

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



COLLEGE *of*
CHARLESTON

N.E. MILES ECDC

ECDC Policies and Procedures

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INTRODUCTION

These policies and procedures are organized to correspond with the ten accreditation standards from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2008). Within the sections, individual policies are coded where relevant, to specific NAEYC criteria. Because ECDC is part of the College of Charleston, many of our operations are guided either wholly or in part, by standing university policy/procedure. In those instances, links to the appropriate university documents are provided.

HISTORY

The College of Charleston (C of C) offers a unique experience for young children and university students at the N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC). Our nationally accredited program has served as the demonstration program and laboratory school for the College as part of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance (EHHP) since its founding under the administration of President Theodore Stern in 1974. Our building is named for Dr. Nathan Edgar Miles, a C of C alumnus and pediatric ophthalmologist whose generous bequest made possible the total renovation of our building which was re-dedicated on November 1, 2002.

The importance of high quality early childhood education is well documented in the research literature¹ and receiving increased attention from media and legislators. Major indicators of quality programs include highly qualified staff, low adult-child ratios, and a rich and diverse learning environment², all of which can be found at ECDC. Our inclusive program accommodates approximately fifty-five children aged two through kindergarten each year.

Our Director and four Master Teachers are highly qualified and experienced early childhood professionals. Five Graduate Assistants (GA's) form the core of our assistant teacher staff each semester, complemented by typically 20-25 undergraduate and graduate Teaching Assistants (TA's), primarily early childhood education, elementary education, and special education majors.

We enjoy a close working relationship with many departments, faculty, administrative and support staff from C of C, the Charleston County School District (CCSD), and other early childhood programs in the Low Country and across the state. Our center welcomes hundreds of visitors, observers, practicum students, volunteers, and researchers each year.

MISSION

ECDC's three-part mission is to provide

- A demonstration preschool for research, observation and practicum purposes.

¹ Society for Research in Child Development, Inc., (2003, July/August). [Child care quality matters: How conclusions may vary with context](#), *Child Development*.

² Fiene, R. (2002). [13 Indicators of Quality Child Care: Research Update](#). Presentation to Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and Health Resources and Services Administration/ Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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- Quality care and early education for children ages two through five from the College and neighboring community.
- An active model of child advocacy in the Charleston community.

PHILOSOPHY

The faculty and staff at ECDC believe the purpose of early childhood education is to provide children opportunities to explore their interests and abilities and develop skills they will need to become life-long self-directed learners and citizens. We believe that in an increasingly global environment, our children need to understand and practice tolerance and respect for others. We believe these values are learned in a community that celebrates both the things we share in common and the differences that make us each unique and interesting human beings. We believe that every child has special needs, so all children are accepted and welcomed at ECDC and fully included in all dimensions of our program. We work with families and specialists as appropriate to make accommodations and adaptations as needed.

Our philosophy is based on the belief that learning and language are socially constructed.³ Children acquire knowledge about the world through play, the manipulation of materials and equipment, and the development of respectful and meaningful relationships with other children and adults. We consider the child an active participant in the learning experience.

We believe in shared responsibility for the education of young children. Families are our partners and their input is necessary and invaluable and often plan classroom activities around ideas, traditions, language, and the expertise and interests represented among our families.

As a demonstration program, we model respect for our teachers as decision-makers. We believe the role of the early childhood teacher and all the adults who interact with our children on a daily basis is to:

- identify and support children's interests
- observe their growth and development
- plan and facilitate activities appropriate to their interests and developmental levels
- monitor, assess, interpret, and document their learning
- respect and include families in the learning processes

We believe curriculum and assessment to be organic, ongoing processes that respond to the needs of each child and family. Each teacher interprets and acts out our philosophy as curriculum in unique ways that are soundly grounded in current research.

1. RELATIONSHIPS

1.1 Parents as Partners

ECDC aims to build strong bonds between home and school, sharing information about the child's school and home life in a collaborative effort to provide the child and family with a high quality early childhood experience (10.A.01). We use the terms "parent," "children of" and "family" generically at ECDC, for we are aware that many children live with and/or are cared for

³ Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget's body of work described the *Theory of Cognitive Development*, a process whereby children progress through a series of four idiosyncratically distinct developmental stages. As they process experiences, they actively construct ideas and schema about the world through a process known as *constructivism*. Piaget's theory influenced others, including Lev Vygotsky who extended the theory to emphasize the important role of social interactions in the constructivist process, and Lawrence Kohlberg, who applied this theory to moral development.

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by persons who are not their biological or adoptive parents, such as step-parents, guardians and guardians ad litem, foster parents, spouses and partners of children's parents, aunts/uncles, grand-parents, etc.

Welcome: After the enrollment process has been completed in April of each year, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) organizes a spring social event (Play Day) to which all currently and newly enrolled families are invited. This event provides a friendly atmosphere for meeting teachers and the other children and families making up the ECDC community (10.B.08).

New family orientation: Prior to the first attendance day, each family is required to meet individually with the Director for orientation to and a discussion of:

- information in the Family Handbook (philosophy, policies, routines, procedures)
- financial options (scholarships, tuition payment arrangements)
- individual child or family considerations and needs (health, languages, learning, personal family situations, etc.)
- curriculum and assessment process
- general questions (10.B.08)

In addition, a friendly New Family Orientation social event/information session takes place before school begins. This meeting provides families a chance to get to know one another and ask/discuss questions they may have as the first day of school approaches. It gives the Director an opportunity to officially welcome new families and emphasize important routines and policies to ease transitions into the program.

HIF: Prior to the first attendance day, families complete (and update annually) the ECDC *Home Information Form* to provide us with information about family demographics, home language, culture, traditions, religion, and family structure that enables teachers to plan activities and an environment that is welcoming and supportive of all our families. Returning families update this form annually. (1.A.02; 7.A.02; 7.A.03; 7.A.09)

Family Visits: Prior to the beginning of the school year, Master Teachers contact each family and schedule a preliminary visit to school. The intent of these visits is for the child to have some one-on-one time with his/her new teacher, to establish positive and reciprocal relationships with our families, and share program information and knowledge about children to inform teacher decision-making (1.A.02; 7.A.02; 7.A.03; 7.A.06; 7.A.08; 7.A.09; 7.B.01)

Communication: Regular, ongoing communication is facilitated in various ways among families, caregivers, and the school staff so that multiple perspectives on the child's development and interests can be used to enhance the child's school experience (1.A.03; 7.A.06; 7.A.08; 7.A.09; 7.A.11). These include, but are not limited to:

- ECDC [Program website](#) and blog
- Parent meetings and conferences
- Classroom newsletters & daily bulletins
- Regular and frequent email communication
- Open door policy
- Family bulletin board in the hallway outside the school
- Daily informal conversations

Home Languages: All program documents and information will be translated upon request into a home language other than English via assistance from the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs. If an interpreter is needed to complete a home visit, conduct conferences or mediations, one will be provided. (4.E.05; 7.B.01; 7.B.02; 7.C.04).

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Meeting family circumstance needs: ECDC works with families when family circumstances change that may necessitate adjustments to routines, attendance schedules, authorizations, etc. (e.g. sabbaticals, divorce/separation agreements, major medical situations, etc.)

Concerns: Parents are encouraged to approach the child's Master Teacher or the Director directly with problems, concerns, or ideas. Family events, transitions, and changes of any kind can affect a child's demeanor and behavior at school, so timely communication helps the staff respond most effectively to the child. (1.A.01; 7.C.02)

Program Evaluation & Strategic Planning: ECDC engages in continuous program evaluation and improvement via

- Submission of Annual Report to EHHP/CofC
- SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) annual program evaluation and reporting process <http://oiep.cofc.edu/complianceassist/>;
- NAEYC Annual Reporting process (and re-accreditation every five years)

All adult family members are invited to complete a formal annual program evaluation survey in April. New Families are also invited to complete a survey 30 days after enrollment. ECDC reports are published to the website and available for hard-copy review at any time. Policy changes or major initiatives are always announced before publication or implementation (8.A.07; 10.B.07).

Respecting Diverse Family Structures and Traditions: ECDC welcomes children and families with many diverse characteristics and traditions. The ECDC adheres to university policies that address the need to make accommodations.

- [Statement on Religious Accommodations for Students:](#)

1.2 Interaction Guidelines

As we follow the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) [Code of Ethical Conduct](#), we use these core principles as guides for interactions among staff members, between staff and children, staff and families, staff and undergraduates, researchers, university employees, etc.

- Respect each individual.
- Create a positive emotional climate for all learners, with sensitivity to differences in age, ability, background, language, culture, religion, and family structure.
- Maintain direct eye contact **at the child's level** whenever possible.
- Use smiles, warm tones of voice, positive touch, social conversations, and humor to support the development of effective working relationships.
- Teachers sit with children during snack and lunch time and engage in conversation. (3.D.07)
- Teachers do not yell, belittle, or use negative language with children, other staff, or parents.
- Approach conflict resolution pro-actively.
- Commit to an environment of inclusion that celebrates differences and builds on common characteristics and values.

Staff avoid the use of negative language ('no', don't) as much as possible and express rules in terms of the desired behavior. For example, "Please walk inside," "I need you to use an inside voice," "Can you help me put this puzzle back where it belongs?"

ECDC accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child consistent with the requirements of the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#). See the following CofC resources (and sections 4.5, 7.1, 7.2):

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- [CofC Center for Disability Services](#)

Because our mission is multifaceted, we strive to build positive relationships with all learning partners by appropriately balancing quality of care for the group with services tailored to individual needs. Our goal is to develop the school's caring community for learning through broad participation and involvement in program improvement for all of our staff, families, and university partners.

1.3 Discipline

All staff, volunteers (who work on a regular schedule), and practicum students sign the *Discipline Policy Statement* at hire and receive orientation information about the ECDC Discipline Policy. No corporal punishment or coercion of any kind is used at ECDC and food is never withheld or used as a form of discipline. (1.B.09; 1.B.10) Redirection, positive reinforcement, modeling, and natural consequences, along with verbal explanation and problem solving training are our preferred and primary methods for development of acceptable behavior. "Time outs" are used with discretion, only if other methods don't seem to be working, and only for very short periods of time. Typically, the child will stay with his/her teacher, having the opportunity to convey readiness to return to group activities.

In the event a child loses complete control or is seriously disrupting the activities of the rest of the class, he/she may be taken either out of the classroom, off the playground, or to the Director's office to 'cool off' and regain composure before rejoining the other children. Children are regularly involved in helping determine the age appropriate rules and expectations for each class. Children are not allowed to hurt other children, adults, or abuse materials and equipment, and are taught to use the materials and equipment productively. They are taught to respect, help, and take care of one another.

The ECDC faculty and Director work with parents on discipline problems for each individual child. Although we encourage daily informal conversation between parents and staff, the child's lead teacher may not be present (or readily available) at pick-up time, so we may provide daily informal written reports and email during the day to maintain regular communication. Working together we can solve most problems. For persistent challenging behaviors, teachers and parents together develop an individualized plan for improvement. Teachers make environmental accommodations when appropriate to create conditions that promote positive behaviors. If difficult behavior does not subside over time, parents may be referred to the *Baby Net* (birth-3) or *Child Find* (3-5) processes delivered via the public school systems or other external professional resources. (1.E.01; 1.E.02).

