



## **Discipline and Expulsion Policy** (as noted in the CCA Parent Handbook)

Our discipline policy begins with prevention. CCA staff pay careful attention to arranging the physical aspects of the classroom for spatial arrangement to allow children to interact appropriately. For example, large open spaces are generally avoided to help children save their large muscle activity, such as running, for recess. Teachers are careful and attentive observers of the children in their classroom such that they are finely attuned to each child's uniqueness. At CONNECT Christian Academy, our rules and expectations are designed to help children learn to manage their behavior for effective interaction and cooperation. All staff members guide and support children by clearly communicating in a positive manner and tone. For example, "let's keep the sand in the sand table so we have a lot to pour". Typically, the children are eager to act appropriately and are recognized for doing so. We design activities that are age appropriate in both task and duration to maximize positive interactions. Our teachers carefully monitor the children's activities to anticipate and diffuse problems before they begin. A child who is losing interest in one activity or getting too loud may be redirected to another area that can spark renewed engagement and positive behavior.

Knowing and meeting expectations encourages independent action and fosters self-esteem. The following are examples of tools and rules we may use in the classroom. Signals: lights off means stop; look and listen; bell or music means clean up and find the teacher. Rules: Be a kind friend; listen the first time; follow the routine; stay in your own space; use words to communicate; use quiet voices inside; walk inside the building; use materials appropriately; put everything in its place.

Because each teacher is unique, there is no one style that will work uniformly with all teachers. Conversely, given the individualized temperaments of children, there is no one style that will work uniformly with all children either. Our teachers are committed to these principles:

- Show love for the child with eye contact, physical hugs, and focused attention by spending individualized time with the child
- Know the age characteristics of children; behavior may be typical of a stage that children are going through
- Praise desirable behavior. Effective praise must be immediate, sincere, specific and related to the event, not the character of the child.
- Extinguish unacceptable behavior by stating your expectations (keeping in mind the developmental age of each child) beforehand. Remind the child of acceptable behavior without focusing on the negative.
- In the case of willful disobedience, deliberate defiance, or deliberate destruction and aggression, the child will be sent to the office and the parent will be notified. If a child becomes a frequent discipline problem, a conference with the parent, teacher, and program coordinator will be arranged. If behavior does not improve, withdrawal from the program may be considered.

## **Persistent and Serious Behavior**

Occasionally, there will be a child whose behavior is excessively disruptive to the classroom environment, and/or who is harmful to themselves or others. If a child becomes a threat to his/her own safety, or the safety of other children/staff, a teacher will gently hold the hand of the child until he/she is able to gain control and feel safe/calm again. If a child has frequent episodes or has persistent behavior issues in which he/she is a threat to others, and the center is unable to meet the child's needs, the family may be asked to remove the child from the center by the Director/Program Coordinator. If necessary, the child will be withdrawn. If you have a concern about a child other than your own, please discuss your concern(s) with the lead teacher and/or the Director/Program Coordinator.

## **Biting**

Experts in the field of child development tell us that biting occurs primarily as a result of the child's inability to communicate. Many preschool children are not yet verbal and may become frustrated by a new experience, such as another child taking away their toy, or suddenly being around other children. In the case of a biting incident, we will: comfort the child who was bit, clean the area to prevent infection, document the incident on an accident report, and communicate the event with the parent/guardian. The identity of the child will be kept confidential. The biting child will be redirected to appropriate activities. The parent will be notified, and an accident report will be placed in the child's file. The teacher will carefully assess the classroom environment to minimize frustration and closely supervise the biting child. Most children stop biting soon after these actions have been taken. In cases of children who continue to bite, it may be necessary to remove them from the program for either a short period, or permanently.

## **Prohibited Practices**

If any staff member or person from a child's family, while in the vicinity of Community Life UMC, engages in a practice prohibited by the program, the Director/Program Coordinator will take necessary steps to assure there is no reoccurrence of the practice. Prohibited practices include, but are not limited to:

- Corporal, or any type of physical punishment. This includes hitting, spanking, beatings, shaking, pinching, or other measures that produce physical pain
- Withdrawal or threat of withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities
- Abusive, profane or derogatory language, including yelling and belittling
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment
- Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, or corruption a child

All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective services agency no matter where the abuse might have occurred. We will follow the direction of the child protective services agency regarding completion of written reports. If the parent or legal guardian of the child is suspected of abuse, we will follow the guidance of the child protective agency regarding notification of the parent or legal guardian.

A staff member who is accused of child abuse may be suspended or given leave without pay pending investigation of the accusation. Such caregivers may also be removed from the classroom and given a job that does not require interaction with children. Parents or legal guardians of suspected abused child will be notified. Parents or legal guardians of other children in the program will be contacted by the Director if a caregiver is suspected of abuse so that they may share any concerns that have had. However, no accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the investigation is complete. Caregivers found guilty of capital child abuse will be dismissed and relieved of their duties.