



**“We have the program for you and your child”**

**High Quality Child Care Services**



**Parent Handbook**

**AlphaOmegaLearning.com**

**[alphaomegamelrosepark@gmail.com](mailto:alphaomegamelrosepark@gmail.com)**

**2217 W. Division Street**

**Melrose Park, IL 60160**

**708-344-6633**

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

We would like to welcome you and your child to Alpha & Omega Learning Center (AOLC)! We are glad that you and your child will be a part of our program. This handbook is designed to serve as a general guide and to provide parents with information regarding policies, procedures, and practices at the center. Please read its contents and keep it in a convenient place for quick references. Administrative staff is available to answer further questions you may have regarding our program. Our goal is to support the family and to ensure that your child continues to grow, learn, and develop.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Monday-Friday 6:30 am-6:00pm

Saturday Enrichment Classes-8:00 am-3:00 pm

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Arrival time will vary for each family and this is dependent upon the time care is needed. Parents are to bring their child at the time agreed upon and pick-up their child as stipulated in the contract agreement.

### **LENGTH of PROGRAM**

Year-round service, Monday through Friday except for the following holidays:

New Year's Day Eve, New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Eve/Day of and day after, and Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after, Winter Break, and Summer Break.

**Please NOTE:** If the holiday falls on a Saturday, we will observe the holiday on a Friday before holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will observe the holiday on the following Monday.

### **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Infants as young as six weeks of age, along with toddlers, preschool and school-age children are enrolled into our Program without regards to sex, age, religion, national origin, race, physical, mental handicap or disability.

### **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Our program welcomes parents to visit the center at all times, so feel free to volunteer and/or just visit your child. If you have questions or concerns please feel free to schedule a meeting, call or email the Director.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

In order to help parents with questions or problems that might occur in their child's class room please feel free to discuss any issues with your child's Teacher/Caregiver. If there is a problem or question that you believe that could have been solved differently, please feel free to speak to the Director/CEO so that we can attempt to solve whatever problems that might be in question.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Alpha and Omega Learning Center seeks to provide a culturally sensitive program that reflects the diversity of the communities and families we serve. We will work with parents to enhance their skills and empower them as effective advocates for their children; to have a significant impact on families' economic growth and quality for life; to educate and foster change for youth to be successful; and to empower children to reach their fullest intellectual, physical, social, and emotional potential.

Our primary objective is to provide a quality comprehensive child development program. To this end, we will strive to:

- Provide a safe, clean and nurturing learning environment
- Ensure that each child receives age appropriate health screening and health care services
- Empower parents to provide the best possible nutrition to their family by providing relevant information on nutrition and healthy lifestyle
- Provide an education program that stimulate brain development
- Deliver and act as a liaison for family-centered services
- Support the transition of children from preschool to a public/private/charter school setting
- Serve as advocates for children and families
- Provide a learning environment for children of or working parents; parents in school (High School or GED program) or Workforce training programs.

The family and community are vital to the accomplishment of these goals. The family is the first and the most important factor in their child's developmental process. Developing a strong sense of family helps develop a sense of community. Every effort will be made to identify and use community resources. In situations where community resources are not available, effort will be made to establish them.

### **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

Alpha and Omega Learning Center is committed in meeting the needs of each child and to support and strengthen the family. We strongly believe that children reach their potential in an emotionally secure environment where they can learn, grow, and develop at their own pace. Our learning environment encourages curiosity, provocation, interpersonal relationships and problem-solving skills. We are committed to providing high quality care in our classrooms. This includes having a safe and educationally stimulating environment that includes healthy and nutritional activities. Quality care also means hiring, retaining, and providing ongoing training and support to staff. We aim to provide the best Teachers/Caregivers for our families and strive to have optimum staff to child ratios to facilitate meeting children individually.

Our program provides a nurturing, clean and safe environment where each child gains a positive sense of self. Children learn best when information and activities are meaningful part of their daily life in the classroom. We believe parents are the most important adults in a child's life and we actively seek their involvement. Our program focuses on the development of the whole child so daily activities enhance physical, cognitive, language, social emotional, personal and creative growth. The racial, ethnic and cultural differences of our families enhance the learning environment and provide use with opportunities to learn about many cultural heritages and traditions

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

The goal of Alpha and Omega Learning Center is to provide services that focus on intellectual, social- emotional, and physical development while taking into consideration individual personalities, health, safety, nutrition, and multicultural awareness.

Alpha and Omega Learning Center strives to make all families feel welcome. We respect the culture in the community we serve. We communicate with families in their preferred or primary language. An interpreter is used to translate in the families' primary language (other than English). Bi-lingual staff is employed in each classroom to strengthen parent communication, participation and family involvement in all activities. AOLC staff will identify the language of the family using the qualified recruitment form during Pre enrollment. The Director/CEO will enroll the families in their preferred language. The family and community play a major role in the accomplishment of AOLC meeting these goals.

