# Child Development Centers

# Parent Handbook

Revised September 2025

Welcome to Fountain Valley School District Child Development Centers. Our program is designed to promote the physical, mental, and emotional health of preschool age children. Special emphasis is placed on enhancing each child's positive self-image as a learner as well as developing warm personal relationships with others. The curriculum will provide key learning experiences to build a foundation for school success.

Our Programs are open Monday through Friday, 10 months a year; hours vary by location. The centers will be closed in observance of legal holidays and local holidays as designated in enrollment packets. The centers provide morning and afternoon (full day) snacks consisting of fruits, breads and crackers, protein sources, and other nutritious foods. Lunch is provided for full day students and/or student will bring sack lunch each day.

Observations and visits are welcomed and encouraged. We are more than happy to answer, on a personal basis, any questions you might have been concerning the program.

**PROGRAM GOALS**

To provide a preschool program in a safe, comfortable, and secure environment for the entire community. The program is designed to promote responsibility, decision making, social development, self-confidence, and personal growth while meeting developmental needs of each child and a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

**PURPOSE**

The FVSD Child Development Centers provides quality child care services that strengthen, support, and supplement the family and the community.

**ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF**

The CDCs are administered by the Fountain Valley School District Board of Education in agreement with the California Department of Education, Office of Child Development, and licensed by the State of California Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Social Services.

Each classroom is staffed by a teacher holding a Teacher Permit issued by the State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. All other staff meet necessary District requirements for education and experience in Child Development.

All staff members are trained and experienced early childhood educators who were chosen for their enthusiasm and expertise in working with children. They work together as a team to provide a quality program for children.

**EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the total Child Development Center Programs is a continuous process with staff, parents, students, and community being involved. The Child Development Centers are evaluated according to the State Evaluation Plan.

## EDUCATION PROGRAM

Each day children will participate in a variety of planned learning experiences supportive of the learning and development of each child. Our classrooms are stocked with materials that invite students to learn as they work with manipulatives and explore their environment.

The environment at the centers is set to help the child develop a positive self-image, a feeling of self-identity and emotional stability. It is one which stimulates curiosity and fosters creativity; encourages independence and problem solving while still offering the greatest opportunity for the child to learn how to participate successfully as an individual within the group; develop habits which lead to effective learning; and offer experiences which are highly motivational. The children develop social, cognitive, and communication skills as they explore in the fields of science, mathematics, art, music, and the social sciences. Much attention is given to the children's development of motor skills. The activities which are planned are designed to foster child growth and development patterns. While the program is individualized, children explore the environment with groups of children having like needs.

## NAPPING

All full-day children at the center are provided a napping time. Children will nap at approximately 12:30. The children will nap on mats. Small sized bedding and sheets should be brought from home for each child. The bedding should be clearly marked with the child's name.

## ADMISSION POLICIES

The CDCs operate under the guidelines of the California Department of Education, Office of Child Development. The center operates in a non-discriminatory manner without regard to sex, race, religion, ethnicity, or physical disability. The center does not include any religious worship or instruction. Corporal punishment is not permitted within our Child Development Center.

Enrollment will be open to any child who is at least three years old and fully potty trained, provided the program can meet the needs of the child and:

a. There will be no adverse effect upon the other children.
b. The child will benefit from the program and the center is able to meet the individual needs of the child.
c. The child will not require additional staff time normally given to the group.

## ADMISSION PROCEDURES

A completed Parent Contract form will be submitted accompanied by a registration fee.

Each child must have a medical examination by a licensed physician evaluating the child's general health, both physical and emotional, and stating any special problems or needs. The medical report must verify that immunizations are up to date in accordance with the State of California Department of Health Services requirements. If parents adhere to a religious faith practicing healing by prayer or other spiritual means, they may be exempted from the medical examination requirements by signing exemption conditions.

**ILLNESS**

Due to the close contact children have with each other in a child care setting, the Child Development Centers have strict policies regarding the illness of a child. The policies are for the protection of all children and families. They are meant to ensure each child is provided with as healthy an environment as possible without disrupting a family's schedule.

