



The Valley School

*"Where Learning Begins"*

# PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised 9/2018

Rev 1/2018

## Table of Contents

WELCOME .....	6
Mission Statement .....	6
GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION .....	8
Licensing-Office of Child Care.....	8
MSDE Accreditation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Maryland EXCELS .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Hours and Closings.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Ages Served .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION .....	8
New Enrollments .....	10
Waiting List .....	10
TUITION AND FEES .....	10
Registration Fees .....	10
Activity Fees.....	10
Payments .....	10
Processing fees.....	11
Late fees .....	11
Withdrawal/Program Changes .....	11
Discounts .....	11
Additional Charges.....	11
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS .....	11
Our Staff.....	11
Staff Development.....	11
Credentialing.....	12
COMMUNICATION .....	12
Kid Reports .....	12
Calendars.....	12
Thursday Folders .....	12
Emails .....	12
Newsletters .....	13
Facebook/Twitter.....	13
DAILY PROCEDURES.....	13

Dropping off .....	13
Pick up Procedures.....	13
Authorized Pick up Persons .....	14
Visitors .....	14
Birthdays and Other Parties.....	14
Sleeping Arrangements .....	14
Clothing.....	14
Inclement Weather Policy .....	15
Personal Belongings .....	15
Toilet Training .....	15
CURRICULUM .....	15
Centers .....	16
Materials .....	16
ASSESSMENTS .....	17
Development Screening .....	17
Developmental Progress .....	17
CHILD GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES.....	17
Biting Policy.....	18
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT .....	18
Parent-Teacher Conferences .....	19
Parent Advisory Committee.....	19
Resolving Parental Concerns .....	19
Classroom Observations .....	20
Volunteers .....	20
Parental Discipline Protocol.....	20
HEALTH .....	20
At The Valley School we encourage children’s healthy growth and development by providing daily physical activity, outdoor play, by serving nutritious snacks. ....	20
Allergies .....	20
Immunization Requirements.....	20
Administering of Medication .....	21
Sunscreen.....	21
Diaper cream, lip balm or skin cream .....	21
Illnesses .....	21

Outdoor Recreation .....	22
Children with Special Needs .....	22
Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting .....	23
Handwashing .....	23
When staff should wash their hands .....	23
When the children should wash their hands .....	23
Food and Nutrition .....	24
Snacks .....	24
Breakfast/Morning Snack .....	24
Lunch .....	24
Snack .....	24
Milk .....	24
Infants .....	25
<b>Food</b> .....	25
<b>Bottles</b> .....	25
<b>Breastfeeding</b> .....	25
Pizza Day .....	25
Nut Free .....	25
SAFETY .....	25
Keeping Records Current and Confidential .....	25
Access to the building .....	26
Key Fobs .....	26
Field Trips .....	26
Photos .....	26
Volunteers .....	26
GENERAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES .....	27
Injuries/Accidents .....	27
In the event of a medical emergency .....	27
<b>Fire</b> .....	27
Shelter in Place .....	28
Intruder or Dangerous Adult Procedures .....	28
In the event of an intruder or dangerous adult: .....	28
In the event of an intoxicated parent: .....	29
Blizzard/Severe Winter Weather .....	29

Lightning .....	29
Missing or Abducted Child .....	29
Power Failure .....	29
Bomb Treat .....	29
Earthquake.....	30
Anti-Bullying .....	30
POLICY AND PROCEDURES .....	31
Media Free .....	31
Cell Phones.....	31

## WELCOME

We welcome you and your family to The Valley School, a Maryland State Department of Education accredited center, and look forward to supporting you in your role as parents. We value the uniqueness of each family and will make every effort to meet your individual needs. While The Valley School is primarily for your child, it is your school also. We encourage you to participate in our programs, invite you to observe our classroom settings, and enjoy an impromptu visit. We hope that you will find The Valley School to be a wonderful place that continues to strengthen your relationship with your child.

As with any service organization, however, we must set forth policy to promote the common good and ensure compliance with state rules and regulations. This handbook is written as a guide to summarize helpful information and to highlight our policies. We encourage you to keep it on hand and use it as a reference, but it is not intended to take the place of open, personal communication. Please read over the handbook carefully and then complete, sign and return the handbook acknowledgement found in your enrollment packet. We encourage you to voice any concerns you may have to your child's teachers or to administration. The Valley School reserves the right to make changes to this handbook and the services offered but will provide at least 2 weeks' notice of any changes. Thank you for choosing the Valley School for your child.

### Mission Statement

To provide a high quality, developmentally appropriate program for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old and their families in the Middletown community.

As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a childcare experience designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through play, which cultivates a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

### Philosophy Statement

At The Valley School we believe that children are born ready to learn and that if the environment is safe, stimulating, and encouraging, as well as providing age appropriate activities that reflect the interests of the children, they can grow up being healthy and strong individuals. We believe that a child's social and emotional needs as well as a child's physical needs are the most important aspects that effect a child's ability to learn.

We believe that parents are a child's first teacher and establishing positive relationships with the families is the first step in building a foundation for learning. Children learn best when parents are involved in their education.

In our program we welcome all children and families. We believe that every child and family have a value to the program no matter what their diverse abilities, disabilities, or what social economic status, ethical or religious background they may come from.

In our program we believe that children learn best through play. Our play-based curriculum incorporates activities from each of the following areas of development. Social emotional, language and literacy, fine arts, mathematics, science and social studies, and physical well-being and motor development for the growth of the whole child. We believe that learning is sequential and proceeds at different rates in each area for each child and we take into consideration the individual needs, abilities, and interests of all the children in our program.

We believe that it is important that the staff members are highly qualified and stay up to date on the latest early education research strategies through continuous professional development to enable them to provide the best care and education to the children in our program.

### **MSDE Accreditation**

In addition to the licensing regulations, we adhere to higher quality standards. The Valley School is accredited by Maryland Department of Education. Accreditation is a **voluntary** process in which programs commit to continuous quality improvement, to benefit children, families and staff.