## **ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

AOLC accepts children 6 weeks to 12 years old without regards to sex, age, religion, national origin, race, physical/mental handicap or disability. Eligible children must be living at home with parent(s) or legal guardian. An interview is scheduled with the parent/guardian and their child to discuss and view our program. Parents must provide the center with a copy of their identification card.

The children enrolled must have a **COMPLETE PHYSICAL EXAMINATION** not more than six months old prior to admission and every year thereafter. Your child will not be able to start AOLC program without a complete physical exam (this includes no pending blood work results). All children must be immunized against those diseases as identified by the Illinois Department of Health. In addition, the following is **mandatory**, a tuberculin skin test or TB questionnaire, diabetic screening, lead screening, hemoglobin/hematocrit, and varicella. Physician will need to state that your child is not at risk for TB if test is not administered. If child

has asthma, an Asthma Action Plan and consent for medication is needed prior to child's first day in school.

A copy of the child's immunization record and birth certificate must also be brought in. An annual Dental exam is required each year. Parental Consents for the following are required:

- AOLC Enrollment Application
- Authorization Forms for Emergency Pick-up/Release
- Consent Form
- Developmental Screening – Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (birth to three years) and Early Screening Inventory Revised-3 (ESI-r3)
- Behavioral Screening - Ages and Stages Questionnaire- Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) for children birth to 6 years.

A copy of the Parent Handbook and Agreement/Contract forms will be given to the parent once they have completed the enrollment process.

### **REGISTRATION FEE**

A \$45.00 non-refundable registration fee per child is required to reserve a childcare slot for your child and must be paid prior to enrollment. Please contact us for weekly rates.

### **CHILD CARE SUBSIDY**

If you are participating in a subsidized program (e.g., DCFS or IDHS), please submit an application to the office for completion; along with income verification. IDHS will access you a monthly co-payment that is based on your income and family size. Monthly Parent Co-payment is due the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month to AOLC. However you will be asked to pay a small parent fee. Any monies paid in advance by you will be deducted from your Monthly Parent Co-Payment fee. If you are due a refund (this is depending on amount paid by you), it will be returned to you after we have received the Approval Letter. If you did not pay enough, you will be asked to pay the additional amount owed. Please understand that it is your responsibility to complete Re-Determination forms in advance to keep your account current. If you do not, and we receive a letter stating that your child's last day was (e.g., 12/24/15). There are two things that will happen, your child will be dropped from AOLC or you can meet with the Director/CEO to make payment arrangements for continual childcare services with us.

### **VACATION FEE**

Childcare fees are standard regardless of family vacation time, sick days, and etc. You will be charged regular enrollment fees to reserve your child's placement. We ask that you plan family vacation time in advance and provide those dates to the center. AOLC will close for five day per year for vacation time. You will be given ample notice prior to closing. However, half of that week tuition is required.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING**

AOLC will close in event of a natural disaster such as a flood, power outage, tornado, blizzard or fire. Families will be contacted of emergency closing. If the center is open and one of the following disasters occurs while in session, we will contact the parents and/or authorize person for emergency child pick-up.

### **ARRIVAL and DEPARTURE / SIGNING IN and SIGNING OUT**

When bringing your child to the center or picking up your child, be sure to sign your child in and out on the form provided. This is a State Licensing requirement. Parents are to check their child's mailbox and to let the teacher know that their child has arrived or is leaving. Parents are to escort their children to the sink to wash their hands. After your child has washed his/her hands parents are to escort him to his classroom. Allow extra time upon arrival to communicate information (e.g., health, eating, and sleeping). Teachers will conduct an *Health Check* for each child. The purpose of this is to ensure that each child entering AOLC program is in good health and free from anything that may be contagious.

Parents are asked to provide the center with three references for pick-up. Your child will be released **ONLY** to an authorized person as listed on Authorization form. AOLC has determined that a person 16 years of age or older is appropriate age to pick-up a child that is authorized by the parent.

You must call the center to inform us if someone other than yourself will be picking up your child. Authorized person must provide a current picture I.D. that verifies who they are. The person picking up your child will be asked to fill out an I.D. card. Always remember to call the center to see if your child has been picked up by the authorized person. If no ID is provided, AOLC staff will contact the parent and ask for a physical description of the person that is picking up their child.

