



ST. STEPHEN'S CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER FAMILY HANDBOOK

Phone: (256) 880-8844

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Monday through Friday | 6:30 AM — 5:00 PM

Director: Autumn Watkins

Assistant Director: Tamara White

STATE LICENSED

for Infants (8 weeks) through Pre-K (5 years)

FULL AND PART TIME PROGRAMS

LOCKED, SECURED & MONITORED ENTRANCE

PLANNED YEAR-ROUND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS USING
MOTHER GOOSE & FUNSHINE CURRICULUMS

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Admission at St. Stephen's Child Development Center (CDC) is open to children from the ages of 8 weeks through Pre-Kindergarten. If space is not currently available, the child's name can be placed on a waiting list. When an opening is available, the Director will collect the necessary fees to complete the registration process.

A pre-admission conference is scheduled when there is a vacancy. At this time, arrangements will be made for the child to visit the CDC before regular attendance.

The following forms MUST be in the CDC office prior to attendance:

- Pre-admission record
- Current immunization card ("Blue Card")
- Signed and dated policies agreement form (last page of handbook)
- Registration Fee (Note: This is a fee due at initial registration to secure space and again annually in March to reserve each child's place and is non-refundable.)

Complete records must be kept on file and updated yearly, or as needed, by the parent or guardian. All records are kept confidential.

WEEKLY TUITION & SPECIAL FEES

2026-2027 WEEKLY TUITION & SPECIAL FEES

| | | |
|------------------|--|----------|
| INFANTS | 8 weeks to 12 months | \$240.00 |
| TODDLERS | toddlers | \$215.00 |
| PRESCHOOL (NTT) | not toilet trained | \$210.00 |
| PRE-SCHOOLERS | toilet trained | \$205.00 |
| Late Payment Fee | (see below) | \$10.00 |
| Drop-in fees | <i>subject to discretion of Director</i> | |

2026-2027 WEEKLY PART-TIME TUITION & SPECIAL FEES

| | | |
|------------------|--|--------------------|
| INFANTS | 8 weeks to 12 months | \$195.00 (M, W, F) |
| | | \$190.00 (T, Th) |
| TODDLERS | toddlers | \$190.00 (M, W, F) |
| | | \$185.00 (T, Th) |
| PRESCHOOL (NTT) | not toilet trained | \$185.00 (M, W, F) |
| | | \$180.00 (T, Th) |
| PRE-SCHOOLERS | toilet trained | \$180.00 (M, W, F) |
| | | \$175.00 (T, Th) |
| Late Payment Fee | (see below) | \$10.00 |
| Drop-in fees | <i>subject to discretion of Director</i> | |

Tuition is billed weekly on Fridays prior to the weekly billing cycle and is due no later than the following Tuesday morning. Late payments are subject to an additional late fee of \$10.00. Accounts that have outstanding late fees must be paid by Friday to ensure uninterrupted childcare privileges. All families should have a \$0 balance starting each new weekly billing cycle. Payments made by mail must abide by the same payment schedule.

Tuition is non-refundable. If an increase in tuition is needed, the CDC reserves the right to adjust as deemed necessary with prior notification.

Families with two (2) children who attend the CDC full time will receive a per-week discount of \$15 off the combined weekly tuition for both children. Families with three (3) children who attend the CDC full time will receive a per-week discount of \$30.00 off the combined weekly tuition for all three children. There is no sibling discount for children who attend part time.

Parishioners of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (communicants in good standing who have been at the church for six months or more) who have a child(ren) who attend(s) the CDC full time receive a discount of \$20 per child per week.

If tuition is unpaid for 2 weeks, children will not be permitted to attend the CDC.

SPECIAL FEES

Registration Fee: A \$200.00 registration fee is collected annually in March for all children, full or part-time, who are returning in the fall in order to secure the child's space at the CDC for the upcoming school year. This fee is non-refundable.

Pre-K Registration Fee: In addition to the \$200.00 annual registration fee, parents of children who will be in the Pre-K class in the summer must pay a \$60.00 field trip fee. This is due by May 1. This fee is non-refundable.

NSF Fee: A \$30.00 non-sufficient funds fee ("returned check" fee or "failed payment to Brightwheel" fee) will be assessed for any checks that do not clear the bank. If assessed, this fee, plus tuition, must be paid in full by the Friday prior to the next tuition-billing cycle to remain current.

LATE Pickup Fee: Parents who pick up their child(ren) after the regular 5:00 PM closing time are subject to a late pickup fee of \$10.00 per each 5-minutes late and an automatic \$50 charge after 15 minutes; a phone call notification is required. Legal authorities must be contacted for children left at the CDC one hour after regular closing time. If assessed, this fee, plus tuition, must be paid in full by the Friday prior to the next tuition-billing cycle to remain current.