A program voluntarily pursues self-appraisal, program improvement and external program review to achieve and publicly confirm that they meet quality state standards set by the organization. You can find out more information as well as the standards at the following link:

<http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/maryland-excels/maryland-accreditation>

### **Maryland EXCELS**

Maryland EXCELS is also a **voluntary** Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) designed to meet the needs of both families and child care programs. Maryland EXCELS recognizes the accomplishments of early childhood and school age programs and providers, offers information to families on choosing quality child care, and articulates to the public the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. Maryland EXCELS awards ratings through five progressive check levels that define The pathway to excellence. When a program joins Maryland EXCELS, the program has made a commitment to continuous quality improvement. This rating system helps Maryland achieve the following goals:

- To recognize early childhood and school-age child care programs of all kinds that provide high-quality care and education;
- To encourage programs to increase the level of quality they provide and to define a pathway to help them achieve excellence; and

- To provide families with information and choices about high-quality early childhood and school-age child care options.

Currently we are a **level 5** and we do intend to strive for a 5, the highest possible rating, when we renew every year.

You can find additional information about the EXCELS program at the following link: <https://marylandexcels.org/choosing-quality/>

## GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION

### Licensing-Office of Child Care

The Valley School is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care (OCC) and adheres to rigid enforcement of regulations that meet or exceed the minimum standards in child care. These standards relate to our physical facility, staff, health and safety procedures, nutrition, and record keeping. The center undergoes yearly licensing and fire department inspections. We support high standards in child care, as they are in the best interest of the children in our care. You can find the regulations at: [http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care/docs/Subtitle 16 Centers COMAR Online.pdf](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/docs/Subtitle_16_Centers_COMAR_Online.pdf)

If you have a concern or questions about a licensed or unlicensed programs you can find the following Parents Guide to Regulated Care at: [http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care/licensing\\_branch/parent\\_guide.html](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/licensing_branch/parent_guide.html)

### Hours and Closings

The Valley School is open Monday thru Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. with the exception of the following scheduled days:

- New Year's Day
- Presidents Day (Professional Development Day)
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Professional Development Day in August (ample notice given)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Our annual calendar can be found on our website, our Parent Board, as well at the sign in/out table. It includes all the holidays, events, and scheduled closures.

**Closing early:** We are open from 6:30AM – 3:00PM New Year’s Eve. In the event of inclement weather or a natural disaster, we will follow our inclement weather policy.

**We do not reduce or prorate tuition for holidays, vacations, inclement weather, or illnesses.**

## Ages Served

- Infants (6 weeks-12 months)
- Toddlers (approx. 12 months-20 months)
- Two Year Old’s (20 months-36 months)
- Pre-school (3’s &4’s)
- Kindergarten Readiness (4’s & 5’s)
- Before and After School (ages 5-12)
- Summer Camp (ages 5-12)

These are approximate ages of the children in these classrooms. Before a child may move to the next age classroom each child is individually evaluated and must meet several social/emotional, academic and developmental milestones. We will not move a child just because of their chronological age alone. There also has to be an opening in the next classroom.

## ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION

Before a child may attend The Valley School, certain paperwork will need to be turned in. The following is a list of paperwork that you can pick up at the front desk or you can also find it on our website.

- Registration Form
- Parent Agreement
- Emergency Card\*
- Health Inventory
- Immunization Record
- Lead Addendum
- All About Me
- Photo Release
- Parent Handbook acknowledgement

Some **other** forms that may need to be completed as well are:

- IEP/IFSP
- Individualized Infant/Toddler Schedule (If applicable)
- Emergency Health Care plan (If applicable)
- Medication Administration Form (If Applicable)

- Sunscreen authorization Form
- Diaper ointment authorization (If applicable)
- Cot Wavier (If applicable)

All paperwork needs to be turned in to the front desk BEFORE a child may start.

\*Parents are responsible for keeping the center informed at all times of any changes such as cell phone numbers, work phone numbers, authorized release persons, emergency contacts. Updates are also done **annually** at the front desk.

### **New Enrollments**

New enrollments will be accepted throughout the year if there is an opening. Each spring, families will need to re-enroll their child for the next academic year and pay the annual activity fee.

### **Waiting List**

If The Valley School is at full capacity for the age group you are looking for, you will be placed on a waiting list. There is no fee to be on the waiting list. Once an opening comes available you will be contacted by email or by phone. You will then have 1 week to decide if you want to take the spot. In most cases it is a first come first served basis. Children who are born to parents who have children already enrolled or staff that have children, take top priority.

Re-enrolling

## **TUITION AND FEES**

### **Registration Fees**

When you register your child, you will pay the **non-refundable** registration fee, annual **activity fee** and the **last week** deposit. This will also guarantee your child's place at The Valley School. This last week deposit is credited back to you upon receipt of your written two-week withdrawal notice. If such withdrawal notice is not given, the deposit is forfeited.

### **Activity Fees**

Activity Fees will be collected during each fall registration period for all children and also again in the summer for ages 2 and up.

### **Payments**

Tuition is due and payable the Friday before care. Payments can be dropped off in the tuition box outside the director's office or may be paid by credit card through our website, or by ACH. We also offer direct withdraw from your credit card or bank account. You will need to complete a form for us to do this. The form can be found at the front office.

## Processing fees

There is an additional fee for any payments made with credit card or bank card. (see tuition chart for fees)

## Late fees

A late charge of \$25 is added to each week your tuition is late.

If an unforeseen emergency arises that prevents you from paying your fees as agreed, you must contact administration as soon as possible. Repeated late payments will be cause for your child to be dropped from enrollment.

## Withdrawal/Program Changes

Should it become necessary to withdraw your child from The Valley School, you are required to give two-week written notice to administration. Your last week's tuition deposit will be applied at this time. Otherwise, you are required to continue to pay tuition for two weeks after notification of withdrawal, regardless of your child's attendance in the program.

## Discounts

Families enrolling multiple children will receive a **five** percent discount off the tuition rate of **oldest** child. Military families will receive a **ten** percent family discount.