1.4 Transitions: ECDC staff plan transitions carefully and we are sensitive to the challenges our context creates as a laboratory/demonstration program with many student employees.

Home-school: To ease transitions for children newly enrolled or moving to their new class for the year, at the beginning of the academic year children are (a) scheduled for a visit to school before the first day of classes to have one-on-one time with the teacher and explore the classroom environment, and (b) phased-in to the program over the first two days of school. Parents request a phase-in day and we accommodate their schedules as much as possible. A *home visit* may be scheduled if parents or the teacher specifically request.

Within-day: Major and minor transitions from one activity to another (e.g. play/clean-up; inside/outside; lunch/nap, etc.) are announced to children in developmentally appropriate ways per age group. Classroom storage areas and centers are labeled and organized to facilitate children taking as much individual responsibility as possible.

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Staff: Master Teachers have primary responsibility for a single group of children. GA's are assigned likewise. Hourly student teacher assistants are scheduled as much as possible for one class group, but sometimes that is not possible. Written logbooks are maintained to facilitate daily communications between AM/PM teachers (10.B.13).

2. CURRICULUM

2.1 Academic Freedom

The College's support for academic freedom guides our belief that as a demonstration and laboratory program, our teaching staff have both the privilege and responsibility to explore and experiment with curriculum that is developmentally appropriate ([Copple & Bredekamp, 2009](#))⁴ and reflective of current research literature on early childhood education. We facilitate and/or conduct research that will advance understanding of how young children learn, grow, and develop. ECDC encourages a *responsibly eclectic* approach to curriculum ([Jaruszewicz, 2005](#))⁵ and supports our teachers' roles as participant/observers, action researchers, and curriculum decision-makers. Teachers are expected to know, understand, and collectively participate in on-going dialogue about how the program philosophy translates into curriculum decision-making and daily activities that demonstrate best practice and support children's individual needs and interests (2.A.01; 2.A.02). Therefore, ECDC works within a curriculum framework, rather than adopting a particular commercial or published curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum Goals, Objectives, & Framework

ECDC curriculum goals:

- Provide children the opportunity to explore and extend their interests and abilities
- Help children acquire the skills and dispositions they will need to become life-long, self-directed learners
- Teach children to understand and practice tolerance, acceptance, and respect for others

ECDC Program Objectives: ECDC uses several sets of applicable standards to inform program objectives:

- [South Carolina Early Learning Standards](#) (as of 2016 these are being revised) apply to children 3-5 and address curriculum from a developmental perspective
- [South Carolina Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers](#) (2008) are adapted for use with our two year olds.
- [Academic Standards](#) (for K-12)

These standards serve as our program objectives for curriculum and assessment of growth and development (2.A.05). The standards address *Approaches to Learning, Physical Growth & Health, Social-Emotional Development, English Language Arts, and Mathematics*. (2.A.01).

Curriculum Framework (2.A.01; 2.A.03) :

The curriculum objectives are also guided by statements about dimensions of the curriculum that articulate specifically how the program philosophy is contextualized. Curriculum content statements address the following areas:

Ecological Responsibility: As members of the ECDC community, children have the opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility for each other and their natural environment and

⁴ Copple, C. & Bredekamp, S. (2009). Developmentally appropriate practices for children in programs aged birth-eight. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

⁵ Jaruszewicz, C. (2005). Responsible eclecticism: Using a structured analysis process to facilitate curriculum discourse with graduate preservice early childhood education students. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 26(4), 361-375.

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resources. Gardening, recycling, and care of the physical and natural environment are an increasing part of our curriculum as we look for ways to help children develop an awareness of the importance of a sustainable and ecologically respectful global environment.

Social Studies: Children's awareness of themselves and the world is developed by establishing respectful and supportive classroom communities that focus on the sharing of cultures, customs, language, and traditions of the families in the class. They learn about their immediate world with many field trips, experiences, and interactions with people and places in the local community.

Language Arts & Emergent Literacy: Multiple literacies develop through daily experiences and practice with many forms of communication. Making extensive use of high-quality, culturally responsive literature, modeling, recording, and revisiting conversations and discussions, and generating literacy products such as books, charts, and letters, enables children to progress from the acquisition of language to the productive use of oral and written language to express original ideas.

Physical Development: Physical development occurs both naturally through various kinds of play and intentionally by planning opportunities and activities to strengthen and refine fine and gross motor skills. Physical experiences develop the child's body coordination, balance, agility, and spatial awareness.

Creative Arts: Recognizing that supporting and encouraging creativity is important for the development of the whole child, children need frequent opportunities to express and explore their ideas in many ways. They need exposure to a wide variety of flexible materials that can be used in different ways. The arts are a primary means by which cultures represent their history, achievements, and values; therefore, exposure to a wide variety of visual arts, music, dramatic, and movement activities is essential. They are the "hundred languages of children." (Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1993; 1998)⁶.

Math: Children acquire fundamental mathematical concepts, logical thinking, and problem solving through the manipulation of materials and application of skills and concepts to real life situations. Concepts learned through work with manipulatives, block-building, sand and water play, and problem posing/solving embedded in group project work include one-to-one correspondence, patterning, counting, sorting, comparing, shape recognition, addition, and subtraction.

Science: Children are innately curious about the natural world and their environment; they develop science process skills through observing, classifying, measuring, communicating, inferring, predicting, and experimenting with familiar objects, animals, and natural processes. Experimenting, learning through trial-and-error, hypothesizing, and developing systematic inquiry processes take time and repeated opportunities to discover how things move, grow, and change. Cooking activities also offer practical and meaningful examples of how scientific principles are applied in daily life.

Social/Emotional Competence: The learning environment should encourage development of children's positive self-concepts by enabling them to cope with setbacks and frustrations without losing self-confidence. Children are supported as they learn to make choices, assume responsibility, become independent, express feelings and needs in words, and participate in

⁶ Edwards, C.; Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (eds.) (1998). *The hundred languages of children (2nd ed.)*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

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creating and abiding by the rules established for behavior in the classroom environment. ECDC children learn to respect others' feelings, choices, and opinions.

Health & Safety: Through adult modeling and practice, children learn health and safety concepts such as personal hygiene, playground and classroom safety and emergency preparedness. These are reinforced in daily routine. Cooking and serving healthy snacks and encouraging parents to prepare balanced lunches emphasize proper nutrition

2.3 Planning

Master Teachers have daily planning time outside the classroom for at least one hour. They are expected to conduct a planning meeting with Graduate Assistants for at least one hour weekly and keep student TA's informed of daily curriculum activities and assessment information via verbal communication and daily communication logs. Planning supports the program philosophy, includes a focus on integrating assessment information for individualizing learning (4.D.02), and is expected to include responsiveness to family:

- Home values and perspectives
- Beliefs
- Experiences
- Language (2.A.04, 2.A.06, 2.D.01)

Teachers may devise their own format for written lesson/activity plans. Activity Plans must be posted at least weekly outside the classroom door and are to be written in a manner that demonstrates consistency with curriculum goals and objectives (2.A.03).

2.4 Field Trips & Supplemental Activities

ECDC fully supports field trips and supplemental extra-curricular activities as an integral part of the curriculum. Field trips support the cognitive and social development of young children and are expected to be planned for several purposes (a) as field work to support inquiry-based project investigations, (b) as cultural enrichment experiences, (c) to facilitate or support collaboration with children and teachers from other programs or schools. Formally scheduled supplemental extra-curricular activities (e.g. music, arts, movement,) are not fixed from year to year, but planned to support teachers' instructional goals and the individual needs and interests of the children and families. Informal supplemental activities such as visiting musicians, poets, storytellers, etc. are expected to be part of the curriculum, involving parents and members of the campus and local community whenever possible and appropriate. Funding is provided annually to support field trips and supplemental extracurricular activities. If the program arranges for transportation, only public transportation or public school system transport companies are used. If parents are asked to provide transportation, seat belts and appropriate car seats are required. Parents are regularly invited to chaperone and attend field trips and supplemental events; they may occasionally be asked to provide admission fees or transportation support (8.B.01; 8.B.02; 8.B.03; 8.B.04; 8.B.05).

3. TEACHING

3.1 Learning Environment

ECDC's philosophy respects our understanding of the environment as 'third teacher.' All staff are expected to work together collaboratively to plan, implement, and maintain a learning environment that supports the philosophy and goals of the program and that helps children manage their behavior and transitions (3.A.05). Their choices should reflect an understanding of children's developmental characteristics and individual needs and interests (3.A.01). The environment should be safe, stimulating, predictable, and organized. Children's work is regularly displayed (at child eye level when possible) and used to revisit and extend their learning (3.A.02-04; 3.A.06-07; 3.D.05).

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3.2 Caring Communities

Respect for each child's needs, abilities, and interests is of utmost priority. Teaching staff are expected to create and maintain a setting in which children of differing abilities, home and community contexts, and values are respected and integrated to form a cohesive community of learners. Teachers are expected to create, offer, and scaffold opportunities for children to participate in classroom decision-making and develop independence, empathy, and mutual respect. Teachers are expected to individualize behavior management and learning plans and involve parents in decision-making on behalf of each child (3.B.12; 3.F.03).

3.3 Classroom and Playground Supervision

Adult/Child Ratios: We meet or exceed required DSS/NAEYC staff/child ratios at all times indoors and outdoors (10.B.12). Ratios are lowered when warranted due to individual or special needs, especially on field trips depending on destination, expected crowd conditions, extent to which destination space is open/confined, etc. Teachers take a cell phone, emergency contact information, and first aid kit on all field trips (3.C.02-05).

Adult/child ratios are posted at both main entrances to the building and each classroom.

Group (Maximum Size)	2's	3's	4/5K
DSS	1:8	1:12	1:17/1:20
NAEYC	1:6 (12)	1:8 (16)	1:10 (20)
ECDC Classroom/Playground	1:4 (12)	1:7(14)	1:7 (24-28)
ECDC Nap/rest time	1:6	1:7	1:7
ECDC Field Trips	1:2	1: 3	1:4

At any time when children are present in the school, there are at least two adults present, at least one of whom is a lead teacher or the Program Director (i.e., the other could be a student employee or intern). Classroom space is designed so that there is an area where children can go to be alone, but not completely out of sight/sound (3.C.02). Classrooms have pass-through child restrooms from adjacent classrooms, with privacy walls between stalls, but no doors, to allow for staff monitoring without excessive intrusion on the child's privacy (3.C.04). Kindergarten children are allowed to re-enter the classroom from the playground to use the restroom independently as long as one adult monitors the length of their absence and checks on them to see if they need assistance.

Tracking: In addition to the daily sign-in and sign-out forms, ECDC Teachers and assistants use a hard-copy form to track children during the day. At regular intervals (typically transition times) the number of children and adults and their location is noted on the tracking sheet. These sheets are kept on file for the duration of the school year.

Supervision Skills and Methods: Our approach to supervision includes the following components

- Awareness requires a knowledge of children, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, ability to interact with others and developmental stage. Knowledge of children helps teachers to monitor and enhance skills that promote children's positive behavior. When a child is upset, an adult immediately investigates the cause of the problem.
- Positioning requires being able to see all of the children. Staff position themselves to be aware of the entire classroom and to see as many children as possible. All children are monitored by sight or sound at all times. When a child needs attention, teachers do not talk across the room, but move to where the child is.