Upon arrival at the center, a staff member may question a parent or guardian about the child's health. Should the child be ill, the parent will be informed that the child will not be accepted at the center for the day.

Should a child become ill while at the center, a parent or someone on the emergency card or authorization form will be called to pick the child up. The child may not return to the center the following day.

Should a child have a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, the child may not return until he or she has been free of these symptoms for a full day. In the absence of these symptoms, a child simply might not feel well enough to be in group care. In this case, the child may not return until his needs can be met in a child care setting.

In the event the child has been taken to the doctor for an illness, a doctor's note is required prior to the child's readmittance to the program. The doctor's note must state: 1) the reason for the visit, 2) if the child is contagious or not, and 3) when the child may return to the center. A doctor's note will be required to return to class if student misses 5 or more days in a row.

In the event that your child develops a rash on their body or blisters in the inside of their mouth, a doctor's note will be required in order for your child to be readmitted into the CDC program. This is to maintain the health and well-being of all the children in the center.

**MEDICATION DISTRIBUTION**

If your child needs to have prescription or non-prescription medication while at school, please use our school district "Request for Medication" form. In the event that you do not have this form with you at the time you are at the doctor's office, the doctor's note must also include: 1) the name of the medication, 2) the dates to start and discontinue the medication, 3) the amount that should be given to him/her, 4) at what time intervals.

**REGISTRATION**
An annual non-refundable registration fee is charged per child.

**MONTHLY TUITION**

a. Tuition is due and payable on or before the first of each month whether or not a bill has been received. If the first of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, tuition is due prior to the first. Sometimes, due to circumstances beyond our control, a bill does not reach the parent or guardian, however, payment deadlines remain the same. You may leave a check in the classroom tuition box (the box will close on the 2nd of the month and tuition must be taken to the child care office), pay online or pay in the child care office. Online payment instructions will be sent with September's tuition statement.

b. There is a $10.00 late charge for payment received after the 2nd of each month. Failure to pay by the 10th will result in dismissal from the program. Failure to pay within 30 days of dismissal will result in the account being assigned to collection. Postdated checks are not accepted. All payments after the 5th of the month must either be money order or cash and must be made at the Child Care Programs Office.

c. A 10% discount is available for any older sibling enrolled in the CDC.

d. **All payments are non-refundable.**

e. Failure to pay tuition even though a child does not attend the CDC during the month will automatically result in the child being dropped from the program.

f. Should a check be returned for insufficient funds, there will be a $20.00 fee. All future payments will require a money order or cash to the Child Care Programs office only.

**WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM**

**Written notice must be received by the CDC by the 15th of the month for the next month of attendance.** This will enable the staff to fill available space with prospective students that may be in need of child care services. **There are no exceptions.**

**OPERATING PROCEDURES**

The CDC operates Monday through Friday. The CDC will be closed on legal holidays observed by the Fountain Valley School District.

**ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP**

**Each child must be signed in and out of the CDC each day by an adult.** Failure to sign a child in or out can result in the termination of child care services.

Parents must enter their pin number to sign the child in and out. Parents or other authorized persons must accompany the child to and from the center. The center cannot accept responsibility for children left at the gate or outside the classroom who have not been signed in.

Either half-day pick up time or Closing time 5:00 p.m. Should a child be picked up after their assigned pick up/5:00 pm closing time, the parent or guardian is assessed a penalty fee of $20.00 for the first 15 minutes. **and $1.00 per minute thereafter.** This fee is to be paid when the child is picked up. Any child left after closing time will be considered to be abandoned, and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the child's safety.

After closing time, if no contact has been made by a parent, a responsible party from the emergency list will be contacted to come to the center and pick up the child. If no one is available from the emergency list, the Fountain Valley police will be called after 5:30 p.m., and the child will be taken into protective custody until a parent can be located.

Three late pickups in one year will result in the child being dropped from the program. This is followed by a six-month period of ineligibility to enroll in the Fountain Valley District's CDC.