## Additional Charges

- **Extra days** beyond the enrolled program time period are billed at the drop-in rate and are due with your regular weekly tuition payment.
- Punctuality is a crucial element in the operation of our center, and we ask for your cooperation in adhering to these hours. Also, please be conscientious of your child's schedule. **Late pick-up fees** are **one dollar per minute**. These fees are due the following day before your child may be dropped off in the morning. Paid by CASH only.
- **Additional fees** may be assessed for field trips, shirts, extra-curricular activities, photography etc.

# EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS

## Our Staff

The Valley School's teachers are highly motivated and dedicated early childhood professionals. All our Lead Teachers are required to have a CDA (Child Development Associate), a two-year degree, or a four-year degree to teach at The Valley School. All of our co-teachers/ Associate Teachers have the 90-hour certificate or a Child Development Associate Certificate (CDA).

## Staff Development

All Lead Staff are trained in Principles of Child Development, Methods in Early Childhood Programs and Child Guidance, Americans with Disabilities Act as it relates to child care,

Basic Health and Safety, Breastfeeding. All staff is also trained in CPR and First Aid which is renewed every 2 years. Each year The Valley School requires continuing education requirements that exceed the MSDE Office of Child Care requirements.

### **Credentialing**

The Valley School staff are required to participate in the **Maryland Child Care Credentialing Program**. This program recognizes child care providers who go beyond the requirements of state licensing. Our teachers complete at least **twenty four** hours of continuing education through professional conferences and trainings as well as a certain amount of Professional Activity Units each year. Our support staff also participates in on-going training appropriate to their role at The Valley School. For more information on credentialing can be found at: <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/office-child-care/credentialing-branch/child-care-credential-program>

We are committed to our staff and recognize them as vital components of a successful program for your children. We make every effort to ensure the work environment is pleasant and supportive of their needs. We value each staff member's life experience and want to empower him or her as individuals. We support staff development and continuing education because we believe that adults who are learning bring that same enthusiasm for learning to the children.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Kid Reports**

The Valley School uses **Kid Reports** to keep you informed of your child's daily activities. Each day you will receive a daily email with pictures informing you about their day.

### **Calendars**

The Valley School publishes a **monthly activity** calendar as well as a **yearly** calendar to keep you informed of our activities, upcoming events and school closings.

### **Bulletin Boards**

Quite a bit of information is listed on the classroom and center Bulletin Boards. Please check there for any updated information.

### **Thursday Folders**

The Valley School also communicates with families weekly via **Thursday Folders**. These folders may include completed artwork, projects, informational fliers, notes from teachers, reminders, curriculum information, etc. Please **return** the folders the next day so we can have them ready for you the following week.

### **Emails**

We also send **email** blasts on a regular basis

## Newsletters

Each classroom has a monthly **newsletter** which will be in the Thursday folders and will be sent by email. You can also find the current Newsletter on the parent board.

## Facebook/Twitter

You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

# DAILY PROCEDURES

## Dropping off

Children's safety is important to us especially during arrival and departure times. It is important to sign your child in and out each day. Sign-in/out sheets are located on the table by the front door. When you sign your child off in at The Valley School, you also certify that to the best of your knowledge, your child is in good health and can participate fully in all activities.

1. Parent/Drop off person must sign the child in every day.
2. Parents are required to accompany their children into their classrooms and get the attention of the teacher to let them know that they are responsible for the child now.
3. Please have your child wash their hands or use the supplied hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the classroom to help prevent the spread of germs.
4. It is also important that children are aware that their parents are leaving. While this acknowledgement may result in an occasional emotional upset, parents should take comfort in knowing that such separation anxiety usually ends by the time the parent reaches the front door.

Please don't bring your child to school at naptime. This will most likely upset the child and the other children who may be sleeping. Your child most likely will cry and wake the children up. A lot of times the child will fall asleep in the car on the way back from an appointment and so they will not sleep at the center. The child will have missed the fun activities of the day and who wants to just come to child care and go down for a nap?

## Pick up Procedures

1. A child may not leave the classroom before the parent has entered.
2. When picking up a child, make sure that the teachers acknowledge you and the child leaving. This way the teacher knows how many children she is responsible for and that time.
3. If a person other than someone that is listed on the emergency card is picking up, please notify the office in advance.
4. Children will not be accepted or dismissed through the gate on the playground. It is necessary for the parent to come in the building and sign

the child out.

### **Authorized Pick up Persons**

Parents are required to list the name, address and phone number of each person other than the parent who is authorized to care for their child in an emergency. Parents or any other person designated to pick up a child must be prepared to show picture identification to The Valley School staff. Children are not released to any other person not named on the emergency card, unless we have prior written request from the parent. Children are not released to anyone younger than sixteen years old unless specified in a letter that is signed by the parent.

### **Absences**

If your child will not be at school, please contact the office by phone or email to let us know. We will relay the information to the teacher.

### **Visitors**

Parents and other authorized family and friends are always welcome at The Valley School. We do encourage you to consider the children and their work and ask that you enter their classroom with quiet respect.

### **Birthdays and Other Parties**

Every child's birthday at The Valley School calls for a special celebration and parents are encouraged to join in the festivities. For example, parents are welcome to bring special treats in recognition of a festive occasion, but we request advance notice.

Also, because we are a **nut-free facility**, please limit your celebration to a simple, store-bought snack and/or drink at our scheduled snack time. Unfortunately, we cannot allow gift exchanges, piñatas or excessive food. Invitations may be placed in children's cubbies or may be sent to the administration to be emailed out to classmates.

### **Sleeping Arrangements**

After lunch, restroom use, and hand washing, the children will take a nap or rest quietly on their individualized cots for ages 18 months-5-year old's. After forty-five minutes of resting quietly, those children who are not asleep may read a book or do another quiet activity on their cot for the duration of the rest time. The classroom will resume scheduled activities once most of the children in the classroom are awake. We ask that you please take your child's sheets home each Friday to be washed and returned. The Kindergarten Readiness class doesn't "nap". They instead have a 30 min quiet time. You may request for your child to nap if so desired.

### **Clothing**

Please be sure that your child's name is clearly marked, with a permanent marker or special labels, on all articles of clothing and sheets etc. so that we can minimize the loss of personal belongings. In the event of a missing item, please notify us promptly. Unclaimed items are donated to charity.

