late payments of fees
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child
- Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the handbook and/or parental agreement

The use of physical force as a discipline measure is prohibited. This includes

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, biting, pulling hair or arms, jerking, etc.

### **Nap Time**

The center has a naptime daily between 12:00 - 2:30. This period will be for all children except the infants. Infants will nap according to each child's schedule. NC has a "Safe Sleep Policy" which each parent of a child under age 1 is required to read and sign. Crib sheets are washed daily for the Infant room.

Nap times will take place shortly after lunchtime. Each child has a labeled cot and sheet. Sheets are washed weekly and cots are sanitized on Friday. Children are allowed to bring from home their favorite blanket or sleep toy. Keep in mind that sleep toys will remain in book bags anytime children are not napping. Teachers will encourage sleeping by rubbing backs and playing soft background music.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

The center strives to be open during inclement weather; however, safety is our first priority. If the center is closed or delayed, the announcements will be on WBTV Channel 3, Footsteps Facebook page, and on the answering machine.

### **Clothing/Weather**

Children are required by NC state regulations to go outside daily unless extreme weather conditions exist. Please dress your child according to the weather. Children should be dressed comfortably in play clothes. We ask that you send your child in clothes that can get dirty.

### **Transportation**

Footsteps Child Care Center does not provide off campus field trips. We do not pick up or transport clients. Staff do not transport in their personal vehicles.

### **Special Occasions**

We encourage birthday celebrations for your child. Be sure to notify your child's teacher prior to planning of any events. If you would like to bring treats to share with your child's classmates, please be aware that all food items must be in the original sealed container.

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are encouraged to visit and observe their child at any time. You are encouraged to volunteer your time and talents within our center. There are numerous opportunities for families to volunteer from reading a book to doing an art project or sharing your occupation, culture, or talent. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in the Spring and Fall of each year. Conferences can be requested in between these times if you feel it is necessary. Conferences are a time when information concerning the child's abilities, needs, and progress can be

# Footsteps Child Care Center

## Family Handbook

exchanged. We encourage parent participation in classroom projects and fundraisers. You are encouraged to share your time and talents with the children whenever possible. Parents are asked to participate in a yearly evaluation of our program. Footsteps has an open door policy and parents are always welcome at our center during any time of the day. We send home daily notes telling you about your child's day. We also send out monthly newsletters informing families of upcoming events or policy changes.

If you have any concerns about your child, the center, or a staff member, please come by the office.

### **Potty Training**

This is a difficult topic for many parents, as children experience varying difficulty with this area. It should be understood that children develop at their own rate; however, it is the policy of the center to begin introducing the concept of potty training at age two. Our staff will encourage the child to "use the potty". If your child is potty training, please be sure to provide extra clothing and pull-ups/diapers. It is important for the parent to assist in potty training. Parents and the teacher should communicate on the progress of child's potty training. Please do not put "onezies" on your child.