If a child at the center has not been picked up by the parent, guardian or another authorized person; the scheduled times for the child discharge and grace period have expired; the center is closing; and no person who is approved to pick up child can't be reached, the following procedure will be followed:

- If a child has not been picked up from the center and the center is closing, staff cannot keep the center open in order to provide care and shelter for the child. In this situation the most appropriate course of action is to contact the local law enforcement. While waiting for the local law enforcement to intervene, center staff will continue to attempt to contact someone who is authorized to pick up child. As a last resort, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) will be contacted. DCFS maintains a 24 hour, 7 days per week HOTLINE (800-252-2873) for this type of emergency.
- If you call and say that someone else will be picking up your child and they do not arrive at the time you call and you state that you will be picking up your child, depending on the time, your child will be released to that person or they will be asked to wait.

If a parent, guardian or other authorized person arrives at the center to pick up child; and the person appears to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, staff is not authorized to release the child to person picking up child. The parent will be contacted and informed of the situation and asked to pick up child from the center. Again, local law enforcement and/or DCFS will be contacted if no one arrives to pick up child.

### **LATE PICK-UP FEE**



Parents are required to pick-up their child on time. There is a **“Late Charge Fee”** of \$3.00 per minute, per child after the agreed time. For example: Agreed Pick-up time is 4:30 pm. The child was picked up from the center at 4:45 pm. You will be charge the late arrival fee of \$3.00 per every minute after 4:30 pm. In this example 15 minutes x \$3 = \$45.00 owe to the center.

Late pick-up fee is payable the same day; in cash only. Your child will not be allowed to attend the program until the fee is paid. We strongly ask that parents to pick-up their child on time to avoid late fees. We ask that you call the center if you are running late picking up your time.

All children enrolled in our program ***shall not*** remain on the premises for more than the agreed time or more than (10) hours in any 24 hour period. If your work or school schedule changes, please inform the office as soon as possible to keep your information current.

### **INSUFFICIENT FUNDS**

Alpha and Omega Learning Center do not accept personal checks. Payment is by money order, Chase Quick Pay or Pay Pal.

### **WHEN FEES ARE DUE**

- Child care fees are standard regardless of the parent or guardian personal day(s) off, sick days, non school days, or national holidays.
- Private paying clients, the fees are required the first Monday of each week, unless discussed with the Director/CEO and arrangements have been made. If payments are not paid time, a \$20 late fee will be added to your account.
- For clients enrolled in a subsidy program, you are responsible for paying a Monthly Co-Payment to the Provider (AOLC). Co-payment is due prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- A \$20 late fee will be added to your child care payment if it is not made on time (e.g. if your child care is \$30 a month and you pay on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month. Your childcare payment will be \$50 instead of \$30). We ask that you pay your payments on time to avoid any late charges.

### **ADJUSTMENT PROCESS - Helping Children Feel Comfortable**

A new child care setting sometimes causes the parent and child to experience separation anxiety; however, this is a normal process. AOLC gives children 30 days to adjust to our program. Normally it takes about two weeks. To help ease the transition we ask that you bring your child with you to the interview to help him/her feel comfortable. You can also arrive early and stay to get him/her settled in. We ask that you do not leave without him/her knowing that you are leaving and that you will be back to get them later. Feel free to call the center 708.344.6633 to check on your child. However, if your child is still experiencing difficulty in settling into the program and you have questions or concerns about separation, please speak with your child’s teacher/caregiver or the Director. While your child is adjusting to the newness of our program, it

is acceptable for your child to have a special stuff animal toy or blanket to keep with him during this adjustment period. However, please note that the comfy toy or blanket will slowly be weaned from the child.

## **THE PROGRAM**

The program is designed to provide a caring and learning environment for the children enrolled. The function of the center is to expand five developmental aspects of the child in the following manner:

1. To foster the child's physical well being and safety
2. To nourish and maintain emotional health
3. To foster social development
4. To enhance creativity in the aesthetic and dramatic realm
5. To develop language and cognitive skills

These areas are developed with individual and group goals in mind and they are included in the program each day.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum is designed to provide the maximum experience for every Infant/Toddler, Two's/Three's and Preschooler that enters our program. Activities will ensure that each child is growing, learning and developing in the developmental domains (creative expressions, cognitive, social emotional, language, and physical development). Our teachers are trained to identify a child who may need extra attention. Lesson plans are individualized to ensure that all children are successful.

The curriculum guide that AOLC uses is the *Creative Curriculum* which allows infants to preschool age children to learn from the environment. The *Creative Curriculum* builds on Piaget's theories of development in young children. Piaget believed that all children learn through active exploration of their environment, beginning in infancy by grasping, rolling, pounding, smelling, sucking, and crawling around and over everything they come in contact with, infants and toddlers discover that objects have weight, volume, color, and texture. During the preschool years, children add to what they have learned in those early explorations.