Clothing should be comfortable, easy for the child to manage (buttons in front, elastic waist bands, etc.) and appropriate for "messy" activities, such as creative arts and

outdoor recreation. Clothing that comes on and off easily, without adult help, gives your child added confidence and avoids toileting accidents. Closed-toe shoes, sneakers or other soft-sole shoes are advised for the prevention of injuries. NO open-toed shoes or flip flops will be allowed on the playground.

We ask that infants, toddlers and 2-year olds have **two changes** of clothing and a supply of disposable diapers and wipes. Preschoolers should have one change of clothing.

A sweater or jacket should be brought to the center during the spring/fall months and Coat, hat, and gloves for all children during the winter months. We never know from day to day what the weather will be.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

We make every effort to remain open during inclement weather. Our goal is to make sound decisions based on the safety of families and staff, while still meeting families' needs for child care. We make every effort to communicate a decision to close or delay opening as quickly as possible. Decisions are announced no later than 5:45 a.m. There are several ways to learn about center closings or delays: website posting, e-mail, our social media sites, and recorded phone message.

If the program closes early, you will be notified by phone and e-mail as well as a posting on our website. It is imperative that you arrange to have your child picked up as soon as possible in the event of an early closing. Staff will stay until all children are picked up.

### **Personal Belongings**

It is difficult for young children to share toys and personal belongings with other children. Likewise, it is difficult for the staff to monitor all the many belongings children might bring from home. As a result, with the exception of show-n-tell, please leave all toys at home. Personal items for naptime at The Valley School should be limited to a pillow, sheets and blanket, naptime toy for resting. Children are encouraged to bring a book for the teacher to share during group times.

### **Toilet Training**

When the parents, teachers and the child are ready to work on toilet training, we all work on it as a team. The teachers and parents will discuss training procedures on an individual basis. Let us know what techniques you are going to use such as (giving an M&M each time they go), what words you use, and we can give you our ideas if needed. Please bring **several** changes of clothing and an extra pair of shoes. Potty training must start at home over the weekend and then we will continue training during the week. Children typically must be toilet-trained before entering the Ponies room.

## **CURRICULUM**

**Infants -3years-** The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos, published by Teaching Strategies, is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that helps teachers and caregivers understand developmentally appropriate practice and how to offer nurturing daily routines and meaningful experiences that meet children's strengths,

interests, and needs. Creative Curriculum is an approved by the Maryland State Department of Education.

In addition to the Creative Curriculum we also use "*Healthy Beginnings*". *Healthy Beginnings* is a resource to help the teacher's nurture the tremendous potential for learning and growth that every child has... that every child is born with. Specifically designed for caregivers of infants and toddlers from birth through age three, *Healthy Beginnings* gives us knowledge and support around child care and child development, and the Activity Planner helps provide fun, developmentally appropriate activities that build young children's skills and promote all kinds of learning.

### **For our Pre-K 3's-**

**For the Kindergarten Readiness**, (4 and 5 yr old's) we use "*The DLM Early Childhood Express*", by McGraw Hill as well as the Maryland State Voluntary Curriculum to guide our planning. The DLM Early Childhood Express offers a comprehensive Pre-K child-centered curriculum with strong teacher support and 21st century technology. The curriculum links connections in literacy, math, science, social studies, fine arts, health and safety, personal development, physical development, and technology

Lesson plans will be posted on the parent board each week.

### **Centers**

In conjunction with our curriculum, most of our classrooms are organized into centers. In Dramatic Play we have such items as dress ups, plastic foods, pots and pans, and dolls of different ethnicities. For example, if the children are talking about a Pizza Parlor then we make a Pizza Parlor prop box and place it in dramatic play. For the Science/Sensory area there is a sensory table with different materials for the children to manipulate. These materials include magnets, nature items, sorting trays and sensory bottles and are periodically rotated. In Block Play there are several types of building blocks, cars, people, writing, and math. In our Language and Literacy areas we have soft seating and books in a variety of subjects and made of different materials in the Library. We also include books made by the class. The children have access to writing materials, paper and crayons to write letters and numbers in the Writing center. In the Math area there are math games, unifix cubes, numbers, beads and string, an abacus, and a balance and rulers to weigh and measure items. In our Art area we typically have an easel, paint in many colors, crayons and markers.

### **Materials**

The materials, toys, and equipment used in our program support children's developing social skills and interest in adult roles, growing imaginations, increasing motor skills, and rapidly expanding vocabularies. We provide learning materials that are accessible on low shelves and shelves labeled with pictures and words to aid the children in putting them away in the correct place. Our materials are developmentally and age appropriate and support the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth of children.

Our materials are appropriate for children of all abilities and are conducive to multiple modes of exploration. We ensure that books, dolls, toys, clothing, music and displays

reflect the culture and ability of the children enrolled in the program. We provide books, some of which are in different languages and about different countries. We offer paint, paper and crayons in multicultural colors, and dramatic play outfits from different countries to name a few examples of our multicultural environment. Our materials are rotated on a weekly and/or monthly basis depending on the children's interests.

Different types of Music are played throughout the day. The children often play with musical instruments and sing songs, daily.

At The Valley School, we believe that play and fun are critical to learning. We also want the children to be excited about coming to the center. We incorporate into weekly themes and classroom items that interest the children.

We also offer Spirit Days, Pizza Day, and interest-based activities and service-based learning projects for our before and after program, among other things.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

### **Development Screening**

In accordance with state licensing regulations, we use a developmental screening tool "Ages and Stages" with each child. The screenings will occur in the first 45 days of the child's enrollment. We will share our findings with the parents. Our staff are trained in using the tool.

### **Developmental Progress**

Lead Staff observes children's progress and conducts ongoing assessments throughout the year. The teachers observe the children daily and make anecdotal notes when necessary. These observations help them when preparing lesson plans. They also spend time collecting items for the portfolios during the year and doing the checklists/assessments that are included in the curriculum when they are required. The Lead teachers do formal assessments with the children three times a year. Fall, winter, and spring. We share this information with the parents twice a year. Once in the fall, and then again in the spring.