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- Scanning involves regularly glancing around the classroom and playground to see children's involvement and what is happening and maintain accurate mental headcounts.
- Redirection is a pre-emptive means for preventing undesirable or unsafe behavior from occurring. Children are redirected to other areas/activities when undesirable behavior is immanent or occurs. This technique helps ensure the safety of all children.

Supervision for all children in areas that are near equipment where injury may occur, requires the use of the above methods and being in close proximity to the children. Children waiting to be picked up due to illness or injury are kept safe, comfortable, and under close supervision in the office.

Toddler Supervision (2's)

- Teaching staff supervise 2's by sight and sound at all times.
- At least one staff member will be able to see children at all times.
- Staff is aware of the entire room and rotate position as needed.
- Two's teachers go in the bathroom with the children (3.C.04).

Preschool & Kindergarten Supervision

- Teaching staff supervise children three and up primarily by sight and are aware of where children are at all times. Supervision by sound alone occurs for no more than five minutes.
- Teachers scan the entire classroom in order to observe what is happening. Teachers position themselves in order to see the entire classroom.
- Teachers are aware of each child in order to maintain a safe environment.
- Teaching staff may allow kindergarten children, with an assigned task in a safe environment, to be out of the teacher's sight and sound supervision for a short period of time.
- Teaching staff check on those children if they do not return quickly from the task (3.C.04; 3.C.05).

Playground Supervision: The playground has physical barriers that divide it into three zones; as a general rule, the number of adults available on the playground dictates the maximum number of areas available for use. (i.e., one adult, one area open; two adults, two areas open). Staff may restrict children to fewer zones so that more adults per child are available to supervise.

- Staff position themselves near large equipment
- Staff supervision focus is interaction with children and promoting safe play; informal visiting among staff is not permitted
- Sand toys and trucks are limited to the sandbox area
- Trikes are limited to the one-way bikeway
- A drinking fountain is installed on the playground, eliminating the need for children to go inside for water.
- Children needing to use the bathroom are escorted inside or a staff member positioned at the classroom door to monitor child by sound.
- Classroom doors are kept locked when children are outside; one set of keys per classroom is available for staff to monitor access to inside.
- At noon, toys are returned to sandbox and trikes parked; at the end of the day, the sandbox and any water/sand tables are also to be covered
- Playground is continually monitored for trash or debris.

The playground gate is *kept locked at all times*. Parents must enter the building using the Wentworth entrance, sign out their child, and then go to playground for pick-up when they come at times children are outside playing.

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If children can't play outside, the multi-purpose room is used, and indoor classroom supervision guidelines apply (3.D.01; 9.D.03). Children may not play outside

- if the temperature is 90 degrees or higher in the shade
- in inclement weather
- if an environmental air quality alert has been issued

Fire Drills: In the event of a fire drill while children are outside, they are to be taken immediately out to the P lot, a head count taken for each class, and kept there until told to re-enter the building.

3.4 Rest/nap time Supervision

Sleeping Children Supervision: Teaching staff position themselves so they can hear and see sleeping children.

- At least two assistant teachers are present when children of any age are napping.
- At least one Master Teacher or the Program Director is in the building to assist with any difficulties that may occur during nap/rest time
- Sleeping children of any age will not have their heads covered.
- Teachers position themselves so that all children can be monitored.
- Teachers use appropriate strategies to assist children (e.g., rubbing backs, talking softly, dimming lights, playing soft music, etc.)
- Children who awake early or do not sleep are supervised and provided quiet activities.
- Teachers provide parents with information about any issues that interfere with children's ability to rest (3.C.03).

3.5 Daily Schedules & Routines

Teachers develop a daily schedule for each class group that allows for a balance of indoor/outdoor, quiet/active, small-group/large-group/individual, and child-initiated/teacher-directed activities (3.D.01). Teachers use routines to create a sense of security, predictability, and promote social interaction (3.D.02). A Daily Schedule is posted outside each classroom. Schedules are flexible and adapted to respond to unanticipated or spontaneous learning opportunities (3.D.09). Teachers use classroom routines, transitions, and rules to provide children opportunities to participate and develop responsibility and citizenship (3.D.08; 3.D.09).

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 Assessment Purposes

ECDC's *Assessment Plan (4.A.01-03)* is consistent with the program's philosophy and goals. Assessment is comprehensive and intended to provide information across all developmental domains (4.B.02). Assessments are conducted in settings that are familiar and comfortable for children and conducted by adults they know and trust (4.A.02). The purposes of our assessment system are to:

- Gather information using multiple means that are culturally respectful, meaningful, authentic, and accurate
- Describe each child's development and learning
- Provide families with comprehensive and relevant information about progress and/or indicators that referral is needed for extended diagnostic evaluation
- Identify children's interests and needs
- Make appropriate instructional decisions and adaptations for each child
- Use assessment results for program improvement

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- Communicate effectively with parents as partners in their child's early childhood education (4.E.04)

4.2 Assessment Procedures

ECDC uses multiple developmentally appropriate, linguistically and culturally unbiased, and authentic methods and procedures to ensure comprehensive and detailed assessment information (4.A.01; 4.B.01). If/when standardized products are used, the program staff research available options and review information about the instrument prior to selection to ensure compatibility with the intended use and expected applications (4.B.04). Primary methods include

- Observation
- Anecdotal records
- Skills checklists
- Developmental screening
- Family Surveys
- Interest inventories
- Performance assessments
- Work sampling
- Informal & written communication
- Developmental Narratives

When warranted, additional formal and/or informal methods that may be used include:

- Running records
- Behavior checklists
- Time/event Sampling
- Video/audio recording
- Standardized testing and/or specific instruments authorized by families as requested by resource/referral agencies or specialists for extended diagnostic evaluation of individual children (4.B.03)

4.3 Assessment Timelines

Assessment begins prior to the child's initial enrollment with parent surveys and home visits and continues throughout the academic year, with assessment information for each child maintained in a portfolio that moves with the child through the program from teacher to teacher. The Master Teachers conduct formal parent/teacher conferences once each semester (4.E.02) and maintain close, informal contact with families throughout the year. At enrollment and re-enrollment, ECDC distributes a hard copy of the *Assessment Plan Timeline (also posted to website)* that provides an overview of the entire process including timelines, procedures/methods, instruments, products, and follow-up (4.A.02; 4.B.06; 7.B.03).

4.4 Confidentiality

Privacy: Because ECDC is a laboratory/demonstration school, there are many students and members of the community visiting ECDC and doing observations, research, and practicum activities. During these activities, strict family confidentiality is preserved. Children are identified to observers by first name only.

We do not ask for private information (social security numbers) that could be used fraudulently by others. For student employee records, ECDC complies with all federal confidentiality requirements as outlined by the university's policies for compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* per the federal [FERPA](#) law.

All our staff and parents are required to sign confidentiality agreements. We require that families respect the privacy, not only of their child(ren), but of all other children and families.

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We encourage open, honest, informal and frequent communication among staff and parents. However convenient, hallways, classrooms, or the playground are not appropriate places for conversations about sensitive matters. A child's teacher or the Director may suggest a follow-up phone call or meeting to discuss concerns raised initially in regular conversation that would be more appropriately addressed privately. (Please also see Policy 8.6 *Technology and Social Media 8.6 for additional privacy-related information*)

Record-keeping: Child and staff files are kept locked in the Director's office after hours. ECDC also complies with the CofC policies for record retention, destruction, and archiving <http://recordsretention.cofc.edu/>:

Due to the unique nature of the relationships that may exist between our student employees and family members, many of whom are college staff or faculty, child files are not open to student employees (Graduate Assistants and Student Assistants). Information that Master Teachers deem necessary for planning, instructional, or assessment purposes is shared verbally with student staff members on a need-to-know basis. Individual child files and assessment portfolios may only be accessed by

- Master Teachers
- Program Director
- Administrative Assistant
- Authorized representatives of the state DSS licensing agency
- Authorized representative from the NAEYC accreditation team
- Health officials with specific authorization from parents
- The signatory family representative(s) for individual children (4.E.07)

General Release: Teachers are expected to use photographs or other media in individual assessment portfolios and reports. Similarly, as a demonstration program, ECDC has a responsibility to share our work with others. We are making increasing use of digital and social media to create visual documentation of children's work and learning that are presented in hallway displays and posted to the *Projects* page and/or the blog on our website. Parents are therefore asked (but not required) annually to sign a general release permitting *routine* use of children's photographs and/or work for these purposes.

Release Forms for Specific Purposes:

We have specific release forms that are adapted as needed for different one-time purposes:

- Practicum students who need to document their work in the classroom with photographs or work samples, (*Permission to Use Classroom Artifacts*).
- Targeted intra-campus or public relations events/publications
- Media, communications, and other artifacts needed to document NAEYC accreditation standards in program and classroom electronic folios
- Child participation in research projects/studies

4.5 Identification of children with special needs

Children are accepted for enrollment assuming that (a) the child is able to benefit from the ECDC program, (b) the child's behavior does not pose a significant threat to the health and/or safety of themselves or of the other children or staff, and (c) parents abide by our policies and cooperate with and support our efforts to meet their child's individual needs. At entry, our collaboration with each family begins as we ask them to complete (a) the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* (2006, 2nd Edition), a developmental screening tool that is normed and standardized across diverse populations and widely used in early childhood programs. This tool may be re-administered subsequently (as well as its companion version, the *ASQ Social-Emotional*) if observational or anecdotal information indicates existing, possible, or emerging special needs (4.C.01).

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In South Carolina, public schools meet the requirements of IDEA legislation for preschool children through [BabyNet](#) (birth-3) and the [Child Find](#) (3-5) processes. If an enrolling child has already been identified with special needs, ECDC staff meet with the family and external professional resource staff to review the IFSP, IEP, or 504 plan. If our assessments and collaboration with families indicate the need for additional screening or developmental evaluation of children not previously identified with special needs, we will request that parents initiate the *Child Find* process and we will make every effort to provide assistance/facilitation with the process. (7.B.04; 7.C.03). If an enrolling child has already been identified with special needs, ECDC staff members meet with the family and external professional resource staff as needed to review the IFSP or IEP. If a child is receiving private services, ECDC requires that any relevant information needed to meet the child's needs be provided to us so that we can make physical and instructional accommodations.

Our expectations of families include:

- Follow-through on our recommendation for referral of the child to the Charleston County School District early intervention networks for evaluation and follow-up services.
- In-school parental time commitment if the child's behaviors or needs require intensive individual attention that presents a significant challenge to our teachers for meeting the needs of other children in the class.
- Adjustment of the child's attendance schedule if teachers deem it beneficial or necessary to meet the needs of other children in the class.

After enrollment, if any of these conditions are not being met, ECDC may request that the child be withdrawn, but will make every attempt to aid the parents in locating a placement in another program.