At AOLC, we view children as "*Active Learners.*" We know that children learn best by doing and it is through active involvement with their environment that they make sense of the world around them. The physical environment of the center is arranged and organized in "*Interest Areas.*" These areas provide the setting in which children can thrive and learn.

## **NUTRITION**

The center participates in and is regulated by the Child and Adult Food Program. We provide two nutritional meals and a snack for young children. All meals are catered fresh daily. Weekly menus will be posted and made available for the parents. Infants and Toddlers will be served as needed. The older children meals will be served "*Family Style.*" The children and teachers will help in setting the table, serving, and clean-up. Nutritional education opportunities will be integrated into the curriculum, including mealtimes, without interfering with the pleasure of eating. Food substitutions may only be made when supported by a physician's statement. Your

physician will need to sign the Medical Food Exemption Form that is included in the enrollment packet. If your child has food allergies and is unable to eat certain foods or milk, a statement from the doctor is required to complete the Food Allergy Plan and list food or milk that child is allowed to have. AOLC will try to meet the child's food allergy but if the cost is too expensive, then the parent will be asked to provide the child's meals. We are a NUT free center.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**

Low-sugar healthy treats such as fruit, animal crackers, rice cakes and etc. You may want to provide treat bags for your child to share on his or her birthday. AOLC will NOT serve cake or cupcakes at the center. Please let us know in advance that you will be bringing a treat to share with your child's class.

### **NAP or REST PERIOD**

All children involved in the busy routine of the center's program need and can benefit from a period of rest each day. Infants have their own crib. The Caregivers follow the schedule of the infants and no set time is set for them to wake up. The toddlers, two's & three's and preschoolers rest on cots for approximately 1½ to 2 hours in the afternoon. Plans are provided for those children who are awake or not sleepy yet. Parents are asked to bring a blanket to the center for their child. The center does laundry a weekly or more often if soiled.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips, community excursions and places of interest may be planned and are considered an important part of the educational program and will be taken periodically. They can also be an exciting and rewarding experience for children. Educational field trips will be planned during the program year. Advance notice will be given for trip, admission and bus fees. The center staff and parent volunteers will continue to provide appropriate supervision while on field trips and community excursions. Parent participation is encouraged and parental permission for your child to participate field trips is part of the agreement. All regular parent volunteers will need a TB screening and background clearance on file.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

AOLC provide transportation service at this time. However, we do use charter school bus service for transportation to and from trips. ***AOLC can provide bus service for toddlers and two's due to the new bus customization.*** Seat restraints for children three and older is available on our charter buses and not for infant children. The bus companies are paid depending on the distance of travel for the trip. Therefore the cost of the bus ride is subject to change. The buses are reserved in advance and AOLC is required to pay for the reserved buses. The bus fees are

charged by the number of children who are participating. The child that does not attend or cancel out; that child's fee is still included in the count. There will be no refund paid for child's trip for admission and bus if parent decide that their child will not be attending the trip. If the center cancels a trip in advance, then admission cost and bus fee will be refunded to the parent.

### **FIELD TRIP FEES**

The admission cost of field trip is the responsibility of the parent, unless admission is free. Only children who are enrolled at AOLC will be allowed to attend field trips. If a parent decides to attend the trip, they may be asked to pay the admission fee, if any. In some cases, adult admission is free. Parents who volunteer to go on the trips may be asked to assist with the children. Permission slips will be given out in advance to inform you of the cost and to get permission for your child to attend the trip. Any child who does not have a signed permission slip will not be allowed to attend the trip. In some cases lunch will be prepared, and in other cases lunch is included in the cost of the trip. Some places require us to pay in advance, when that happens and we cancel, their policy is not to give refunds because someone else could have had that space. If you have paid for your child to go on the trip and for some reason your child can't attend, you will be refunded the amount of the trip providing the trip was not paid for in advance (e.g. a reservation is made two weeks to a month in advance to schedule a field trip).

### **CHILD SAFETY ON FIELD TRIPS**

A first aid kit and an emergency list with family information are always taken on every trip in case of an injury. If the injury is minor the child will be attended to by the teacher. If any serious injuries occur, 9-1-1 will be called immediately, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital, and the parent and the center will be notified.

To prevent a child from getting lost, adequate supervision is provided; the center's name and phone number is placed on the back of the children's coat or in their pocket.

A count of all the children is taken before boarding the bus, while sitting on the bus, when departing the bus when entering the establishment, frequently while in the establishment, when leaving the establishment and boarding the bus, while on the bus, and finally when departing the bus upon entering the center. The bus driver will not leave until all of this is done.