Sign In/Out Fee: Parents who fail to sign their child in and/or out of the CDC will have a \$5.00 fee added to their account.

Waitlist Fee: Parents who wish to be added to the waitlist for a child(ren)'s placement in the CDC must pay a \$50 non-refundable fee per child upon completion of the registration form.

TOILET TRAINING

When a child is fully toilet trained, the family is eligible to receive a \$5.00 discount on weekly tuition. To receive this discount, the child's teacher must state and agree that the child is toilet trained, and the Director must receive a written notice from a parent/guardian stating that the child is toilet trained.

Teachers and the Director do not consider a child to be toilet trained unless he/she is able to go throughout most days without any accidents. A child should also be able to rest through nap time with minimal accidents.

REFERRALS

Families who refer NEW families to the CDC who then have children who attend will receive a \$50.00 referral credit once the new family begins.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

The CDC is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM during normal business operations or at the discretion of the Director; weather or illness concerns may alter the days or times. However, NO child may be at the CDC for more than 10 hours in one day on a regular basis.

All children must be accompanied into and out of the CDC by a parent/guardian or designated adult until they are signed in/out and are in an adult's care. Please drop off older children in their classrooms before dropping off infants in the Nursery. Conversely, please pick up infants from the Nursery before picking up older children from their classrooms. This will minimize the spread of germs and keep the Nursery less crowded.

Parents must sign each child in and out each day and at any time during the day if a child(ren) leaves and then returns. The time of day must be indicated for each arrival and departure. Parents are required to sign their full name (not merely their initials) on the sign-in/sign-out sheet. Each child will only be released to the parent/guardian or designated adult indicated on the pre-admission form. Any other authorization for

pick up must be indicated in writing by the parent/guardian. Any new authorized person picking up a child must show proper identification to the teacher in order for the child to be released into that person's custody, and he/she must follow the same sign in/out procedures as above.

All children must arrive and depart from the main CDC doors. Vehicles should enter the premises from the north entrance and then follow the parking lot to the covered entry area by the CDC playground. Parents who choose to park directly in front of the CDC should ensure that their child(ren) exits and enters vehicles from curbside only since vehicles that drive around the parking lot may not have adequate visuals on your child or vehicle.

Vehicles may exit the premises using the south exit. Adherence to these requirements will enable the CDC to maintain its License and Variance permits and are designed to ensure each child's safety.

Both the CDC and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church have electronic alarm systems, and the CDC entrance is monitored by the CDC office surveillance camera. This camera allows the Director and CDC employees to see who is requesting entry. An intercom button is located next to the CDC entrance door for those requesting entry. All persons entering the building from the church entrance must also identify themselves before they are granted entrance.

ATTENDANCE

We request that you notify the child's teacher or the Director if your child will be absent. Regular attendance is expected unless the child is ill.

Children must arrive at the center no later than 9:30 AM each morning, unless a doctor's note is provided.

HOLIDAYS

The CDC is CLOSED for the holidays listed below. Additionally, the CDC closes early on the two "parade days" listed below. Full tuition is due for the weeks in which holidays or "parade days" occur.

- New Year's Day (if it occurs Monday-Friday)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth (if it occurs Monday-Friday)
- Independence Parade Day (weekday just prior to July 4)
 - The Parade begins at 3:00 PM, and the CDC closes at 3:30 PM

- Independence Day (if it occurs Monday-Friday)
- Labor Day (if it occurs Monday-Friday)
- Columbus Day (if it occurs Monday-Friday)
- Halloween Parade Day (weekday just prior to October 31)
 - The Parade begins at 3:00 PM, and the CDC closes at 3:30 PM
- Veterans Day (if it occurs Monday-Friday)
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
- Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after
- New Year's Eve (if it occurs Monday-Friday)

VACATIONS

After a full year of attendance at the CDC, each child will receive a free week of tuition. This means that the child cannot be in attendance for five consecutive days. The Director will monitor this to ensure that families who qualify get the opportunity to receive this benefit.

If a child does not qualify for a free week, weekly tuition must be paid, even if the family is on vacation.

HEALTH AND MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

The CDC has no provisions for the care of students who become ill while at the CDC. Parents/Guardians will be contacted immediately and are required to pick up the child.

An ill child will be isolated from the group but will have continuous supervision by a staff person until the parent arrives.

A child cannot attend the CDC if he/she has a severe cold, rash of an undetermined nature, spots, fever, severe headache, upset stomach, any contagious or communicable disease, listlessness, diarrhea, severe stomach cramps, green drainage from the eyes, ears or nose, sore throat, or any other symptoms of illness.