4.6 Communicating Assessment information

Staff-Staff: Master Teachers meet at least once weekly with Graduate Assistants to plan, and maintain daily oral and written communication (*Classroom Staff Log*) with undergraduate Student Assistants about children's activities, needs, interests, and ongoing adaptations to the curriculum that are informed by the assessment process (3.A.01; 4.D.02)

Staff-Families: Teachers maintain ongoing verbal, electronic, and informal written communications with families about both group and individual child progress. Specific information about the assessment system is provided at new family orientation sessions and conferences. At ECDC, group learning is mainly communicated through daily bulletins, classroom news releases and visual documentation displays. Two-way communications are facilitated by email and face-to-face conversation. Teachers conduct conferences with each family once per semester, at which time all assessment information from the semester is reviewed and a detailed summary progress checklist and narrative report is shared and discussed (7.B.03; 7.C.01; 7.C.02).

Staff-Families-External resources professionals: When families are working with external specialists, the Program Director coordinates meetings, observations, focused assessment activities, and follow-up as needed. The program provides support to assist families in advocating and decision-making on behalf of their children. The Director also ensures that external specialists who provide in-school therapies or who have direct contact with a child over an extended period of time must provide required documentation for child abuse clearances, TB tests, and receive required level of orientation information about the program and routines (7.C.03; 7.C.01).

ECDC-other schools: When assessment information is formally requested by other schools or programs, it is provided with written permission of families (7.C.08).

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5. HEALTH & SAFETY

5.1 Child Health Records

Prior to enrollment, parents must provide complete, dated, and signed:

- DSS 2900 Form *Statement of Child Health* (updated annually: contact information for 2 persons authorized to act on parents' behalf in event of emergency, health and emergency provider, health insurance; instructions and information about special health needs)
- DHEC 1148 Form *SC Record of Immunization* (evidence of current immunizations according the SC [DHEC immunization schedule](#) OR
- DHEC 1126 Form *SC Exemption for Religious Reasons* from immunization (not available online; must be obtained directly from DHEC)

Per DHEC regulations, ECDC requires these forms to be kept current and monitors expiration dates, providing due reminders one month prior to expiration date. If updated forms are not returned in timely fashion, parents are notified by DHEC in writing of child exclusion from the program pending return of current Immunization Form.

5.2 CPR, First Aid & Blood Borne Pathogens Training

All adult staff at ECDC have annual training in Blood Borne Pathogens and follow *universal precautions* according to the *Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan* (part of the ECDC Emergency Plan. At least one adult is always present in each classroom that has been trained in Pediatric First Aid (including rescue breathing and management of blocked airway) and Infant/Child CPR. We also have access to a portable AED device in the event of emergency. Annual (paid) training sessions are scheduled twice per year at the beginning of the fall/spring academic semesters. If staff do not attend the training sessions provided, they must secure certification at their own expense.

5.3 Sickness/Illness (5.A.04)

ECDC follows the [SC DHEC guidelines for exclusion from care](#) in the event of illness and annually distributes a current copy (in English or Spanish) of the DHEC [brochure](#) for parents describing these guidelines.

Sick child notification and exclusion: ECDC does not have facilities or staff to provide sick care for children. If a child becomes ill, he/she is removed to the office, kept comfortable, and parents notified to pick up within 30 minutes. The ECDC *Illness Release* form is sent home with the child and returned signed and dated by a parent or authorized family member when the child is well enough to return. A child with fever may not return until fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours. Parents will be called if a child

- vomits or has uncontrolled diarrhea more than once,
- has a fever over 100F
- has any condition or discomfort which keeps him or her from actively participating in the activities
- shows symptoms of highly contagious conditions, such as conjunctivitis (pinkeye) (5.A.04)

Health Alerts: In the event of our notification of a vaccine-preventable illness occurring among the child or adult population, parents of any child with an immunization exemption will be notified using the *Temporary Exclusion for Health Reasons* form within 24 hours of temporary exclusion from care until the threat is no longer present, as evidenced by a signed return to care authorization from the ill child/family's licensed health professional (5.A.01).

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Teachers are expected to communicate information about common communicable diseases present in the classroom verbally or through classroom level email correspondence. If an unusual disease emerges or a common disease, such as strep throat appears in multiple classrooms, ECDC issues an email *Health Alert* that includes information and links to online or print resources about signs, symptoms, transmission, period of communicability, and any control measures being implemented. ECDC forwards any community-wide health alerts to all families that are received either from the College Health Services, or the state and local DHEC office. (5.A.05). This policy applies to adult staff as well as children.

5.4 Indoor/Outdoor Play

Daily schedules include a minimum of three outdoor play periods per day (AM, before/after lunch, PM), weather and environmental safety conditions permitting (at least 20 minutes per period). Children may not play outside if the shade temperature is 90 degrees or higher. ECDC monitors local weather and air quality conditions daily and follows any/all directives issued by local DHEC or campus authorities. The multi-purpose room is used for indoor gross motor play in the event of inclement weather.

(5.A.06)

Parents are expected to provide:

- seasonally and size- appropriate clothing with at least one complete spare set (replaced as needed)
- ONLY closed-toe shoes are allowed on the playground
- DSS requires that parents provide both sunscreen and insect repellent, labeled with the child's name that teachers will use as needed before outdoor play periods (see policy 5.4.1 below).

Only commercial water tables, sprinklers, and wading pools are used for water play. Water is changed between groups of children and no child with sores or skin ailments is allowed to participate in communal water play. Water tables and wading pools are drained and sanitized daily and kept covered when not in use (5.A.10).

5.4.1 Sunscreen & Insect Repellent

ECDC follows the preferred DHEC Reference for guidelines about sunscreen and insect repellent (*Caring for our Children: National Performance Standards, Section 3.4.5:*

<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/>) These guidelines require:

- minimum 15 SPF for sunscreen
- maximum 30% DEET insect repellent
- pump spray or cream/lotion form only (no aerosols)
- Children under 3 may not have any product with oil of lemon or eucalyptus
- Must be labeled with child's name
- Staff will follow label directions
- Staff are discouraged from applying to face and eye area
- Parents should apply sunscreen & repellent prior to arrival at school
- Staff will re-apply repellent 1x only
- Staff will re-apply sunscreen after 2 hours or after water play
- Children's sun exposure is limited to the extent possible between 10AM-4PM

5.5 Diapering & Toileting (5.A.08)

Diapering: We assume many children entering the two's class will still be in diapers. Children entering the 3's class, however, are expected to be toilet-trained unless parents provide written medical justification for continued diapering. Parents are expected to provide all diapering supplies including disposable diapers, creams/ointments, wipes, and extra sets of clothing. *Cloth diapers are only permitted with a signed medical statement from the child's*

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licensed medical practitioner, and if used, must include an outer covering for each diaper that completely secures diaper from leakage and is changed as a single unit.

Staff that diaper children are expected to adhere to the following procedures:

- Change diaper only in designated diaper changing area
- Assemble needed supplies before lifting child to changing table
- Keep one hand on child at all times
- Wear new disposable glove
- Remove wet diaper, fold and secure with soiled side inside, and place in foot-operated disposal container.
- Remove soiled diaper, fold and secure with soiled side inside, and place immediately in disposable plastic bag. Send cloth diapers home daily; disposable diapers are taken to outside dumpster after each changing period.
- Thoroughly clean child with disposable wipes provided by parents, and apply any provided cream/ointments per instructions. Written medical log authorization and instructions must be provided for prescription ointments
- Re-dress child (with clean clothes if necessary). Wet/soiled clothes are placed in plastic bag, tied, and sent home daily.
- Place child on floor
- Sanitize diapering surface thoroughly using appropriate disinfectant solution and paper towels.
- Dispose of glove and paper towels in foot-operated trash receptacle
- Wash hands using proper procedure (wash child's hands if any contact with urine or feces)

Children are to be checked and changed as needed

- Every two hours during normal activity times
- Before/after nap
- When visibly wet or soiled

Toileting: For children training or able to use the toilet independently, staff members adhere to the following procedures:

- Encourage/permit child to use the toilet when requested, providing signs that it is needed, and at logical times (before/after rest, outside play, field trips, etc.)
- Adult help is provided for removing/redressing if needed
- Children are taught the proper hand washing procedure and monitored for consistent use (5.A.09)
- Hands are washed after each toileting
- Staff wash hands after assisting any individual child

ECDC provides resource information for parents whose children are toilet-training and supports training procedures being used at home, but does not assume primary responsibility for toilet-training.

5.6 Hand washing (5.A.09)

Proper hand washing technique is taught, demonstrated, and practiced with supervision during orientation of all new staff. Children are taught proper hand washing technique as part of the daily routines. Staff assist children with hand washing when needed, and monitor for ongoing compliance. Chemical hand sanitizers are allowed by DSS and may be used occasionally at ECDC, but not as a regular substitute for hand-washing.

Frequency: Staff and children wash hands:

- On arrival
- Before and after meals/snacks

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- After toileting
- After return from outside
- After handling or touching body fluids
- After touching any pets or animals
- After water play with two or more people
- Before/after visiting another classroom

Staff wash hands additionally:

- Before/after administering medication
- After handling garbage or trash
- After assisting a child with toileting or diapering
- Before/after feeding children

Procedure:

- Use warm water
- Wet hands
- Apply liquid soap and wash thoroughly at least 20 seconds (back of hands, in-between fingers, nail beds)
- Rinse well
- Dry with paper towel
- Use paper towel to turn off water
- Discard paper towel in hand's free trash receptacle

5.7 Medications (5.A.11)

The ECDC *Child Medication Log* is used to provide documentation that any medications provided for children are administered correctly and with proper authorization. Parents are required to authorize both over the counter and prescription medication. All medications must be

- in original container
- labeled with child's *first and last name*
- labeled with date prescription was filled OR recommendation was made by child's licensed practitioner
- written instructions on container for over-the counter medications OR from the child's licensed medical practitioner for prescription administration
- labeled with expiration date of medication
- *handed directly to the lead teacher* in Ziploc bag or other closed container. Medications sent to school in the child's lunchbox or backpacks will NOT be administered!

Medications are secured in the administrative office area under proper storage conditions. Only Master Teachers or the Program Director are authorized to administer medication. Staff are required to follow the 'five right practices' procedure for administering medication, and sign off on the medication log each time medication is administered for each step of the process, verifying that the

- correct child is receiving medication
- medication being administered is correct
- dosage is correct
- medication is given at the proper time
- method of administering is correct

5.8 Meals, Snacks

Snack: ECDC does not provide or prepare meals on site, but does provide snack twice per day, milk at lunch, and juice/water at snack time. Menus are prepared with the advice of the

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campus dietician and in compliance with the [Caring for our Children](#) guidelines, *Standard 4*. Snack menus are posted on the website and outside each classroom. *ECDC Food Storage, Preparation, and Serving Procedures*, are posted in the kitchen and followed. Snacks have at least two components represented among the four food groups, e.g. apples/raisins, pineapple & cheese quesadilla, graham crackers/oranges, etc. (5.B.01; 5.B.03; 5.B.16). Morning snack is served between 9:00 and 9:30 AM and afternoon snack following rest time (after 2:30 PM). Children are often involved in cooking or baking activities as part of the curriculum that are subsequently served for snack. All foods for children younger than four are cut into pieces no larger than ½ inch square (5.B.01; 5.B.14; 5.B.16).