### **CENTER RIGHTS ON FIELD TRIP**

- The center reserves the right to cancel and make additional decisions regarding the scheduled trips. Some trips are planned for indoors and outdoors.
- Field trip will be canceled if the weather is too bad or not enough parent participation.
- Children experiencing behavior problems will not be permitted to attend the schedule field trip.
- If your child is not following directions at school then he will probably not follow directions away from school. We wouldn't want your child to run away from the group and have something bad happen as a result of not listening. This does not mean that your

child is banned from all field trips. He will be able to go if someone in the family over the age 18 years or older is able to accompany your child on the trip or if staff observes significant improvement in child's behavior.

- On the day of field trip, if any child comes to school sick, gets sick after he arrives, or is having difficulty breathing, then their parent will be called and your child will not be allowed to attend the field trip.
- Nose bleeding, diarrhea, or any other illness that will cause him not to participate and have fun will also cause your child not able to attend the trip.

### **PERSONAL BELONGING**

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children dress in washable, comfortable clothing, appropriate for the weather, including enclosed shoes (**no open toe sandals or flip flops**). Plastic aprons are provided by the center for art and water activities. Water activities, sand play, and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate that an extra set of clothing be kept at the center *at all times*. All extra clothing should be marked with the child's name and put in a small plastic container, which is provided by the parent. All soiled and wet items will be sent home in a plastic bag. Parents are requested to return a clean set of clothing the next morning.

### **TOYS FROM HOME**

Alpha and Omega Learning Center does NOT permit toys (or Tablets and other expensive devices) brought from home to the center. We are not responsible or liable for lost or damaged toys.

### **SUPPLIES**

1. **Infant/Toddler Room** – 4 label bottles, sippy cup, Infant Water, diapers, wipes, pacifier, 2 changes of clothing, 1 gal Ziploc bag, and 3 boxes of Kleenex.
2. **Two's & Three's Room** – Pull-ups/Diapers, wipes, 2 complete changes of clothing, toothbrush/paste, 3 boxes of Kleenex, favorite blanket and a pair of center shoes.
3. **Preschool Room** – A pair of center shoes, toothbrush/paste, 2 complete changes of clothing, blanket, 3 boxes of Kleenex, and favorite blanket.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The personnel of AOLC are expected to respect the confidence entrusted to us by the families and to know that the center's continuing program is dependent on the successful delivery of quality service as well as on the understanding, goodwill and generosity of the families and referral agencies. The parent or legal guardian has complete access to the information (such as: admission, progress, health or discharge) in their child's file. All records are limited to center staff designated by the Director, CEO and DCFS and other affiliates. A written consent by the

parent or legal guardian must be obtained prior to any forwarding and/or receiving of confidential information.

### **GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

This is the policy of AOLC that positive discipline practice will be used to help each child grow in self-esteem, self-control, and respect the feelings of others and to successfully become a member of the group.

The purpose of discipline is to help children learn ways of behaving that are acceptable to themselves and to others. With very young children this usually means setting limits for their safety, the safety of others, and the safety of property. Children need to reassurance that the people who care for them will guide and protect them. Parents will be given the “*Guidance and Discipline*” policy at the time of registration.

Under no circumstances should staff:

- Use the denial of food as a form of punishment
- HIT OR STRIKE A CHILD FOR ANY REASON
- Verbally abuse or constantly yell at any child
- TALK NEGATIVELY ABOUT A CHILD IN HIS OR HER PRESENCE OR IN THE PRESENCE OF OTHER CHILDREN
- Use time out
- PLACE A CHILD IN A ROOM OR HALLWAY WITHOUT ADULT SUPERVISION
- Demonstrates favoritism toward some children and ignores or mistreats others

### **SUSPENSION and/or DISMISSAL POLICY**

Alpha and Omega Learning Center has a non-expulsion policy. Every effort will be made not to dismiss a child from the program. However, there are certain instances in which dismissal may be considered. For example: medical not in by the deadline, physical and immunization is not current, severe behavior or other disorderly conduct, excessive absenteeism or misconduct, delinquent child care payments, unresolved differences in the educational philosophy between the parents and the center, continual late pick-up, or the program does not meet your needs. No child will be dismissed arbitrarily and all involved parties will be adequately notified of possible dismissal or of definite dismissal.

#### **Suspension Procedure for General Misconduct:**

- a) The teacher will talk with the child
- b) The teacher will redirect the child’s behavior
- c) As a last resort, the teacher will provide an alternate activity or becomes the teacher partner for the day
- d) Verbal Warning -The teacher will speak with the parent about the child’s behavior
- e) Final Warning - The teacher will provide a written plan for behavior management
- f) A Parent-Teacher Conference will be held to discuss child’s behavior
- g) The child will be suspended for 1 to 2 days

- h) If disruptive behavior continues, a Parent-Teacher Conference will be held.
- i) The parent will be given a two (2) week notice of termination.
- j) AOLC will support in finding alternative care that will support the child's needs.