Parents/Guardians must keep children home for 24 hours following the last occurrence of any of the following symptoms, whether the symptoms occurred at home or at the CDC: temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea.

A child who does not appear to be fully recovered from an illness will not be readmitted to the CDC without documentation from an attending physician stating that the child is able to return and participate in CDC activities. A child may not return to the CDC after having a communicable disease until an attending physician has released him/her or until all symptoms have disappeared. This is for the protection of every child. A doctor's note must accompany a child's return after any surgery, hospital procedure, or long-term illness.

The CDC Director or Assistant Director can administer doctor-authorized oral medications to a child under these guidelines:

- parents/guardians must sign and date an Authorization Form
- the medication must be prescribed by a doctor, in its original container with the pharmacy label attached, and accompanied by a Doctor's Authorization Form
- the name of the child's doctor as well as parents/guardians and other emergency contacts must be on file and current

The Director or Assistant Director will provide, in writing, the time of day that any doses of prescribed medications are administered.

WE WILL NOT ADMINISTER OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS (Tylenol, cold medicines, Orajel, etc.) as advised by our Board of Directors and DHR. All over-the-counter medications must be administered by a parent/guardian only.

COVID-19 AND OTHER CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

If the CDC is notified of a positive diagnosis for a staff member, child, or parent, we will monitor and notify concerned parties of procedures. The closure of the CDC or self-quarantine (following current Centers for Disease Control guidelines) may be necessary. Staff members take daily precautions to prevent the spread of germs by disinfecting regularly, washing hands often, and utilizing facial coverings, if necessary.

COOPERATION BETWEEN HOME AND CDC

➤ CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Children, including infants, should be completely dressed when they arrive at the CDC.

Children should wear comfortable clothes suitable for indoor and outdoor wear. Durable and washable play clothes and comfortable shoes are required. Sneakers are preferred. Crocs and sandals are prohibited. Children cannot participate fully in activities when shoes are not secure.

Unless the weather is extremely cold or extremely hot, children may spend part of the day outdoors. Therefore, in cooler weather, children should wear a jacket, hat, and gloves; in warmer weather, t-shirts and shorts are appropriate.

All clothing should be marked with the child's name. This includes jackets and rain apparel. A complete change of weather-appropriate clothing (or two) for each child should be always at the CDC.

➤ **SUPPLIES FROM HOME**

INFANTS: 8 weeks to approximately 12 months/walking independently

Parents will supply, and mark with their child's name, any of the following items which apply according to the age and needs of the infant(s):

- Disposable diapers
- Breast milk/formula in unbreakable bottles (pre-made), labeled with the child's name
- UNOPENED baby or junior foods, labeled with child's name (Homemade baby food can have only two ingredients, which must be listed on the container, and be labeled with the child's name)
- Wet wipes (initially in a "hard" container then refills as needed)
- Sleeveless sleep sack
- Three weather-appropriate changes of clothing

Parents should provide a schedule of their infant's nap and feeding times. If the infant's eating pattern is that of a toddler (i.e., table food), all dishes and food will be provided by the CDC once the child is on a typical eating schedule.

Each infant will receive daily personal contact and attention and will spend time outdoors when weather permits.

Blankets are **NOT** allowed in cribs. CDC caregivers are not allowed to cover babies with any type of blanket, sheet, or quilt as directed by the Department of Human Resources (DHR). Infants should wear a one-piece sleeper or long pants during cold weather.

➤ **SUPPLIES FROM HOME**

TODDLERS: Approximately 12 months/walking to 2 1/2 years non-toilet trained

Parents will supply, and mark with their child's name, the following items:

- Disposable diapers or Pull-Ups
- Cot cover (a "Napper" is preferred; see the Director for suggestions)
- Wet wipes (initially in a "hard" container then refills as needed)

Two weather-appropriate changes of clothing in a tote bag or small backpack that will be returned each day at pick up. The sheet and cot cover/napper will be sent home on Fridays for laundering or as needed. (Nappers are sold in the CDC office for \$35.00 each.) Each toddler will have his/her own cot.

➤ SUPPLIES FROM HOME

PRESCHOOL & PRE-K: Children 2 1/2 and older

Parents will supply, and mark with their child's name, the following item:

- Cot cover (a "Napper" is preferred; see the Director for suggestions)

Two weather-appropriate changes of clothing in a tote bag or small backpack that will be returned each day at pick up. The sheet and cot cover/napper will be sent home on Fridays for laundering or as needed. (Nappers are sold in the CDC office for \$35.00 each.) Each toddler will have his/her own cot.