The only persons allowed to pick up a child are those who are 18 and over and whose names are indicated on the child's records.

No child will be released to any adult during school hours who does not properly identify him/herself with a government issued ID. We request that you contact us ahead of time before someone other than you arrive to pick up your child. However, please keep in mind that if anyone listed on your authorization form or emergency card arrives to pick up your child, we will release him/her. **Please keep your child's emergency information current in SchoolCare Works.**

**ABSENTEEISM**

1. If a child is absent, a parent must notify the CDC staff that day and each day that he or she will not be in attendance.

2. If a child is absent or has "unused" hours for any given day, that day and/or hours cannot be applied to another day.

3. Because tuition is prorated, in order to ensure the continued operation of the program, no credit or allowance can be given for absences due to legal holidays when the center is closed or for any reason other than prolonged illness.

4. If a parent chooses to withdraw, a notice by the 15th of the month for the next month is required, the withdrawal will be considered a termination, and in order to reenter the program (if space is available), both a new registration fee and first month's tuition must be paid.

5. When a child returns from an absence of 5 days or more a doctor's note must be provided. In the case of illness, the specific type of illness must be indicated in order to comply with state regulations.

## NUTRITION

Full day children need to bring 2 snacks and a nutritious lunch. Half day children must bring one snack each day. Teachers eat with the children, using this time to promote social development and to serve as a role model for the children.

## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

CDC Programs utilize a positive approach to guiding children's behavior. Redirection is primarily used to direct inappropriate behavior. If repetitive behavior persists, the parent will be notified and together with the teacher, an action plan will be developed. Consistency is the key to guiding children. Cooperation from the parent is expected and required for continued enrollment.

Standards of behavior in the CDC parallel those in the school classroom. Children are expected to respect the adults in the program and to follow their directions. All rules are directed toward avoiding injury to persons or property while insuring fairness. The basic rules are:

- Keep hands and feet to oneself.
- Follow the direction of adults respectfully.
- Use equipment properly.
- Treat other children with courtesy.
- Use appropriate language suitable for a school setting.
- Settle disagreements by discussing them.

To ensure a safe, courteous, and positive environment, it is necessary to deal with unacceptable behavior firmly. A disruptive child may be removed from a group situation to regain self-control. If at any time it is considered that a child is not acting appropriately, parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and develop an appropriate plan of discipline. If behavior does not improve following the implementation of the discipline plan, the child may be dismissed from the program. This is followed by a six-month period of ineligibility to enroll in the Fountain Valley School District CDC Program.

In the event the staff deems it necessary, a parent may be called to pick up their child immediately.

## EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, such as earthquake or flood, the following procedures will be in effect:

- All children will be kept at the center until they are picked up by the parent or other authorized person. A person authorized by the parent to pick up a child will be requested to present identification before the child is released.

- Should it be necessary to evacuate children from the center, the evacuation site will be posted on the center door and every effort will be made to contact parents and guardians.

- Staff members will remain with the children until they are released to the parent or authorized person.

- The center is equipped with sufficient supplies to accommodate children in the event of an emergency.

- **Please keep emergency information on SchoolCare Works current to assist the CDC staff in the event of an emergency.**

**CLOTHING**

The children will be involved in a variety of activities during the day. Many of the activities will become messy and may require the child to change clothes. (For example, water play, shaving cream art, painting, etc.)

In order to avoid lost items, all clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name. All children should wear play clothes and sturdy shoes suitable for the types of activities they will be involved in during the day. If the child stays until closing time, a sweater or jacket is recommended as it gets cool in the late afternoons.

**TAX INFORMATION**

Fountain Valley School District's Tax I.D. number is #95-6001370.

**WHAT TO BRING TO CHILD CARE**

ALL CHILDREN

- At least two full changes of clothes (Please include lots of socks and underwear.)

  Please consider the clothing as it will contribute to the ease of potty time.

  FULL DAY STUDENTS

- Bedding should be a small size to fit children and mats 24" x 48", the size of a beach towel.