If behavior is so extreme that it impacts the safety of the children and/or others and prior steps are ineffective, disenrollment proceedings will be recommended:

- A child who puts his/herself in danger.
- A child who puts others in danger and does not listen to Teachers/Caregivers.
- A child whose behavior patterns have an adverse effect on other children and/or are so time-consuming that the Teachers/Caregivers cannot provide adequate care or supervision.
- A child who carries out the instruction of a parent who encourages that child to act in self-defense, which is contrary to the philosophy of the Alpha and Omega Learning Center.

### **WITHDRAWAL**

Parents may withdraw their child from the program at any time. *A two week notice is required.* Parents wishing to withdraw their child will be held responsible for their Monthly Co-Payment and any monies owed to the center. When withdrawal is made without notification, the parent will be held responsible for payment of two weeks. We reserve the right to discontinue service for any reason by giving you a two week notice as well.

### **CHILD ABUSE and NEGLECT POLICY**

One of AOLC goals of the program is prevention of abuse/neglect through educational opportunities for parents to improve their parenting skills and their abilities to cope with stress. If a parent is having difficulty with their child, the Director or CEO is available to work with you. All employees of AOLC are required as mandated reporters to report child maltreatment immediately when they have "*reasonable cause to believe*" that a child known to them in their professional or official capacity maybe an abused or neglected child. This is done by calling the DCFS Hotline. Before a call is made to DCFS, we ask that AOLC staff:

- a) Report observation to the Director/CEO
- b) Continue to observe and record child's behavior
- c) Communicate with the parent about their observation

Reporting a situation of suspected abuse or neglect is not meant to be a punitive action taken by staff, but is done to protect children and to assist parents in acquiring the skills to discipline in an effective and appropriate manner. A copy of AOLC Mandated Reporter (Child Abuse & Neglect) Policy is explained and signed by all parents upon enrollment. If any staff member of AOLC have reason to believe that the child is being abused or neglected, a call will be made immediately. If a report is made, AOLC will continue provide support, training, referral, and services to the family.

### **ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS**

Accidents do happen while children are playing and we will do our best to ensure the safety of all the children in our care. Teachers/Caregivers will always be attentive to listen and observe children at all times; whether this is inside or during outdoor play. First Aid will be provided to the child who experiences a bump, bruise, scrape, insect bite or small cut. The parent will be called and given verbal notice of incident. A written incident report is completed by the Teacher/Caregiver and given to Director to sign off on. A copy of incident report is given to the parent and a copy is filed. An incident report form will be required of the parent for child(ren) who arrive at the center with injuries from home.

### **CARING FOR MILDLY ILL CHILDREN**

If a child becomes ill and it is not a serious illness, temporary comfort will be provided for the child away from the group, and the parent will be called.

Children who are in our care and are too ill and exhibits one or more of the symptoms as indicated below will be temporarily isolated and provided comfort while waiting for emergency pick-up.

- A. unusual changes in behavior (fatigue, irritability, loss of appetite, complaints of pain)
- B. Elimination disturbances, such as constipation or diarrhea
- C. Fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit)
- D. Vomiting
- E. Serious skin rash or eruptions
- F. Sore throat, earache, headache or other suspicious signs of illness or just too sick to participate
- h. In extreme emergencies, we will call 911, call you, and take the child to the nearest hospital. However, prior consent from the parent is requested

\*It is important that you provide the center with current telephone numbers and email addresses if they have changed.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

The center will make every effort to control the spread of communicable disease and will establish health policies and precautions to that end. Children in a communicable state will be isolated while at the center and excluded from the program until a doctor's clearance is made available to the Director.

Whenever exposure to a communicable disease has occurred at the center, the following procedure may occur:

- Illinois Department of Public Health will be consulted, and their instructions will be followed with respect to control measures.
- The Teacher/Caregiver will notify the director. A call shall be made to the parent for pick-up. The child will be isolated until the parent arrives.
- An exposure notice will be posted on the parent board and copies made available to the parent.
- Children who are absent, a call will be made to inform the parent.



- Parents are required to inform the center within 24 hours of a diagnosis of a serious illness in the family.
- A report to the Dept. of Health will be made.

For the benefit of the children and to prevent the spread of infection, parents are asked not to send their child to the center if any of the following signs of illness are present as indicated above and below:

COVID-19, Chicken pox, German measles, Measles, Ring worm, Lice, Pink eyes, Pin worms, Strep, Hepatitis A, Impetigo, Mumps, Whooping Cough, Shigellosis, Salmonellosis, and Hand-foot-mouth disease, and any other contagious disease.