## **CHILD GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES**

A critical area of our curriculum is helping children gain self-control. This goal is best achieved in a loving, supportive environment where children are treated with respect and fairness.

Our philosophy on discipline is based on respect for the child. The key to success for children is in preparing a supportive learning environment and using selective intervention to guide children in their behavior. We believe that when the environment and activities are prepared with age appropriateness in mind and presented correctly, children can initiate their own play and exploration, and the need for teacher control is reduced.

Our policy in helping children gain self-control is to intervene and redirect energies before problems begin. Our positive discipline approach consists of redirection, choices, consequences, warnings, supplying language, and problem-solving. We cannot write enough guidelines to fit every child or situation. Therefore, each child is treated as an individual, and parents are expected to work as partners with The Valley School staff in helping the child practice self-discipline in the classroom.

When an unacceptable behavior begins to occur at The Valley School, the teachers will inform the parents and a behavior reports may be filled out. If the behavior continues to occur, the parents will be asked to participate in a conference to develop a plan to correct the behavior in a positive way. The plan will depend on the child and the situation.

We recognize that children often respond to changes and situations they do not fully understand. It is important that you keep The Valley School staff informed of matters that may be affecting your child's behavior. In this way, we can offer support when they are at our school.

Our goal is to assist you in raising a happy, well-adjusted child. We can accomplish this goal best through mutual respect and support. We are confident that you, as a parent, will give us that support.

### **Biting Policy**

As we know, biting is a common occurrence among children who do not have language to express their feelings. We understand that biting is normal at certain ages, but it is not an acceptable means of resolving issues. At The Valley School, we will take immediate action in the classroom as well as with the family regarding any biting incidents. Whenever a child is bitten, the teachers must first comfort the child. Next, the wound should be washed with soap and water. Then ice should be placed on it. Once the child has returned to play the teacher must write an incident report for the child that was bit and a behavior report for the child that did the biting. Then the parents of the child that was bitten will be called and informed of the incident. The parents of the child that did the biting will be informed at dismissal. Once a child has become "a biter", the staff will be responsible for keeping an eye on that specific child by observing, shadowing, and separating the children before an incident occurs. If a specific biting incident continuously occurs, and if we do not receive appropriate cooperation from the family or the children are continuously getting hurt, we may elect to withdraw the child from our facility.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

We hope that The Valley School is one of many enriching experiences in you and your child's lives. Because we recognize that you are entrusting us with your most precious family member(s), we want you to consider The Valley School as part of your extended family. Consequently, you are considered an essential element in every facet of your child's activities at The Valley School. We strongly encourage families to participate and

are encouraged to share their hobbies, talents and cultural backgrounds.

Some suggestions for parental involvement include:

- Get involved in the Parent Advisory Committee
- Help with center events throughout the year
- Attend school celebrations
- Attend a fieldtrip
- Volunteer to visit the classroom and read a story
- Donate a book or other supplies and materials

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Children's assessments are conducted throughout the year to provide parents with an overview of their child's developmental progress. Throughout the year, we conduct portfolio assessments, which involve the collection of multiple samples and repeated observations of the child's performance in naturally occurring situations. We also evaluate the child's developmental progress through notation during group as well as one-on-one interactions between the teacher and individual students. Parent-teacher conferences are also held biannually. Once in the fall and once in the spring. During these conferences, we take the time to answer any questions or concerns parents may have regarding their child's experience at the center. These conferences also enable parents and staff to work closely to meet each child's specific needs. Parents and teachers are also free to request additional conferences any time they wish. We utilize the information gathered during children's assessments and parent-teacher conferences to improve and to update an individualized curriculum for each child.

## **Parent Advisory Committee**

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is made up of parents who have children enrolled at The Valley School and are interested in sharing their opinions and supporting our program. At these meetings we brainstorm ideas for planning new events for students and families and discuss school-related topics. Minutes are sent out to all enrolled families. Please see monthly calendar for dates. Child care is provided, if needed.

## **Resolving Parental Concerns**

Occasionally, differences in philosophy or child-rearing practices may occur in the child care setting. All concerns about your child's care should be discussed promptly with a teacher or the administration to come to a resolution that will best support your child. Be sure not to discuss a child in front of the children and other staff that aren't involved. If a concern is going to take a while and takes the attention of the teacher away from the children, then please request that the director or assistant director can step in to supervise the children. Our priority is the children and their safety. All efforts to arrive at a mutually agreed upon solution will be made. If a solution cannot be agreed upon, parents may request a meeting with the Owner of The Valley School. The Valley School asks that parents communicate with teachers while the teachers are at the Center. Please refrain from calling staff at home to discuss issues related to the Center. If there is an emergency, please call the Director or Assistant Director of the Center before

calling any other staff member. We greatly appreciate your cooperation in respecting the personal and family time of the Center's employees.

## Classroom Observations

Parents are encouraged to visit their child's classroom for added insight into our programs. You are welcome to schedule a follow-up discussion with teachers or administration to offer comments or suggestions.

## Volunteers

We extend an open invitation to parents to observe or participate in their child's classroom whenever desired. Parents and volunteers are encouraged to accompany the children on field trips and help on special projects throughout the year. Occasionally, we will have a high school student come and do volunteer work. Volunteers will never work with children under 3 years of age, be alone with any children, be counted in the teacher ratios, and will never be in the bathroom with a child or change a child's diaper. Volunteers will wear a badge letting you know that they are a volunteer and not a staff member.

## Parental Discipline Protocol

The Valley School asks that when you pick-up your children from the classroom, if you notice a situation that warrants disciplinary action, please notify the teachers in the classroom or administration. Please do not take it upon yourself to discipline any students in our care. Parents entrust The Valley School and our teachers to discipline students according to our policies.

Please make sure that your child is following the **rules** while at the Valley School. This includes but is not limited to using walking feet, staying with parents, and only exiting the front door **with** a parent.

## HEALTH

At The Valley School we encourage children's healthy growth and development by providing daily physical activity, outdoor play, by serving nutritious snacks.

## Allergies

If your child has allergies, please ensure that you have included that information in your enrollment forms. An "Allergy Action Form" must be completed. This will inform the administration and staff of the steps to take if your child should come in contact with an allergen.