➤ TOYS

Security blankets and transition objects are permitted. However, children should NOT bring toy guns, sharp objects, mouth toys, or small pocket toys to the CDC. The CDC is not responsible for any personal toys that are broken, lost, or damaged.

Books, recordings, special toys and other items of interest to the child's group may be brought with the permission of the teacher. Make sure all items are labeled with your child's name.

➤ DIAPER BAGS/TOTE BAGS

Diaper bags, tote bags, and backpacks are welcome; however, all bags **MUST BE childproof. Medications and small objects CANNOT be in diaper/tote bags.** All bags or backpacks must be labeled clearly with the child's name on the **OUTSIDE** of the bag.

Medications must be locked up and away from child access. DHR medication forms must accompany any medications on the CDC premises; this includes diaper cream and doctor-prescribed medications.

➤ POTTY TRAINING

Children who are potty training must wear Pull Ups during wake times in the center until they are accident-free.

➤ BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Each child's birthday will be recognized in the CDC. If parents wish to bring refreshments on their child's birthday, arrangements can be made ahead of time with the teacher and/or Director. All food items must be pre-approved by the Director to ensure the safety of other children who may have food allergies.

➤ MEALS

Except for infants, all children are provided with two snacks and a hot lunch each day. All food is prepared by a trained CDC staff member and meets all USDA requirements for nutrition. Children are served ALL prepared food items, and we encourage them to sample new foods.

For the sake of all children, the CDC enforces a strict NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS rule. If there is a dietary concern or for a child who requires a restricted diet, please let the Director know. In addition, we observe a NUT-FREE policy; we prohibit all peanut and nut products at the CDC. An Action Plan should be on file for any child who has any known food allergies.

WE DO NOT SERVE BREAKFAST. Please make sure your child has eaten prior to arrival. The first snack time is not until 8:30 or 9:00 AM. The afternoon snack follows naptime.

➤ FIELD TRIPS/ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM THE CENTER

As a service to the children and parents, the CDC owns and maintains a 15-passenger van, which accommodates a maximum of 12 children and 2 adults, for transportation to and from supervised Pre-K field trips/activities. Children are required to ride in a booster seat in the CDC van until age 6. All staff members who attend field trips with children are CPR & First Aid certified, and there is a First Aid kit on the van.

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) does not have a representative who accompanies the staff on field trips/activities, including swimming, or who inspects transportation to and from the field trips/activities. The CDC assumes full authority and responsibility for all field trips/activities while away from the CDC.

For all field trips/activities away from the main facility, a written statement, signed by each child's parent(s)/guardian(s), must be on file in the CDC office prior to each child's participation in the field trip/activity.

Once a child leaves the CDC for a field trip, parent(s)/guardian(s) CANNOT pick a child up from the field trip site. If a parent follows the van to the field trip location and/or meets the CDC staff and child at the field trip location, he or she must return to the CDC after the field trip and officially sign the child out from the CDC.

➤ COMMUNICATION

Parents/guardians are welcome to submit suggestions for improvements of the CDC's services to the Director and teachers. Confidentiality is important; therefore, parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule a conference to address concerns. Any concern that cannot be addressed by a teacher, or concerns regarding CDC operations or the care of a child should be brought to the attention of the Director first, preferably in writing in addition to a spoken conversation since the concern may need to be reviewed

by the CDC's Board of Directors.

If the matter is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, he/she may contact the Rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at 256-881-7223. The CDC is licensed by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) which may be reached at 256-427-6000. A copy of DHR's Minimum Standards is available in the office for your review.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Weather permitting, ALL children will receive outdoor time each day. Babies will enjoy stroller rides, and toddlers through Pre-K will utilize age-appropriate playgrounds one-to-two times daily for large motor skill development and physical activity.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

All disciplinary action will be consistent, fair, kind, and firm. Time-outs will only be used if redirection is not effective, and it will be only 1-minute per age of child. For a child who has excessive office visits in one day or multiple attempts to correct behavior are ineffective, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child. Multi-day suspensions may be necessary depending on the severity of the misbehavior. Absolutely NO corporal/physical punishment will be used.

If a child bites another person three times in one day, the parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up the child. After repeated issues or excessive reports in a one-week period, the child will be suspended for three days. After two suspensions for biting, we will cancel enrollment and no longer offer care for that child. This policy is to keep all of the children in our center safe.

BABYSITTING ARRANGEMENTS

The CDC prohibits staff members from communicating with parents regarding personal babysitting arrangements during normal CDC hours. If arrangements are made outside CDC hours, please have a written contract between the two parties that indicates non-involvement on the part of the CDC.