Nut-Free Center: ECDC is designated “nut-free.” No nuts, nut oils, or other nut-based items are used in any of the classrooms or allowed for snack or lunchtimes. Since non-allergic children’s favorite foods often do include peanut butter, for example, we inform parents of substitutes such as ‘sun butter’ (made from sunflower seeds) that can be found at local grocery stores and are similar in taste/texture to peanut butter, but not a threat to children with allergies (5.B.05).

Special Health Needs: Parents of any child with special food-related or dietary health needs must provide a written individualized care plan prepared in consultation with the child’s health care provider that specifies particular needs or prohibitions. This information is added to the *ECDC Child Health Advisory* list and posted in the kitchen and classroom offices. If needed, a daily log is maintained for the child documenting the type and quantity of food consumed (5.B.04; 5.B.05)

Lunch: Parents are required to provide their child with an appropriate lunch box or other leak-proof receptacle clearly labeled with the child’s name. Our staff is expected to spend snack/mealtimes at the tables interacting with children; the time needed to heat lunches prevents them from being able to do that. Therefore, *we do not heat left-overs or pre-packaged meals or snacks (5.B.07)*, so cold or hot packs must be used if food needs to be kept warm or cold. We prefer items that do not need refrigeration. ECDC provides 2% milk at lunch and *parents are responsible for providing a healthy lunch for their child* that does not include candy or other junk food items that are high in sugar, salt, or fats. ECDC provides USDA recommended healthy food resources to parents (5.B.02).

Special Occasions: We make exceptions for birthdays and other special occasions and parents are welcome to send in whatever kind of treats they wish at these times! We *prefer* that these items be commercially prepared rather than home-cooked (5.B.02).

5.9 Cleaning & Sanitation

The College provides custodial services to ECDC according to the NAEYC *Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table*. All areas of the building are mechanically ventilated and proper disinfectant and cleaning solutions and procedures used to ensure standard precautions against contamination and/or the spread of infectious disease (5.C.01-03)

Fish are the only pets maintained at ECDC. Visiting pets are cleared for immunizations before visiting classrooms and properly supervised while interacting with children. Children with animal allergies are not exposed to visiting pets. (5.C.05)

5.10 Emergency Plan

ECDC has a written comprehensive *Emergency Plan* for (a) medical emergencies, (b) evacuations, and (c) risk management/preparedness. The plan is reviewed/revised at least annually and as needed to be consistent with and inclusive of all CofC Emergency policies and procedures, DSS requirements, and NAEYC standards. A copy of the plan is located in each of the teacher offices, and an office copy is available for review at any time. Evacuation routes and

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the *CofC Quick Reference Chart* are posted in all classrooms and several other locations throughout the building.

Staff are trained in the implementation of the emergency plan at the time of hire or whenever there is a change of procedure. The Office of Public Safety monitors the security system and provides Community Crime Watch bulletins. The CofC Fire Marshal conducts practice drills and monitoring of alarms and extinguishers.

ECDC is part of the CofC *Cougar Alert Emergency Notification System* and as of 2015 has its own internal back-up notification system (*ReachAlert*). In the event the campus declares an emergency closing, parents MUST pick their children up within one half hour of notification or follow alternate procedures if instructed to do so.

5.11 Medical Emergency Notification

In the event of a medical emergency,

1. Staff will call the College of Charleston first response team (fire and life safety) to obtain emergency personnel. This may include an ambulance and other medical teams.
2. Staff will attempt to locate all authorized emergency contacts including relatives and medical personnel listed on child's DSS 2900 form. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep these files up to date.
3. A child may be transported to a hospital emergency room to receive all necessary treatment.
4. Staff will continue to attempt to reach a family member or other authorized adult until someone is reached who can then assume responsibility for the child's care.

5.12 Child Abuse & Neglect

All staff, long-term volunteers and researchers are required to process child abuse clearances through the DSS Central Registry before the first day in a classroom as outlined in SC Code 20-7-510 and described in a DSS brochure provided to parents and new staff at orientation. Any allegation of abuse or neglect on the part of an ECDC staff member will result in immediate removal from the classroom and temporary suspension without pay until an investigation is completed and determination is made on disposition of incident. During this time the employee's privacy and strict confidentiality will be maintained per College of Charleston policies. South Carolina provides an online [searchable database](#) of current information and addresses for registered sex offenders. All staff are required by South Carolina law⁷ to follow reporting procedures for suspected child abuse or neglect by others (10.D.03).

5.13 Drop-off & Pick-up

Parking & entrances: Doors open at 7:45 AM. An adult must escort children into and out of ECDC. When parents are in the building, they are legally responsible for their children. No child may be left unattended either in the building or out on the playground.

Parking decals: ECDC issues pressure-sensitive parking decals annually. These decals help CofC and Charleston City parking officers distinguish ECDC parents from those using our drop-off/pick-up designated areas illegally. These decals are not official CofC paid parking permits and are not valid in any location other than our temporary loading zones. Parents may enter the center in one of two ways.

1. Each family may be issued two security swipe cards for the Wentworth door entrance and park in the loading zone space on the street. The cards are free, but a \$5 replacement fee will be charged if lost or stolen. The card *may not be marked in any way* with ECDC identification and great care taken to ensure that only those permitted

⁷ SC CODE OF LAWS, SECTION 63-7-310

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- to pick up the child are provided access to this card. This card must be returned when the child 'graduates' or leaves ECDC to attend another program.
2. Families may park in the yellow-striped and marked drop/off zone behind the building in the "P" lot and then use the walkway to Wentworth Street to the front entrance. This space is reserved for ECDC 24/7 and time is officially limited to 20 minutes; permission for extended parking time for designated activities such as coming in to do an activity with children may be approved if requested in advance as these requests must be approved by Parking Services. Cars may/will be ticketed if parked anywhere outside the designated zone. At no time may ECDC families park in spaces marked for student use.

No one may enter or leave the building through classroom doors or the latched gate in the Wentworth Street fence except in an emergency. Parents are not allowed to permit children to use the security cards!!!

The center closes at 5:15 PM. ECDC. Parents must be *in the building* by this time and if for some reason, are delayed due to unforeseen circumstances, they will call the office. *Habitual late pick-up (more than 3 times) may result in a late fee assessment of \$5 per pick-up.*

As College of Charleston property, the ECDC building and playground are strictly off limits for security and liability purposes after hours and on weekends.

Sign In/Out: There is a sign in /sign out sheet at each classroom door. It is the responsibility of the parent to sign in AND out daily, making sure signature or initials are on the sheet even if the child helps you "sign". DSS and NAEYC both require accurate attendance records.

Authorized Pick-up Persons: Only a parent, official guardian, or someone previously designated by the parent/guardian in writing ("parent"), may pick up a child. Photo identification will be requested until staff is familiar with authorized pick-up persons by sight.

The enrolling parent(s) provides a list of names of those people authorized to pick up the child from the center on the *ECDC Authorized Pick-up Form*. Written changes to this list may be made at any time by parent(s). *No one else* is allowed to pick up the child without prior written authorization (note or email). The designated person will be asked to show photo ID, and the name matched to the authorized list in the child's file. If there is an unexpected emergency, a parent may call and speak directly with the Director or the child's teacher to let them know the name of someone else who is coming that day. We do not recommend code words for young children, but if a family code word is used, it must be recorded on the *DSS 2900* form. *A court order must be provided (copy will be kept in the child's file) documenting any immediate family member who specifically does not have authority to pick up a child.*

If a parent arrives who is intoxicated or otherwise incapable of taking the child home safely or if a non-custodial parent attempts to claim the child without the consent of the custodial parent, the Campus Public Safety Office will be called by the Director or whomever is the designated person-in-charge in the event the Director is offsite.

6. TEACHING STAFF

6.1 Code of Conduct (6.A.01)

All teaching and program staff are expected to know and use the *NAEYC Code of Professional Conduct*; all staff members receive this information during orientation and sign the *Statement of Commitment* at the time of hire. ECDC employees also adhere to: [CofC Ethics Policy \(9.19\)](#). Student employees are encouraged to develop [EHHP Teacher Dispositions](#):

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- The belief that all students can learn.
- Value and respect for difference.
- Value of positive human interaction.
- Intellectual curiosity and willingness to learn new knowledge.
- A commitment to inquiry, reflection, and self-assessment.
- Value of responsible, collaborative, and cooperative work.
- Sensitivity to community and cultural context.
- Responsible and ethical practice.

6.1.1 Babysitting Policy: We get many inquiries from ECDC parents, families, and the general community requesting contact information and/or referrals of our graduate and undergraduate Teaching Assistants for private baby-sitting and/or nannying positions. This is certainly understandable, given the high standards and screening processes we maintain. However, we believe this practice is not in keeping with College Ethics and liability guidelines, nor the *NAEYC Code of Conduct, P-2.11*, which states: *"We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness working with their children."*(p.4)

Therefore our policy is:

- The ECDC program does not *facilitate or assist with* private arrangements between families and [student] staff members. We neither maintain a contact list for this purpose nor do we give out personal contact information for any employee.
- For those on campus, the university's internal listserv "[Yammer](#)" has a "Faculty and Staff Childcare Network" group and we would encourage College employees to look at that as a resource.
- The University *does not* allow parents to list any staff member (including students) as a "pick-up" person for their child or make arrangements with a staff member to be responsible for a child either immediately before or after the program day.

6.2. Teacher Qualifications

The core of the ECDC teaching staff is our four Master Teachers. All assistant teachers are currently enrolled students at the College of Charleston including five Graduate Assistants (20 hours per week), and 20-25 hourly teacher assistants. Master Teachers have a master's degree in early childhood education or a closely related field, current SC teacher certification, at least 3 years of experience working with young children. Graduate Assistants have a bachelor's degree and are currently enrolled full-time in the Early Childhood, Elementary, or Special Education M.A.T. program. Teaching Assistants are full-time CofC students, and at least 50% are declared Early Childhood, Elementary, or Special Education majors at either the undergraduate or M.A.T. level. All teaching staff must meet other qualifications as required by DSS and NAEYC (CPR, Pediatric First Aid, background clearances, health requirements, etc.). (6.A.05; 6.A.06)

Provisional Employment: The ECDC does not place staff in a classroom with children until receipt of both state-required child abuse registry check (SLED) and FBI fingerprint review.

6.3. Job Descriptions

Master Teacher:

The Master Teacher (MT) at the N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center is a permanent classified employee with full benefits at the College of Charleston, contracted for the academic year (August 15 through May 15) and additional days as needed for the ECDC Attendance Calendar. MT's may contract for the optional Summer I session. MT's report to the Program Director.

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Each Master Teacher is assigned responsibility for a particular group of children and works 37.5 hours per week (not counting half-hour lunch) which includes approximately one hour planning time daily (during child rest time) for professional tasks such as curriculum development, lesson planning and preparation, and child assessment. A Master Teacher may need to monitor or supervise naps during this time if one of the Teaching Assistants is absent or still in the probationary period. (10.B.11; 10.B.13)

The ECDC Master Teacher is responsible for:

- Attending all program staff meetings and EHHP meetings as occasionally required
- Family visit with each child in the class before the beginning of Fall semester
- Curriculum development and implementation of lesson plans
- Design of interest centers and materials
- Supervision of Graduate Assistants, practicum students, and student aides assigned to the class (meeting with students, helping plan activities, and evaluating students in partnership with TEDU professors)
- Classroom management and discipline
- Assessment of each child
- Conferencing with parents at least once per semester
- Representing ECDC teachers on committees as needed
- Attending and helping to plan and implement PTO meetings
- Planning and implementing special projects and holiday activities for children and staff, including fund-raising opportunities
- Preparation of NAEYC accreditation materials
- Establishing and maintaining positive, supportive relationships with families
- Specific delegated duties assigned by the Director as needed

ECDC Master Teachers are expected to support the program mission and philosophy. Master Teachers are expected to be an integral part of the decision-making, policy and procedure setting, and administrative functions of this school. The input and collaboration of the MT is essential to the success of ECDC.