Confidentiality regarding any communicable disease will be maintained to ensure the rights of every individual. The Director, Staff, Department of Public Health, Department of Children and family services will be made aware of children diagnosed as having any communicable disease.

### **RE-ADMITTANCE**

- If your child was kept at home due to minor illness (such as a fever or cold), parents are required to call the center and inform us of child's illness and symptoms the child is experiencing.  
*NOTE: A child with a fever may return to school after being fever-free for 24 hours.*
- If your child was absent for 3 or more days due to a serious illness or contagious disease, a "Clearance Note" from the doctor is required.
- If your child was absent due to hospitalization, a "Clearance Note" from the doctor is required.
- If your child was taken to emergency the night before and your child was discharged, a "Doctor's Statement of Discharge and Clearance" is required.

### **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**

AOLC staff, children, staff and volunteers shall be taught to use and practice universal precautions and infection control procedures; including hand-washing, sanitizing, and hygienic measures to stay clean and healthy. Infection control shall include the following:

- At arrival, parents are required to assist in hand-washing before releasing their child to their child's teacher or caregiver. Thorough hand-washing with soap and warm water upon arrival for the day, before eating, feeding, or handling food, after toileting, following nose blowing, sneezing, coughing, after cleaning equipment, before and after giving medication, after taking a child's temperature, and after removing disposable diapers.
- Use of disposable waterproof gloves in situations where there is contact with blood or body fluids.
- Use of proper sanitizing procedures on all surface areas, toys, equipment, bathrooms, and tables before food service or cooking activities. Sanitizing solution shall be prepared

fresh daily with four tablespoons of bleach to one gallon of water. There shall be adequate provision of cleaning supplies and disposables gloves at all times. All blood and body fluids shall be handled as if infected.

### **TOILET TRAINING**

AOLC will assist (not initiate) families in toilet training their child. Before starting toilet training, look for signs your toddler is ready. Beginning too soon can be frustrating for both of you and can make the whole process take longer. If you've started the process, find out how often to ask kids-in-training if they need to go to the bathroom. There's no magic age at which children are ready to start learning how to use the potty, but some develop the necessary physical and cognitive skills between 18 and 24 months of age. Many parents don't start potty training until their children are 2 1/2 to 3 years old, when daytime bladder control has become more reliable. And some children aren't interested in potty training until they're closer to 3, or even 4.

Use the checklist below to measure your toddler's progress toward readiness, and keep in mind that starting before your child is truly ready doesn't mean you'll finish sooner – it's more likely that the process will just end up taking longer.

**Use the following signs of readiness:** Physical Signs – Urinates a fair amount at one time and has “dry” periods of at least two hours or during naps, which shows that his bladder muscles are developed enough to hold urine. Behavioral Signs – Can pull pants up and down, dislikes the feeling of wearing a wet or dirty diaper, shows interest in others’ bathroom habits (wants to watch you go to the bathroom or wear underwear, tells you, make grunting sounds or find child squatting, and isn’t resistant to learning to use the toilet. Cognitive Signs – Understands the physical signals that mean he has to go and can tell you before it happens or even hold it until he has time to get to the potty and has the words for urine and stool.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION POLICY**

This policy is to encourage communication between the parent, the child’s health care provider and the child’s Teacher/Caregiver to assure maximum safety in the giving of medication to the child during the time the child is in child care.

#### **Procedure**

In order for children to receive medication to be administered by their Teacher/Caregiver during the school day, the parents must give consent and the following must occur:

#### **Parent Consent and the Medication Log:**

1. Parents need to sign the Medication Consent Form before any medications can be given. Director/Teacher/Caregiver need to complete and sign the staff section of the medication consent form.
2. It is important that parent’s notify your child’s teacher if medicine is being taken, along with possible signs or symptoms to be aware of. This information will help the teacher to understand and monitor what your child may be experiencing from the medication.
3. All medication must be left in its original container. The label should have the following

information: pharmacy name/phone number, doctor name, date of prescription, name of person prescribed to, name of medication, dosage/direction/how often, storage of medicine (shelf or refrigeration), and expiration date.