## Immunization Requirements

In accordance with state licensing requirements, each parent must submit a doctor's certificate and immunization record upon enrollment. These records are kept on permanent file at the center and must be **updated** as your child receives immunizations. For current immunization requirements click on the link

## Administering of Medication

Any time that a child is required to be given medication at The Valley School, parents must complete a **Medication Authorization Form**. If the medication is a prescription medication, both the parent and the physician will need to sign the form. This form can be found on our website or at the front desk.

According to state licensing requirements, the medication must be kept in its **original container** and clearly state the following information:

- child's name
- doctor's name
- prescribed dosage
- time to be given
- date

At least one dose of the medication must be given at home in order for the parents to monitor the child's reaction to the medicine.

For over-the-counter medications, licensing standards state that we must administer the medication in amounts according to the label directions or as amended by a physician in writing. Medication can only be administered by a staff member who has been **certified** to administer medicine. The Valley School houses all medications in a secure place, well out of reach of children. We maintain dated records, the amount of medicine dispensed, and the name of the staff person who administered the medication for one year. We also provide refrigeration when necessary. Medicines are returned to you or properly disposed of when they are no longer required by your child.

### Sunscreen

We do provide sunscreen, "Rocky Mountain" for those parents who are interested in having it applied to their child. If you would like to use a different brand you will need to provide it. Parents will need to fill out a permission slip for us to apply **any** sunscreen. Forms can be found on our website or at the front desk. Please apply sunscreen to your child in the **morning** and the staff will apply it in the afternoon and before water play/swimming. This will help us tremendously.

### Diaper cream, lip balm or skin cream

We must have written parental authorization to administer.

Parents wishing to personally administer medication (during the time the child is in care) may do so-however, the parent must indicate on the paperwork that they did so.

## Illnesses

Our priority at The Valley School is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. While we take precautions to protect your child against illness, most children experience a normal number of infections and illnesses throughout the year. In such cases, we will notify you if it is necessary to take your child home or to the doctor. We will provide a quiet, calm place for your child to rest in the classroom or the reception area until your child is picked up. Children will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions which State licensing regulations say it is necessary for a child to

be excluded from care:

- **Fever** (100.4) accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness. Child must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of Motrin or Tylenol before returning to the center
- **Diarrhea** (not associated with diet changes or medications) until diarrhea stopped and the child has regular bowel movements.
- **Vomiting** – Child must be symptom free for 24
- **Strep Throat**- excluded for 24 hours after antibiotic has begun
- **Severe cough or wheezing**- difficult or rapid breathing until seen by a professional
- Excessive **greenish or yellow nasal discharge**, indicating possible infection
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- **Rash** with fever or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- **Pink eye** (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated
- **Head lice**-child must be “nit-free” before returning to the center.
- **Abnormal behavior**-Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing

In addition, we also ask that your child be **symptom free for 24 hours** without the assistance of fever reducing medication before returning to school.

Should your child become exposed to an infectious disease at The Valley School, we will notify you promptly. In return, we request that you **report to us** when your child has been exposed to or diagnosed with a particular infection or disease.

A written statement from a parent or physician is required before a child may return to the program after an absence of three days or more due to illness.

## Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation for fresh air and exercise is scheduled twice daily, weather permitting. Each playground has developmentally appropriate climbing structures for each age group. A park-like playground is aesthetically pleasing as well as conducive to normal muscle development and creative use of space. Your child is given the opportunity to climb, balance, stack, and simply enjoy nature. In addition, the children enjoy playing ball, participating in group games, and experiencing a variety of textures. The school agers will take trips to the parks throughout the year. Parents will need to sign the annual permission slip to allow the children to go. The children may take walks away from the building on the sidewalk out in front of the school when it is too wet to play on the playgrounds or to incorporate themes to enhance their curriculum. The infants will be strolled in the stroller and the toddlers, twos, and three-year old's will hold the rope or the teacher's hands.

## Children with Special Needs

At The Valley School, we believe that every child should have a successful and meaningful experience. We will do everything we can to include every child; however, administration and the parents will work together to decide if we are able to accommodate a child with special needs. Upon enrollment, we would like a copy of your child's IEP, or any other individualized plans to enable the teacher to tailor your child's curriculum regarding any disabilities or other special learning needs.

## Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting

Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting are important steps to removing dirt and reducing the spread of germs in child care settings. Each classroom has a cleaning chart that needs to be done and checked off every day. We use a solution of regular household bleach and water. This solution is effective and an easy way to remove or kill germs found on surfaces in child care. Bleach and water solution may be used in several ways:

- Dipping the object into a sink or pan filled with the bleach and water solution then letting the item air dry.
- Using paper towels soaked in bleach water solution to wash surfaces, then letting the surface air dry.
- Using spray bottles to thoroughly wet a surface, then allowing the surface to air dry.

Tables are cleaned and sanitized before and after eating. All containers of bleach/water solution are made **daily**.

The bathrooms and sinks areas in the classroom are cleaned daily. The carpets and floors are vacuumed and mopped daily also.

## Handwashing

All staff and children need to wash their hands often to prevent the spread of disease to children and staff members. Handwashing procedures are located near the sink.

Below is a list of ideal times to wash hands.

### When staff should wash their hands

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- When changing from one group of children to another
- Before preparing or serving food
- After eating food
- After diapering/toileting a child
- After contact with bodily fluids (vomit, blood, mucus)
- Before and after administration of medication
- Before and after sensory play, including water play
- After coming indoors or returning from a break
- After handling pets
- After using the restroom

### When the children should wash their hands

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- Before eating, drinking or preparing snacks for others
- After eating
- After using the toilet or having their diapers changed
- After contact with bodily fluids (vomit, blood mucus)
- Before and after sensory play, including water play
- After returning indoors from the playground

We will encourage the staff and children to use the **procedures** below when washing their hands:

- Use soap and warm running water
- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds (sing the “ABC’s”).
- Wash all surfaces, including backs of hands, wrists, under fingernails with fingers pointed to the sink drain
- Rinse hands well with the water running
- Dry hands with a disposable towel
- Turn off water with the paper towel

If the children are too young to do it themselves, the teachers will assist the children.