  According to California State Licensing Laws and Regulations, each child must have a sheet/blanket to cover their cot. It is the CDC policy that each child arrives at the beginning of each week with their sheet and blanket and that the sheet and blanket be taken home at the end of the week to be washed for the following week.

- Families may wish to bring an object the child is attached to in order to make the transition easier.

- Blankets, jackets, sweaters, and extra clothing should be marked with the child's name.

**PARENT/STAFF COMMUNICATION**

A newsletter will go out from the site to provide you with program information and other news which may be of interest to you. The parent bulletin board close to the sign-in area will also contain special announcements including local community events. Please check it often. Parents are always welcome to visit the center, and are encouraged to participate in special activities.

**PARENT CUSTODY/COURT ORDERS**

We realize that custody situations can be very complex and stressful. However, please be respectful of all staff and children in the CDC program when managing custody matters. **Parents are strongly encouraged to keep all custody disputes away from the child care environment.** CDC staff have been directed to not discuss personal family situations with parents and guardians. **All custody court orders must be authentic (court seals), up-to-date, and a copy must be on file in the CDC office in order for staff to comply with the mandates listed within the documents.** Staff will only follow orders within the court documents.

**COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

The FVSD Child Development Services division staff believe that the quality of the CDC program can improve when the staff listens to complaints, considers differences of opinion, and resolves disagreements though an established process.

Any concerns should be directed to the CDC director. If the problems are not resolved, they should be directed to the Child Development Services (CDS) director. In the event the CDS director is unable to resolve the problem, you will be advised by the

program director to follow the District's uniform complaint procedures.

**UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

The Board of Education recognizes that the District is responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. The District shall follow uniform complaint procedures when addressing complaints alleging (1) unlawful discrimination in any program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance, based on sex, ethnic group identification, race, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, or any basis that is contained in the prohibition of hate crimes set forth in subdivision (a) of section 422.6 of the Penal Code or (2) failure to comply with state or federal law in adult education, vocational education, child care and development programs, child nutrition programs, consolidated categorical programs, migrant education, and special education programs; (3) instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health and safety of pupils or staff, and teacher vacancy and mis-assignment, as set forth in Education Code section 35186.

The Board encourages the early, informal resolution of complaints at the site level whenever possible. The Board prohibits retaliation in any form for the filing of a complaint, the reporting of instances of discrimination, or for participation in complaint procedures. Such participation shall not in any way effect the status, grades, or work assignments of the complainant. The Board acknowledges and respects student and employee rights to privacy. Discrimination complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the facts. This includes keeping the identity of the complainant confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation or proceedings, as determined by the Superintendent or designee on a case-by-case basis. Other types of complaints and responses thereto are public records. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that employees designated to investigate complaints are knowledgeable about the laws and programs for which they are responsible. Such employees may have access to legal counsel as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

## NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS, STUDENTS, AND TEACHERS: PRESCHOOL COMPLAINT RIGHTS

Parents/Guardians, Students, and Teachers:

Pursuant to Education Code 8212, you are hereby notified that any California State Preschool Program that is exempt from licensure must have:

1. Outdoor shade that is safe and in good repair

2. Drinking water that is accessible and readily available throughout the day

3. Safe and sanitary restroom facilities with one toilet and handwashing fixture for every 15 children

4. Restroom facilities that are available only for preschoolers and kindergartners

5. Visual supervision of children at all times

6. Indoor and outdoor space that is properly contained or fenced and provides sufficient space for the number of children using the space at any given time

7. Playground equipment that is safe, in good repair, and age appropriate

If you choose to file a complaint alleging that any of the above conditions is not being met, your complaint will be addressed through the district's uniform complaint procedures as required by law. A complaint form may be obtained at the school or district office, or downloaded from the school or district website. You may also download a copy of the California Department of Education (CDE) complaint form when available from the following website: http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc . However, a complaint need not be filed using either the district's complaint form or the complaint form from CDE.