The probation period for a Master Teacher is one academic contract year (10.E.05). Master Teachers are reviewed annually between January and March and set professional goals for the following year, using the *University Employee Performance Management System (EPMS)*. After the evaluation conference with the Program Director, evaluations are signed by the Master Teacher and Program Director, reviewed and approved by the Dean of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance, and kept on file in the Human Resources office (6.B.01).

Master Teachers must meet annual DSS and NAEYC requirement for continuing education/training. Some funding is available annually for conferences and other professional development opportunities. The school may close for faculty to attend a conference or other educational opportunity. Teachers are encouraged to visit other programs, join professional organizations, take up self-initiated research, and to be active in community endeavors.

Graduate Assistant:

The Graduate Assistant (GA) is contracted for one semester at a time for fall or spring semester. Graduate Assistant stipend amounts are established by the university to cover 300 hours of work per semester, but no more than 20 hours per week. The ECDC GA's typically work either four or five mornings per week, including one hour of planning time. GA's work two teacher prep days prior to the beginning of each academic term, and two teaching days after the end of final exams at the end of each term. Graduate Assistantships are not available

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for summer sessions, but GA's may apply to work as hourly employees during those sessions and if qualified, may be hired as lead teachers. The GA is assigned to a particular group of children and reports to the Master Teacher for that classroom (10.B.11; 10.B.13). The GA is encouraged to identify a teaching or professional goal for the semester and work with the Master Teacher to successfully meet the goal.

The Graduate Student is responsible for:

- Assisting in planning and implementation of curriculum
- Assisting with classroom management and discipline
- Assist with routines and housekeeping duties
- Assisting with assessment of child progress and behavior
- Supervising inside and outside center/play
- Planning and conducting small group activities as directed by the Master Teacher
- Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with children and families
- Adhering to DSS regulations, NAEYC accreditation standards, and CofC/EHHP/ECDC policies and procedures

The probation period for a Graduate Assistant is 30 days. GA's are formally evaluated at the end of each semester worked by the Master Teacher in consultation with the Program Director and a conference is held to discuss the evaluation (10.E.05).

Teaching Assistant:

The Teaching Assistant (TA) is an hourly College of Charleston student employee, hired for one semester or summer term at a time through the Career Services office. TA's may be either graduate or undergraduate students. Most, but not all TA's are early childhood, elementary, or special education majors. To minimize transitions, while ECDC makes every effort to assign TA's to a single group of children, they may be scheduled to work in more than one classroom. The TA reports to the Master Teacher(s) in the classroom(s) to which he/she is assigned (10.B.11; 10.B.13).

The Teaching Assistant is responsible for:

- Assisting in implementation of curriculum
- Assisting with classroom management and discipline
- Assisting with routines and housekeeping duties
- Monitoring of rest times and child behavior
- Assisting with completion of daily reports as needed
- Maintaining daily communication with the Master Teacher via the classroom log
- Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with children and families
- Adhering to DSS regulations, NAEYC accreditation standards, and CofC/EHHP/ECDC policies and procedures

The Teaching Assistant is probationary for 30 days and formally evaluated at the end of each semester by the Program Director in consultation with the Master Teacher(s) to whom he/she is assigned (10.E.05).

6.4 Professional Development Plan

Orientation: At the time of hire, all employees and volunteers receive the *New Staff Orientation Handbook*, and participate in an initial orientation that covers program-wide ideals and routines:

- Program philosophy, values, and goals
- Specific job duties & responsibilities
- Expectations for conduct
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Program Standards

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- South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) regulations
- Initial and ongoing training/professional development
- Program policies and procedures
- Program curriculum & assessment system
- Daily activities and routines
- Health, safety, and emergency procedures
- Meeting needs of individual children
- Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques
- Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures(6.A.07; 6.A.08; 6.A.10; 6.A.11; 6.A.12; 7.A.01)

Training: At the beginning of each semester, Master Teachers also hold classroom-level meetings with student staff to discuss and demonstrate routines, daily schedules, planning and documentation processes, and information that is needed to meet the needs and support interests of individual children (6.A.03; 6.A.04).

All student staff in their first semester at ECDC complete three 1.5 hour workshops that specifically focuses on key elements of practice relative to the ECDC context.

Master Teachers must complete one or more seminars offered through the campus Career Center focused on supervision of student employees, or the two-day ADEPT training for cooperating teachers/mentors provided by the EHHP Office of Teacher Certification (6.A.09).

Continuing professional development: Master Teachers and the Director must complete 15 clock hours of training per calendar year to meet DSS requirements (5 child development, 5 curriculum, 5 other). The Director must obtain an additional 5 hours in administration. As long as student employees are currently enrolled in one of the EHHP teacher certification programs (early childhood, elementary, special education) they meet this requirement. Student employees who are not education majors may be required to attend professional development workshops if needed to meet DSS requirements.

As part of the annual performance review process, the Director and Master Teachers identify potential sources for workshops and/or conference sessions. ECDC encourages Master Teachers to obtain the highest quality professional development possible and will close the program if necessary to enable teachers to attend multi-day or national conferences. A limited amount of funding is available annually for travel through the Research and Development Account. Each year the Director and Master Teachers decide how the funds will be allocated equitably. The ECDC Director and Master Teachers may qualify to also apply for supplemental internal grant funding for professional development for conference presentations.

Undergraduate and graduate coursework opportunities are available as an [employee benefit](#) through the Provost's office for those on permanent contracts. The College also offers many free training opportunities for all employees through different venues.

6.5 Performance Evaluation

Employees are evaluated in the following manner (6.B.01):

Staff Category	Evaluator	Instrument	Timing	Follow-up
Director	Dean EHHP	EPMS	January 1- March 15	EPMS Conference; evaluation signed by Director & Dean; review by Provost

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Master Teachers	ECDC Director	EPMS	At one year from DOH and January 1-March 15 thereafter	EPMS Conference; evaluation signed by MT & Director; review by Dean
Graduate Assistants	Master Teacher	GA Performance Evaluation Tool (includes EHHP dispositions)	End of each contracted semester	Conference; signed by GA, supervisor, Director
Teacher Assistants	ECDC Program Director w/input from Master Teachers	Teacher Assistant Performance Evaluation (includes EHHP dispositions)	30 days (if needed); end of semester; annually thereafter	Signed by employee & Director; conference if warranted
Administrative Assistant	ECDC Director	EPMS	At one year from DOH & January 1-March 15 thereafter	EPMS conference; evaluation signed by Director & AA; review by Dean

7. FAMILIES

7.1 Waiting List:

ECDC enrollment is primarily intended for, but not restricted to the College of Charleston community. We maintain a waiting list according to the following priorities:

1. Siblings of current and previously enrolled children.
2. Children of full time College of Charleston employees and students.
3. Children of alumni and Memminger Elementary School staff.
4. Children from the general community.

Enrollment applications may be taken as soon as a child is born, but may not be activated before then. Our waiting list is maintained for each age group in order of application date and priority. *We use the waiting list to make enrollment offers, but reserve the right to structure class groups to support appropriate diversity, gender distribution, and accommodation for children with special needs.* Applications are kept active until either the parents request removal from the list, or the child becomes age ineligible for admission. Applications are accepted throughout the year. Registration for summer sessions and the next academic year occurs in March/April. Once enrolled, it is not necessary to re-apply.

ECDC is open to all children two through five years of age (as of September 1). The child's age on September 1 determines initial class placement in the two, three, four, or five year old kindergarten class. The fours and kindergarten groups operate as a mixed age class.

Enrollment offers are made and registrations confirmed each year in March/April for the following September. Class sizes are determined by the needs of the individual children in each group and may be lowered when there are children whose needs require additional individual attention. Interim vacancies are filled on a case/case basis. As many of our children's parents are tenure-track faculty at the college, a space will be held for a child whose family takes sabbatical leave with payment of a registration fee for either the current year (fall sabbaticals) or next year (spring sabbaticals). Temporary enrollment will be offered to fill these spaces with continuing enrollment conditional on space available upon return of the child whose family was on leave.

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7.2 Conditional enrollment:

Children are accepted for enrollment assuming that (a) the child is able to benefit from the ECDC program, (b) the child's behavior does not pose a significant threat to the health and/or safety of the child or other children or staff, and (c) parents abide by our policies and cooperate with and support our efforts to meet their child's individual needs. *Children entering the three year old class are expected to be toilet trained.* Conditional enrollment requirements may include, but are not limited to:

- Follow-through on our recommendation for referral of the child to the First Steps *BabyNet* and/or Charleston County School District *Child Find* network for developmental evaluation and subsequent delivery of services
- In-school parental time commitment OR providing the program with a personal aide/shadow if the child's behaviors or needs require intensive individual attention that presents a significant challenge to our teachers for meeting teacher/child ratios or the needs of other children in the class.
- Adjustment of the child's attendance schedule if teachers deem it beneficial or necessary to meet the needs of other children in the class.

After enrollment, if any of these conditions are not being met, ECDC may request that the child be withdrawn, but will make every attempt to aid the parents in locating a placement in another program.

7.3 Open Door & Observing

Parents and other family members are encouraged to visit and observe. Parents and families are an important part of ECDC and are often invited or encouraged to participate in classroom activities, especially those that focus on celebrations and cultural traditions. Parents or family members may be asked to share their work experiences or life skills as part of ongoing curriculum project work as well.

The observation booths are open to parents at any time during ECDC operating hours. It can be very stressful 'leaving' a child for the first time and spending a few minutes in the observation booth after drop-off can relieve anxieties about separation and adjustments. ECDC wants families to know as much as possible about their children's' experiences during the day - parents are welcome to drop in and have lunch or visit their child any time. However, parent visiting inside the classroom must not disrupt instructional activities or classroom routines.

We do limit and pre-schedule observation hours and capacity for visitors and college students to two hour blocks AM and PM. No visitor observations are permitted during rest time.

Teachers keep information and documentation of children's classroom work in the observation booths for reference. Families and visitors are welcome to look at any of this material, but *may not remove it from the center!!!!* No food or drinks are allowed in the booths, and *photographs or videos are not permitted without specific pre-authorization.*

The free and full access policy *does not apply to family members or individuals who are under court order that restricts or stipulates otherwise.*

7.4 PTO

Parents at ECDC are active and involved in our program (7.A. 12; 7.A.13; 7.A.14). The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) coordinates fundraisers, plans special family events and teacher appreciation activities, and playground clean-up/gardening days or other service projects. ECDC parents are friendly and welcoming, and we highly encourage new families to attend meetings and community functions and get involved. All families are automatically members of the PTO.