## Food and Nutrition

### Snacks

Good nutrition is an essential ingredient in our child development program.

The Valley School prepares and provides **two snacks** daily. Each snack is planned to meet a child’s nutritional requirements and is presented in an appealing manner. The Valley School provides snacks that include whole grains, fresh fruits and/or vegetables, and limits fat, sugar and salt in food served by the program. The snack menu is posted on the parent boards and can be found on our website as well.

#### Breakfast/Morning Snack

The Valley School provides a morning “snack” between 7:30 and 8:30. Typically, this is some type of breakfast item such as pancakes, Nutri grain bars, cereal, toast etc. If your child needs to eat before this time or doesn’t want to eat what we are having for breakfast, you may bring your child’s breakfast.

#### Lunch

Parents are expected to bring a packed lunch from home. Please put an ice pack in the lunchbox if anything needs to be kept cold. Staff will warm up any food that needs to be warmed.

#### Snack

Afternoon snack is served between 3:00 and 4:00 pm depending on which classroom your child is in.

#### Milk

We serve whole milk to the children under 2 and 1% to the older children with breakfast, lunch and snack.

## Infants

### Food

For children in our infant classroom, parents must provide all food (i.e., formula, breast milk, table foods, jar foods, snacks).

### Bottles

Bottles need to be prepared each day and brought to the center ready to be warmed in the bottle warmer.

### Breastfeeding

We will provide a comfortable area with a rocking chair which enables mothers to breastfeed their child. Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child.

## Pizza Day

Once a week we have Pizza Day. Each child may bring \$2 and we will order pizza for them for lunch.

## Nut Free

Because we are a **nut-free facility**, we ask that any food brought from home be **nut-free**. We utilize mealtime to instill in children at an early age the long-term benefits and the joy of healthful eating habits. All meals are served in the classroom, and teachers eat with the children in a family-style manner. We encourage parents to drop by for lunch with their children.

## SAFETY

### Keeping Records Current and Confidential

To provide emergency medical care to children at The Valley School, we require signed authorization by each child's parent or legal guardian. This form contains vital information about each child, such as parents' office and home phone number and addresses; and the name, address, and phone number of the child's physician. This form must be kept current and on file if the child attends The Valley School. Please notify us of any changes. We will request updated contact information on an annual basis.

Children's files are stored in the front office. All child and family information will remain confidential unless a legitimate need exists to share such information. Furthermore, this information will not be disclosed to relevant persons without written permission by a parent or guardian.

## **Access to the building**

To ensure the security of the children at The Valley School, administration is readily available at the front door to greet incoming guests. If administration does not recognize a guest, the guest will be asked to provide a photo identification card before he will be allowed to proceed through the building. All our playgrounds are enclosed by vinyl fences with safety latches. Each classroom is designed with safety features, including two exits.

## **Key Fobs**

Each family will be assigned 2 key fobs which will allow them to enter the facility. Please don't allow anyone to enter the building with you that you don't recognize. The key fobs will need to be returned once you withdrawal from the program. A deposit of \$5 per key fob is required which will be returned to you when you return the key fob.

## **Field Trips**

Information regarding the field trips will be presented in your child's monthly classroom calendar and in your Thursday folder. This sheet serves as a permission slip to allow your child to attend the field trip. This sheet will need to be signed and initialed for your child to attend the field trip. During field trips, the teacher and the bus driver will have cell phones to call for help whenever necessary and first-aid kits to address any injuries.

## **Photos**

The Valley School has a strict policy that prohibits teachers and staff from taking pictures of children for purposes other than those outlined in the Photo Release Form or for sharing with families as appropriate. Parents also have the option of restricting this, which should be indicated on the Photo Release Form in your child's file.

## **Volunteers**

We also periodically use student volunteers who have been carefully screened and interviewed before working at the center. These volunteers interact only with children ages 3 years and older and are always supervised by a staff member. Volunteers are never counted in staff to child ratios and wear volunteer badges. They may help by playing educational games with children, providing homework assistance, or assisting with administrative tasks in the office. If you have any questions or concerns about our student volunteer program, please feel free to speak with the Director or Assistant Director.

In the event of a disease outbreak, The Valley School will contact the Health Department and proceed according to their instructions. In the unlikely event that The Valley School has an intruder/volatile person, we will contact the local

police department and follow their instructions.

In the unlikely event that the center is ever severely damaged or declared unsafe, the staff will evacuate all children to a designated emergency shelter to wait the arrival of a parent or guardian. Most likely, we will evacuate to the Thompson Funeral Home located next to and behind our building. In the event of such an emergency, the administration of The Valley School would notify each child's parent. In the event of inclement weather or a natural disaster (floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, etc.), we will follow our closing policy.

## GENERAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

### Injuries/Accidents

If your child is hurt while at The Valley School, an injury/accident form will be filled out. Depending on the severity of the incident, the parent will either be contacted by phone or informed at time of pick up. The parent will need to sign the form. If you would like a copy of the form you may ask the teacher to make you a copy.

#### In the event of a medical emergency

If a person becomes ill or injured at the center the following procedures will be followed:

1. The staff member who witnessed the emergency will remain with the injured person.
2. The Director or Assistant Director will call 911
3. The Director/Assistant Director will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Card will be called.
4. If a child needs to be transported to the hospital, a staff member familiar to the child will remain with the child until the parents/relative arrives and takes custody of the child.

Children who are ill or injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director and/or Assistant Director until a parent arrives. An incident/sick report will be filled out and the parent will need to sign it when they arrive.

### Fire

We teach the children about fire safety and have the Middletown Fire Company come and talk to the children during the year. In accordance with the Maryland State Law, The Valley School conducts fire drills on a monthly basis. It is crucial to the safety of the children that they learn proper emergency evacuation procedures. In our effort to simulate emergency conditions during fire drills, children are required to line up and exit the building, dressed as they are, and walk down the sidewalk, as quickly as they can, with a teacher in the front and one in the back of the line, over to **Thompson Funeral Home** parking lot. The teacher takes with her the first aid kit, the children's emergency numbers, and the attendance tablet. When the class arrives at the Funeral Home parking lot the teacher then takes attendance to make sure all the children are accounted for. The Director/Assistant Director check the building for children that may have accidentally been left behind, then proceeds out to the classes in the parking lot. She checks to make sure that all children are accounted for.