**PARENT CONDUCT**

While in the presence of children and staff, parents are expected to maintain a professional demeanor. Other than their own children, parents may not at any time approach children in the program for discipline reasons. All concerns must be directed to the staff.

California Education codes are very clear regarding confrontations with staff. Any parent, guardian, or other person who insults or abuses any teacher in the presence of other school personnel or children at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public situations in connection with assigned program activities is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Any conduct by a parent toward staff or a child which is deemed unacceptable may result in permanent termination of child care services.

**NON DISCRIMINATION IN DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

The Board of Education is committed to affording equal rights and opportunities to all persons in public education. No person shall be subjected, in any program or activity conducted by the District, to discrimination on the basis of sex, ethnic group identification, race, national origin, religion, mental or physical disability, color, or any basis that is contained in the prohibition of hate crimes set forth in subdivision (a) of section 422.6 of the Penal Code. The Board shall promote programs which ensure that discriminatory practices are eliminated in all district activities.

**Penal Code 422.6 states**: *(a) No person, whether or not acting under color of law, shall by force or threat of force, willfully injure, intimidate, interfere with, oppress, or threaten any other person in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him or her by the Constitution or laws of this state or by the Constitution or laws of the United States because of the other person's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation, or because he or she perceives that the other person has one or more of those characteristics.*

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy as stated of Fountain Valley School District to provide an educational environment free of unlawful harassment, in which all students are treated with dignity and respect. (B.P. 5145.7 and A.R. 5145.7). The District maintains a strict policy prohibiting harassment of students due to sex, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, physical or mental disability, blindness, severely impaired vision, or any other basis protected by Federal, State, or local law, ordinance or regulation.

All such harassment is unlawful. The District's anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the District's educational environment and prohibits unlawful harassment by any District student or any employee of the District, including administrators, supervisors, certificated employees, and classified employees. Complaints will be processed in an expedited manner.

Unlawful harassment in any form, including verbal, physical and visual conduct, threats, demands, and retaliation is prohibited. Violation of this policy by an employee may result in discipline, which may include discharge, depending upon the seriousness of the violation. Violation of this policy by another student may result in discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion, depending upon the nature and seriousness of the violation (EC 48900 & 48900.2).

**Sexual harassment is defined in the Education Code as:** Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the workplace or educational setting, under any of the following conditions: (1) Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress; (2) Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment or academic decisions affecting the individual; (3) The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; (4) Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs or activities available at or through the educational institution.

**Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:** (1) **Verbal:** Sexually demeaning comments, sexually explicit statements, questions, slurs, jokes, anecdotes or epithets; (2) **Written:** Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations; (3) **Physical:** Sexual assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement; (4) **Visual:** Leering, gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.

Sexual harassment also includes: Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is un-welcomed. Making reprisals, or threats of reprisal, following a negative response to sexual advances, or following a sexual harassment complaint. The law prohibits any form of sexual harassment, which impairs the educational environment or a student's emotional well being at school. If a student thinks he/she is being harassed because of his/her sex, race, ancestry, or other protected basis, he/she should use the complaint procedure outlined in the District's policy to file a complaint and have it investigated.

The investigation of a claim of harassment will be conducted in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the facts. The District will not retaliate against the student for filing a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by any District employee or another student. Any report of retaliation will be immediately, effectively and thoroughly investigated, and if substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Students have a right to redress for unlawful harassment. In order to secure this right, submit a complaint to the principal or his/her designee. District complaint forms are available. There is absolutely no requirement that a student must make a complaint to the alleged harasser. The student's complaint should include the details of the incident or incidents, the names of the individuals involved and the names of any witnesses. The District will immediately undertake an effective, thorough and objective investigation of the harassment allegations. The investigation will be completed and a determination regarding the alleged harassment will be made and communicated to the student/parent. If the District determines that unlawful harassment has occurred, it will take effective remedial action commensurate with the severity of the offense. Appropriate action will also be taken to deter any future harassment. Students should be aware that the U.S. Office of Civil Rights also investigates complaints of harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, blindness, severely impaired vision or other protected basis.