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Social Events: Annual activities co-sponsored by parents and/or teachers include, but are not limited to:

- Thanksgiving Feast
- Sottile House Holiday Festival
- Pajama Movie Night
- Play Day/New Family Welcome
- Kindergarten Graduation and Family Potluck

Family volunteers: Many adult family members extend their involvement by volunteering in school wide and/or classroom activities. We regularly encourage family members to share their skills, talents, interests, and traditions with our children as an important element of support for our curriculum.

Fundraising: Parents and teachers work together to coordinate fundraising events such as:

- Donations to the ECDC Foundation Account
- Book Fairs
- T-Shirt sales
- Rebates from designated local grocery stores
- Dinners and other social activities

7.5 Parent Support

Parent Information Meetings: Parent information nights address topics relevant to parents' interests and needs (e.g., literacy, toilet training, behavior management, etc.). Typical events include:

- Back to School Night (information about curriculum, activities, and routines in each class)
- Transitions Panel (information about local schools, "life after ECDC" shared by alumni parents (7.C.06; 7.C.07))
- ECDC Accreditation & Assessment system (7.B.03)
- Emergent Literacy

Resource Information: (7.A.05; 8.A.01): ECDC regularly provides parents with resource information in multiple formats (e.g., resource list, website, print, parent bulletin board, emails) on topics relevant to their needs and issues. These include, but are not limited to:

- Health and safety
- DSS Regulations and NAEYC Accreditation information
- Curriculum & development topics
- Early childhood education research & publications
- Community events
- Cultural opportunities
- Recreational/athletic opportunities
- Summer/break alternative program or care options
- Elementary public/private school options
- Social service, medical, mental health, screenings and family support services
- Financial counseling & support

8. COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

8.1 EHHP

ECDC is part of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance (EHHP). The Director is expected to attend or delegate a Master Teacher to represent ECDC at EHHP meetings, requested committees, and functions. ECDC collaborates with faculty, the departments of Teacher Education (TEDU) and Physical Education and Health (PEHD), the Office of Teacher

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Certification, Teaching Fellows, and the Center for Partnerships to provide observation, practicum, and research opportunities. ECDC works specifically with designated faculty on the *ECDC Liaison Committee* to discuss and develop collaborative initiatives and ways in which ECDC can inform and support EHHP certification programs. The ECDC Director teaches a minimum of one course per year in addition to program responsibilities; Master Teachers are qualified to teach as adjunct faculty in the EHHP and ECDC will accommodate their schedules if so requested (8.A.02; 8.A.07).

8.2 Campus-wide

As part of the College of Charleston, ECDC follows all university policies and procedures, reporting lines and processes. ECDC regularly seeks opportunities to support campus academic and service programs and to keep campus informed of ECDC activities and opportunities (8.A.03). ECDC's mission as a demonstration program provides opportunities for many different types of collaborations that may be ongoing or vary from one year to the next.

8.3 Community Partnerships

Two parts of ECDC's mission focus on providing a demonstration/laboratory program and promoting and modeling child advocacy in the community. The program does this through (a) formal and informal partnerships, (b) involvement in local, state, and national professional organizations and (c) welcoming visitors from other programs, schools, and agencies (8.A.02; 8.A.06). Examples of partnerships include but are not limited to:

- Memminger Elementary School
- Charleston County First Steps Early Headstart Initiative
- Charleston County School District Child Find network
- Medical University of SC (MUSC) Internship program

8.4 Practicum and Research Protocols

ECDC staff members conduct and facilitate practicum and research projects with both campus and the external community that are either (a) part of academic course or program requirements and/or (b) approved through [the CofC Institutional Review Board in the Office of Research & Grants \(ORGA\)](#). ECDC reserves the right to accept or reject proposals based on a determination of developmental appropriateness, quality of research design, or our ability to adequately facilitate. ECDC provides protocols and guidelines for observers, practicum students, and researchers to ensure proper and ethical conduct of projects and participants. Confidentiality policy is strictly followed, and all visitors to the building are screened, logged in, and wear ID badges while in the building. ECDC limits observer/researcher hours to 8:30-11:30 AM and 3:00-4:30 PM. No visitors other than parents/guardians are permitted during nap/rest times. All practicum/intern students and researchers must follow DSS requirements for child abuse clearances and TB/health screenings if warranted. Parents have the opportunity annually to provide ECDC blanket permission for observers, photos, and media and no artifacts are collected or research conducted without specific individual consent (8.A.02; 8.B.01).

8.4 Professional Memberships

The Director and Master Teachers are expected to be active members of NAEYC and SCAEYC, and the program maintains membership with the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (NCCCC). Staff members are encouraged to participate or belong to other groups that advocate for or promote high quality early childhood and early childhood teacher education. Political activities are not permitted onsite (8.C.01).

8.5 Advocacy

Part of ECDC's mission is to model child advocacy. The ECDC Director is expected to represent the program and actively participate in local, regional, and national advocacy

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activities. All teaching and program staff are expected to seek out, support, and participate in activities sponsored or co-sponsored by ECDC on behalf of young children. The ECDC Program Director and Master Teachers are encouraged to participate in the DSS Center for Continuing Career Development ([CCCCD](#)) as certified trainers and are expected to attend and present at local, state, and national conferences when possible (8.B.05; 8.C.01; 8.C.02; 8.C.03; 8.C.04; 8.C.05; 8.C.06).

8.6 Technology and Social Media

Technology: The ECDC supports development of meaningful relationships and provides guidelines based on research and field expertise (such as the *American Academy of Pediatrics*) for families and staff in order to make informed decisions about technology use. As a general rule, children at ECDC have very limited screen time. We do model the use of technology as it occurs in the “real” world when an appropriate resource for curriculum work. For example, children may dictate the text of an email to the Geology Department with a question about rocks, or may watch a webcam of nesting eagles, etc. Teachers use the Internet for research with the children and may share an online video occasionally that connects to curriculum topics. We may put the children together for a movie if we have had a bad stretch of weather that precludes going outdoors, but devices with entertainment or learning applications are not used.

We do use digital cameras/recorders for curriculum documentation purposes and sharing curriculum activities with families and the general public. However, this use is restricted to the teaching staff under strict guidelines for usage and formatting.

Social media: This term refers to any platform that promotes online information sharing, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snap Chat, Instagram, Google+, blogs, etc.

- ECDC prohibits posting ANY pictures or videos of children or adults taken at school on personal social media websites
- All ECDC stakeholders (staff, visitors, student employees) should be cognizant of their professional online identity and presence.
- We cannot prohibit teaching staff, parents, and student workers from connecting online with each other, but we encourage ethical online behavior that complies with College Ethics policies & requirements.
- Not all parents participate in public events (e.g. Halloween Parade, Sottile Tree Lighting, etc.) where photos are usually taken. While we cannot prohibit sharing photos on social media, we advise caution. Please consider secure options for image sharing instead of “tagging” on a wall or blog.

9. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

9.1 The Building

Capacity: ECDC’s licensed classroom capacity is 70 children, based on square feet of 35 per child and DSS ratios. The actual capacity is typically 52-54 (two’s: 12; three’s: 14; 4/5’s: 26-28)

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to maintain lower NAEYC teacher/child ratios, and accommodate for children with special needs (9.C.01).

Maintenance: The ECDC building is repaired and maintained by the College of Charleston Physical Plant, which handles all matters related to physical systems, buildings, and grounds, including pest control. Routine problems and maintenance needs are requested and documented through the [Physical Plant automated system](#). Emergencies are handled by phone. Routine inspections and maintenance schedules are established by the College (e.g., changing air filters, cleaning HVAC ductwork, recycling, etc.). Teachers are expected to inspect their rooms and the adjacent parts of the building daily for minor hazards, and report any needed repairs (9.C.08; 9.D.01; 9.D.02; 9.D.08).

Custodial Services: Custodial services are provided by the Custodial division of Physical Plant and include a mid-day aide to assist with serving milk and after-lunch clean-up, and evening building cleaning after hours. Custodial staff are trained to adhere to the NAEYC *Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Chart* and required to sign-off daily on each procedure as completed (9.C.06).

9.2 ADA Compliance

The ECDC building, entrances, and playground are maintained in compliance with ADA regulations. Teachers must plan classroom design, equipment, materials, and activities to accommodate children with special needs (9.C.03).

9.3 The playground

Capacity: The playground area encompasses approximately 5800 square feet, approximately 83 square feet per ECDC's licensed capacity of 70 children (if all children were on the playground at the same time). For safety purposes, when all children are present, outside play schedules are coordinated so that two and three year olds play together and fours/kindergarten play together, but usually not all at the same time (9.B.04).

Maintenance: The grounds are maintained in good order at all times and inspected monthly for needed repairs and maintenance. The playground is also secured to prevent unauthorized access. The playground supervision policy is outlined in section 3.3. The PTO assists periodically with playground beautification and maintenance projects (9.B.07).

9.4 Equipment & Furnishings

One of ECDC's program goals is to create an environment that is home-like, aesthetically pleasing, and orderly. Each Master Teacher is responsible for (a) classroom arrangement, (b) good care of materials and equipment, (c) monitoring condition and use, (d) ensuring that children learn respect for the environment and materials, and (e) training student staff to promote a high quality environment (9.A.13).

We make sparing use of the fluorescent lighting system and encourage use of the secondary lighting and dimmer system supplemented with floor, table, and/or hanging lamps. We encourage the use of natural elements and colors. Classroom arrangements include areas for small group, large group, and individual activities. Each classroom must contain soft seating elements and an area where a child can go to be alone when needed or desired.

ECDC believes that children need an orderly environment and careful placement of materials to develop responsibility and independence. Centers are well-organized with a balance of age-appropriate commercial and real-world materials. Each teacher devises a system that helps children understand how many children a center can accommodate comfortably. Duplicate materials are purchased when developmentally warranted. Teachers are

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encouraged to label materials, centers, and classroom features in languages represented among the children in the class. Materials are periodically rotated and kept clean and in good repair according to the *NAEYC Cleaning and Sanitation Schedule*.

Each Master Teacher is also responsible for the organization and condition of the classroom observation booth. These areas are not used for storage of surplus materials or equipment. They are kept in good order, with current classroom artifacts and relevant developmental or other research and resource articles available for visitors and observers.

Each classroom is equipped with a fully-stocked First Aid kit. Extra kits are kept in the office and on the playground with another available to be taken on field trips (9.C.10).

9.5 Transportation

ECDC does not provide transportation, except occasionally for field trips. In the event of a field trip, either parents transport their own children, or a commercial school bus company is contracted (9.C.14).

9.6 Environmental Health

ECDC follows regulations and guidelines regarding environmental health and safety established by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). In addition, ECDC supports the [CofC Sustainability](#) initiative and designates one of the lead teachers as the "Eco-Rep" annually. [CofC Smoking Policy](#) does not permit smoking in any area of the building or grounds at any time. The CofC campus is officially a "[tobacco free environment](#)" as of July 1, 2014. Signs to that effect are posted in the building and on the playground (9.D.06).

10. LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

10.1 Licensing

ECDC is licensed through the Department of Social Services as a child care facility for 70 children. Our license number is 17626, renewed even years on September 26. The license is posted at the main entrance of the facility (10.B.04). Site inspection violations for all licensed child care facilities may be viewed online at the [DSS](#) site and are posted in the facility on the Community Bulletin Board at the office.