- If there isn't a fire, the director announces that it is safe to go in the building and everyone returns to their classroom.

- In the event of a real fire, someone will be instructed to call 911 and the parents/emergency contact will be contacted, as soon as possible.

Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom.

### Shelter in Place

1. Once the staff is told to Shelter in Place the staff will collect the classroom first aid kit, and attendance tablet.
  2. Staff member closest to the hallway exit is responsible for leading children out that exit and to the designated shelter area. Every classroom must stay together as a group.
  3. The infant and toddlers shall enter the kitchen first.
  4. All the other classrooms will place themselves in the hallway in front of the kitchen and away from windows and doors.
- ✓ Staff member farthest from the interior exit is responsible for ensuring everyone has evacuated the classroom.
  - Once assembled in the designated shelter area, (Hallway in front of kitchen) the Lead Teacher is responsible for using the Kindle or classroom attendance sheet to ensure all children are accounted for.
    - ✓ If the Lead Teacher is not present, the Full Time Assistant Teacher assumes this responsibility.
  - The Director and/or Assistant Director will verify, as soon as possible, with Lead Teachers that all children are accounted for.
  - All children and staff must remain on the floor in the designated shelter area and wait to receive an “all clear” from the Director and/or Assistant Director.
  - During a tornado warning, the Director and/or Assistant Director will be responsible for monitoring weather information by radio and will keep staff members informed of emergency weather changes.

### Intruder or Dangerous Adult Procedures

A dangerous adult is considered someone who is displaying inappropriate or threatening behavior, carrying a weapon, or showing signs of intoxication from either drugs or alcohol. This also includes an individual that is prohibited by court order from picking up or having contact with a child.

If there is an intruder or dangerous adult in the center:

- Staff members in the immediate area will position themselves between the children and intruder/dangerous adult.
- A staff member will attempt to have the parent/intruder move to the hallway and close the classroom door, while a second staff member calls the Director or Assistant Director to assist with the situation.

**In the event of an intruder or dangerous adult:**

- ALL staff and children must return to their classrooms; lock all classroom doors; and sit on the floor away from doors and windows. Wait for an “All Clear” from the Director or Assistant Director before continuing with activities.
- The Director and/or Assistant Director, or a staff member designated by the Director and/or Assistant Director, will contact the Police Department to notify them of the situation.
- The Director and/or Assistant Director will instruct the intruder or dangerous adult to leave the premises, maintaining visual contact with the individual until the police arrive, or until the individual leaves.

### In the event of an intoxicated parent:

- The Director and/or Assistant Director and Lead Teacher will talk with the intoxicated parent about alternative arrangements for pick up, while another authorized pick up person is contacted.
- If another authorized pick up person cannot be reached, the child must be released to the intoxicated parent.
- The Director and/or Assistant Director, or Lead Teacher will inform the parent that the police will be notified.
- Call the Police Department and inform them of the situation. Provide as much information as possible, including parent's name, make/model of the car, and license plate number.

### Blizzard/Severe Winter Weather

- The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.
- Lead Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the early closing. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

### Lightning

- All children must immediately return indoors when lightning is observed. Children playing under or around a tree must be immediately removed from the area.

### Missing or Abducted Child

- In the event of a missing child, the Lead Teacher will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director and/or Assistant Director to help with the search.
- If the child cannot be found in a reasonable amount of time, the Director and/or Assistant Director will notify the Police Department and the child's parents.
- In the event of an abducted child, the Lead Teacher must immediately contact the Director and/or Assistant Director, the Police Department, and the child's parents.

### Power Failure

- Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes.
- If power cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time, the center will close and parents contacted.
- Lead Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as possible until parents arrive.

### Bomb Threat

If a staff member receives a bomb threat or locates a suspicious package, the Director or Assistant Director must be immediately notified. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE.** The Director or Assistant Director will contact the Police Department.

### IF YOU ARE ON DUTY IN CLASSROOM:

- Position yourself between the children and impending threat, as much as possible.

- Collect the classroom first aid kit, classroom binder, and attendance clipboard.
  - ✓ Staff member closest to the outdoor exit is responsible for leading children out that exit and to the designated meeting place: **Thompson Funeral Home**. Every classroom must stay together as a group.
  - ✓ Staff member farthest from the outdoor exit is responsible for ensuring everyone has evacuated the classroom.
- Once assembled at the designated meeting place, the Lead Teacher is responsible for using the classroom attendance clipboard to ensure all children are accounted for.
  - ✓ If the Lead Teacher is not present, the Full Time Assistant Teacher will assume this responsibility.

The Director and/or Assistant Director will verify, as soon as possible, with Lead Teachers that all children are accounted for.

## Earthquake

In case of an earthquake, staff members will assist children in seeking shelter under tables or outdoors and away from buildings. The first aid kit, classroom emergency binder and classroom attendance clipboard should always remain with the Lead Teacher. When notified by the Director or Assistant Director that the situation is safe, the Lead Teacher must use the classroom attendance clipboard to verify all children are accounted for. Parents will be notified as soon as possible.

Parents may review more details regarding our Emergency Preparedness Plan upon request.

## Anti-Bullying

The Valley School takes matters of bullying very seriously and is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all children, free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- Is severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this policy requires the affected student to possess a characteristic that is a perceived basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or another distinguishing characteristic.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo’s, demeaning comments, drawings, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. “Intentional acts” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s). This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment,

intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other policies or classroom rules. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitutes violations of this policy. In cases of bullying, our disciplinary policy will be followed.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Media Free**

Our center is a media free center. We don't have a TV, computers, I-pads etc. for the kids. We believe that the children are here to learn, and enough time may already be spent at home using electronics.

### **Cell Phones**

Staff—Will never be seen using a cell phone while they are to be supervising children. This includes texting, talking, searching the web, taking pictures, Facebook etc.

Parents—Please finish your conversations before entering the classroom.