4. Over the counter medication must be brought in by the parent with a doctor's note. Non-prescription medication can be dispensed with a written physician's note. Over the counter fever reducers as Tylenol or Motrin are used to reduce fevers. We can administer fever reducers to children who have a history of febrile seizures if we have clearly written physicians orders; including the dosage and when to administer. Children without a history of febrile seizures but develop a fever greater than 100.3 F (underarm) and 101.F (by mouth) should be sent home.
5. Storage of Medication shall be stored safely and out of reach of children. Medication will be kept either in the office locked filed cabinet. If medication requires refrigeration, it shall be stored in Ziploc bag with the child's name and date received and kept in medication box. Medication will be sent home when it is no longer needed.
6. It is important that the parent give the first dose of any medication at home so that the parent can observe for adverse reactions. Staff will watch for allergic reactions, such as swelling around the mouth and face, rashes, and/or difficulty breathing. Staff will watch for changes in the child's normal behavior pattern. Unusual lethargy, aggressiveness, anxiety and/or agitation should be considered as a possible reaction to medication. Parents will be notified immediately if staff observed that an allergic reaction occurred after given medication. Parents will need to contact the child's physician and receive guidance as to next steps. If parents cannot be reached, the Director will call the physician directly. In case of serious reaction, like difficulty breathing, the emergency response team (Fire Department Paramedics 9-1-1) will be contacted. All medication reactions will be documented on an Incident Report form and in child's health file.

### **DRUG and ALCOHOL FREE WORK PLACE**

The center recognizes drug and alcohol dependency as a major health problem in the workplace and the community. The center values its children and employees and therefore, strives to provide a drug-free, healthful, safe, and secure environment for all who come onto the center's premises.

If an employee, parent, or visitor is present at the center and is suspected of being inebriated from drugs or alcohol, he or she will be asked to leave the premise immediately. For employees, they will be dismissed.

### **SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Smoking tobacco, in any form, is not permitted by anyone (i.e., employees of AOLC, parents, or visitors) on or around the immediate premises during and after operating hours; especially when children are present.

### **SAFETY PLAN**

#### **Fire Prevention and Drill**

Fire safety is a regular part of the curriculum for the children and the emphasis is on safety procedures. Each month, a drill will be held. It will be a combination of scheduled and surprise drills. At least one drill will be observed by a representative of the Fire Department.

### **Tornado or Severe Weather**

Each month between tornado drills will be held. The Teachers/Caregivers are instructed of the location of the emergency shelter.

### **Power Failure**

In the event of power failure at the program, the Director will immediately determine if the failure is program based or covers a larger area. The children will be kept inside if the power failure is due to power lines nearby. As soon as a probable cause for power failure is located, the power facility will be called for emergency service. The Teachers/Caregivers will keep the children calm and comfort any in distress. If the weather conditions outside are such that proper heat or cooling will not be maintained at the program, the parents of the children will be notified.

### **Missing Child**

It is the program's strict policy that no child is ever left alone. The children are instructed to ask permission to leave the group for any reason, and the Teachers/Caregivers are responsible for ensuring their safe return within a reasonable time period. If a child cannot be found after an exhaustive search, the program will notify the local police department for their assistance, as well as call the child's parent.

## **DIFFICULTIES and DIFFERENCES**

Success at the center is based on teamwork. Communication is the key for your child's success at the center. However, if there seems to be difficulties or differences to arise and cannot be corrected with the teacher, then the parent can call the center and discuss it with the Director, CEO, or make an appointment for a meeting.

## **PARENT NEWS**

Handling of infants and/or children by parents other than their own at the center is not permissible. This is for the safety of the children. Regular scheduled meetings between the teacher and parent are held during the school year (i.e., quarterly parent meetings, tri-annual parent-teacher conferences, and parent workshops). **It is mandatory that all parents attend at least 2 parent workshops and 2 parent meetings.**

All parents are asked to volunteer some time, make donations, and contribute to the program in ways that improves our program and to participate in our fund-raising projects. The contribution of time given will be considered as in-kind services only and is assessed a non-monetary value (parent reading and activity logs are required for some age group at our center). The Parent's Information Sheet is used to let parents know how their child's day went, what was eaten by the child, and for giving miscellaneous information. The Parent's Bulletin Board and the website is the most important communication center at the center. It is used to inform you of the day-to-day happenings; lunch menus, newsletter, staff in-service trainings, certificates, messages and information directed to the parents.

*Thank you for choosing our program!*



**CONTRACT AGREEMENT**

This contract is between \_\_\_\_\_ the parent of  
\_\_\_\_\_ and Alpha & Omega Learning Center.

I agree to the terms of this contract:

Hours of care: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Co-Payment/Tuition Amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple family discount (10% per family) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that this Parent Handbook is a guide to AOLC policies and procedures and does constitute as a contract for the time my child is enrolled. I understand that the standards and rules of this Parent Handbook are not intended to place unreasonable restrictions on me, but are necessary for the efficient and orderly conduct of the child and parent. I also understand that AOLC reserves the right to change, modify, amend,

suspend, or cancel in whole or in part any of the contents in this Parent Handbook without giving prior notice to the parent.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledge that the policies and procedures in the Parent Handbook has been explained to me and I have received a copy of AOLC Parent Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE      DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE      DATE

AOLC PARENT HANDBOOK – REVISED 8/17