10.2 Accreditation

ECDC has been accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children ([NAEYC](#)) since 2005. Our program number is 279292, The accreditation cycle is five years with renewal date of May 1. The accreditation certificate is posted at the main entrance of the facility.

ECDC acquired certification as a [NatureExplore](#) classroom in 2012 through the National Arbor Foundation. This designation is renewed annually and posted at the main entrance of the building.

10.3 Governance and organizational climate (10.A.03; 10.A.07)

The program is part of the School of Education, Health, and Human performance. The desired organizational culture is collaborative, inclusive, and team-focused (Jaruszewicz & White, 2009)⁸

⁸ Jaruszewicz, C. & White, M.J. (2009). The Teachergarten: Creating an environment conducive to meaningful teacher growth. *Early Childhood Education Journal* (37) 171-174.

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Staff Meetings: The Director distributes a staff meeting agenda at least 24 hours prior to meetings with follow-up report within 24 hours of meeting conclusion. Meetings are scheduled as follows

- Director and Dean of the EHHP: as needed, at least once per semester
- Lead Staff (Director, Master Teachers, Administrative Assistant): bi-weekly
- GA's and Director: Prior to beginning of fall and spring semesters. GA's are invited to lead staff meetings if they wish to attend.
- Hourly TA's and the Director: Prior to beginning of fall and spring semesters and as needed for specific trainings

Note: Because of GA and TA course schedules, meetings of the entire staff are difficult to schedule, but are called when appropriate or requested. Families are informed of all major decisions before announced to the general campus community.

Advisory Groups: ECDC has two advisory groups. The *EHHP Liaison Committee* is composed of the Director, two faculty members from TEDU, one from PEHD, one representative from the Center for Partnerships in Education (CPIE) and one representative from the Office of Professional Development. This committee meets twice annually and is charged with coordinating collaboration, research, practicum experiences, and other initiatives between ECDC and the teacher certification programs in the EHHP. The *Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)* is composed of one parent representative from each class group appointed by the Director annually; collectively they function as ombudspersons for reporting and/or mediation of conflicts or grievances, and in an advisory capacity on matters of policy. This group meets in an ad hoc capacity as called, and may make recommendations that are then carried forward to the Dean of the EHHP. Current members and contact information are listed on the program website and Family Handbook. (10.B.06).

Grievance Process: We encourage open and honest communications; parents should express questions and/or complaints originating in the classroom to their child's Master Teacher or the Program Director. If a parent is not satisfied or feels uncomfortable with this process, any member of the *Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)* can be contacted and the issue will be relayed to the Program Director anonymously or carried forward to the Dean of EHHP who may forward to other campus bodies or administrators as needed to resolve.

10.4 Program Director (10.A.02: 10.A.04: 10.A.05: 10.A.07) This is a twelve-month administrative, non-tenure track position, with full benefits, reporting to the Dean of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance. A doctorate is preferred; a master's degree in Early Childhood or related field, administrative experience, and a minimum of three years early childhood teaching experience is required. The Director has adjunct status, teaching a minimum of one undergraduate or graduate course per year in the EHHP Department of Teacher Education, depending on experience and qualifications. The Director's primary responsibility is to support and facilitate the accomplishment of the ECDC mission. The Director's responsibilities include setting and implementing administrative policies, managing the day-to-day operations of the center, ensuring continued high-quality educational experiences, maintaining licensing, NAEYC accreditation standards, and currency in the field of early childhood education, coordinating field experience and research opportunities for College of Charleston students and faculty, and developing and maintaining productive relationships with the Department of Teacher Education, the EHHP, the College, and the early childhood community.

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10.5 Administrative Assistant

The AA position is a full-time permanent staff position. Minimum qualifications are a high school diploma (college coursework, Associate Degree, or training related to early childhood education desirable); state and federal abuse clearances; current TB and health appraisals; CPR & First Aid certification; computer proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and Outlook Express; excellent interpersonal skills; must be able to lift 30 pounds; must have own car transportation.

The Administrative Assistant reports to the ECDC Director. Responsibilities include:

- Reception (phone, security monitors, front door buzzer, visitor logs, routine communications with parents & student employees; mail & UPS deliveries)
- Maintaining paperwork and files related to child enrollments, Department of Social Services (DSS) licensing, and National Association for the Accreditation of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation (child files, new enrollment paperwork, waiting list, fire drills, insurance, parent questionnaires, etc.)
- Scheduling of student employees and emergency substitutes; processing of student employment paperwork, staff timesheets
- Coordination and processing of routine purchases, contracted supplies, staff travel, and maintenance
- Bi-weekly food shopping and incidental emergency purchases; inventories
- Processing and maintaining records of tuition/fundraising deposits and invoices
- Coordination with Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) of special classes, events, and fundraising activities
- Miscellaneous clerical and technical support for Director (preparation of teaching materials, copying, website, etc.)
- Emergency assistance with sick children and/or classroom support when short-staffed

10.6 Hiring Documentation (10.E.02: 10.E.04)

At the time of hire, each teaching or administrative staff employee (and long-term volunteers) must provide documentation that includes:

- Application materials (appropriate to position)
- Criminal-record check ([DSS 2924](#), [IBT Fingerprint scan](#))
- 18 years of age
- Education qualifications required for position (academic transcripts)
- Health Assessments (current TB; [DSS 2901](#); [DSS 2926](#) within one year)
- Two personal references
- Proof of citizenship or legal alien status (I-9)
- W-2

In addition, all new staff are given or provided access to:

- Written job description with performance evaluation criteria for position
- Orientation packet
- *ECDC Policies and Procedures*

At the time of hire, each employee signs:

- ECDC Discipline Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- NAEYC Statement of Commitment (Ethical Code of Conduct)

Student employees are also asked (but not required) to sign a FERPA release so their class schedules and transcripts can be obtained for licensing, accreditation documentation and scheduling purposes. Students who choose not to sign must provide ECDC with revised schedules and transcripts each semester.

ECDC Policies and Procedures

All college employees participate in a formal orientation with Human Resources that includes information about the university, payroll procedures, benefits, retirement, sick and personal leave, and other personnel policies (10.E.06).

10.7 Personnel Policies and Procedures (10.E.01)

ECDC Director, administrative assistant, and Master Teachers are permanent employees hired through Human Resources. Graduate Assistants are hired through the Graduate Office. Hourly student employees are hired through the Career Services Office.

ECDC follows all [personnel policies](#) for CofC employees:

- Benefits
- Compensation Policy for Classified Employees
- Family & Medical Leave Policy
- Leave Benefits Policy
- Hours of work Policy
- Reduction in Force Policy
- Holiday Schedule
- Temporary Employment Policy

Information specific to hiring procedures for Student Employees:

- [Graduate Assistantships](#) (Graduate Office)
- [Office of Victim Services \(OVS\)](#)
- [CofC Student Employment Policies & Procedures](#) (Career Center)
- [Job Classification Numbers](#) (Career Center)
- [Counseling & Substance Abuse](#)

10.8 Accident and liability coverage

All adult staff members are included in the College of Charleston insurance umbrella. ECDC contracts annually through the CofC Procurement Office for accident and liability insurance for the children enrolled. Current insurance policy binder is available for review at any time (10.B.02)

10.9 Financial Policies (10.C.01–0-3)

As part of the College of Charleston, all the program financial operations and reporting are accessible through the multi-portal *Banner* system, accessed on campus through the password-protected [My Charleston](#) website, and coordinated through various campus departments, including:

[Controller](#)

[Budgeting and Payroll Services](#)

[Information Technology](#)

[Career Center](#) (student personnel)

[Treasurer](#)

ECDC Tuition:

Parents sign a financial agreement annually that describes the following policy and collection procedures if warranted by the College of Charleston Treasurer's Office.

Families are guaranteed the rate/schedule approved at the time of annual registration and schedule change requests are considered on a space-available basis, but not guaranteed. Registration constitutes a "reservation" for a particular schedule and the program then staffs accordingly; therefore tuition is due regardless of whether the child attends or not.

ECDC Policies and Procedures

Continuous registration, including payment of a non-refundable deposit is necessary from one academic year to the next to maintain reservation enrollment spaces at ECDC (Maymester and Summer I sessions are optional, but require separate registration and non-refundable registration fee). No refunds are given due to days missed for illness or other missed days.

End of the calendar year tax statements are distributed by January 30. The federal identification number is available on request, and posted on the parent bulletin board in the hallway.

The operating hours of ECDC are 7:45 AM-5:15 PM, with half-day pick-up at 12:15 PM. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to escort the child to the classroom on arrival, and pick up the child within this time frame. (See 5.13)

Families are responsible for timely payment of tuition according to the current fee scale. For those who choose *monthly tuition payments*, they are due on the first school day of each month. Payments may be made by cash, check, electronic bank draft, or online through the [CofC Marketplace](#). Checks may be dropped off at ECDC in the office (there is a deposit box available for this purpose) or made directly at the Treasurer's office on Calhoun Street (next to Starbucks). Checks should be made out to the *College of Charleston* and receipts are issued for cash payments. The College prefers cash payments be made directly to the Treasurer's Office. *No billing statements are issued.*

Need-based scholarship applications are available. Alternative payment arrangements may also be made as necessary with the College of Charleston Treasurer, but without special arrangements, tuition payments are expected when due.

Teaching staff at ECDC who have preschool aged children may enroll on a space-available basis at half-tuition rate, but enrollment is not guaranteed. A staff member wanting to enroll a child or children at ECDC must follow the same application and wait list process as all other applicants.

Supplemental Activity Fees: As appropriate, we provide additional classes conducted by itinerant teachers (e.g., yoga, music), field trips, and excursions during the school day as part of our curriculum and included in the cost of tuition. We may, however, charge a nominal fee for field trips to destinations that charge for admission.

10.10 Purchasing (10.01: 10.03)

All purchasing is done in compliance with state law and College procedures through the [Office of Procurement and Supply Services](#). The Director, administrative assistant, and each of the four Master Teachers is authorized for an institutional credit card with varying purchase authorization amounts per position and current institutional policy. CofC Employees are randomly audited for record-keeping accuracy and adherence to purchasing regulations. Consumable items are ordered if available, through Central Stores warehouse. The college maintains vendor contracts for copying equipment and office supplies. Most classroom materials, equipment, and supplies are ordered through reputable early childhood catalog vendors. Snack and food items are obtained locally. College policies that apply to purchasing and inventory maintenance include:

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- Purchasing Procedures
 - Central Stores Catalog
 - Purchasing Card Manual
 - Inventory Control Procedures

ECDC Policies and Procedures

10.11 Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Strategic Planning

On-going program evaluation and long-term planning activities include input from families, staff, and other university and community stakeholders. Reports and aggregate data are published on the program website. Regular activities include:

- College of Charleston [Strategic Planning](#) (thorough analysis of mission and resources, identification of long-term goals and needs)
- Completion of the *NAEYC Annual Report* (analysis of strengths and weaknesses)
- Completion of the College of Charleston *Annual Report* (reporting of activities and program data)
- Analysis of *NAEYC Parent and Staff Surveys* (analysis of reported strengths & weaknesses)
- Completion of an annual *Action Plan* (reporting of prioritized goals, needed resources)