PHOTOGRAPHY APPROVAL

On occasion, staff and other parents may photograph children during field trips, activities, or programs; however, we do not display these photographs outside the CDC without the permission of parents/guardians permission.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

We conduct evacuation, fire, tornado, earthquake, and evacuation drills monthly as required by DHR.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Please make sure that at least one parent/guardian has access to a phone and/or email for emergency notifications.

- **MEDICAL**

In case of a medical emergency concerning a child, the CDC will notify parents/guardians immediately. If parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the CDC will attempt to contact the child's doctor. The CDC will arrange to have the child transported to Huntsville Hospital by ambulance if we are unable to contact the child's doctor or if the doctor tells us this is advisable. Parents will be responsible for all expenses for medical services, including transportation to facilities where medical services are performed. Parents/guardians must complete an emergency permission form when their child is enrolled.

- **EVACUATION**

If there is an event that requires evacuation (a gas leak, for example), the CDC will evacuate to the safe location determined by the Emergency Management Association (or Fire Station #9 on Hickory Hill). If the CDC experiences a fire, we will leave the building and stay at our safe place on the far side of the parking lot. If the CDC experiences an earthquake, tornado, or other weather-related incident, we will follow our emergency plan.

- **CHEMICAL SPILL**

If the CDC learns of a chemical spill, the staff will close all windows and doors and turn off the central air system. Doors and windows will be sealed with damp cloths. Parents will be notified about how and when to pick up their children.

- **POWER FAILURE**

The CDC will remain open in the event of a power failure unless the weather is extremely cold or extremely hot. If necessary, parents will be notified to pick up their children at the CDC, at Station #9 (Hickory Hill/Four Mile Post) Fire Station, or as directed by the EMA (Emergency Management Association).

- **SEVERE WEATHER**

The Director uses a weather alert radio to monitor the weather. If there is a tornado warning or severe storm warning, all staff and children proceed to the CDC basement or an interior safe room. The Director will post a notice on the CDC's main entrance door to inform parents/guardians of our location and how to reach it. If a warning is still active, the staff requests that you remain with the staff and children in the CDC basement or safe room until the warning has been canceled.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS & DELAYED OPENINGS

The CDC closes for severe weather, including snow, ice, and some severe weather occurrences. If the CDC must close early, for a full day, or have a delayed opening, the Director will make the decision following the lead of Huntsville City Schools. During the summer, CDC closing is at the discretion of the Director. If the CDC closes early, parents/guardians must pick children up as soon as possible.

TOBACCO-FREE FACILITY

The CDC is a tobacco-free facility. No use of tobacco products including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and "spit tobacco" is permitted within the facilities or on the church or CDC property at any time.

WITHDRAWAL/TERMINATION OF CARE

Parents who wish to withdraw a child(ren) from the CDC are required to give two weeks' advanced written notice. Weekly tuition is still required during this two-week period, regardless of whether the child attends or not. Any excess funds beyond the two-week period will be refunded to the parent/guardian.

The Director and/or Board of Directors reserves the right to cancel a child's enrollment in the CDC. In this case, parents/guardians will be given two weeks' prior notice during which time full tuition is required, regardless of whether the child attends or not. However, the Director also reserves the right to give written notice of immediate cancellation of enrollment where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the staff members or other children.

The most common reasons (although not all-inclusive) the CDC may terminate care are below:

- Failure to pay for childcare tuition in the required week-to-week timeframe
- Routinely late pick up of a child
- Failure to complete required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation

- Failure of child to adjust in a reasonable timeframe (The Director will offer suggestions which may include finding alternate care.)
- Center's inability to meet a child's needs
- Lack of compliance with the Family Handbook regulations
- Serious child illness which potentially impacts other CDC children
- Excessive disciplinary issues

ALL POLICIES ARE DEVELOPED, REVIEWED, AND IMPLEMENTED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE DIRECTOR AND MAY BE AMENDED AS NEEDED.



St. Stephen's Child Development Center is in partnership with its parents for the development of the children in our care. It is our pleasure to educate and develop each child's greatest potential.

By signing below, you are acknowledging that you have read the St. Stephen's CDC Family Handbook in its entirety and agree to abide by all policies and procedures stated herein. Additionally, you acknowledge that this form serves as a binding contract between the Center and you and fully understand each of the specific information listed below:

- Weekly Tuition & Special Fees
- Arrival & Departure Procedures
- Holiday & Vacation Information
- Health & Medication Requirements
- Cooperation Between Home & CDC, Including Required Supplies
- Meals & Outside Food Information
- Field Trips/Activities Away From the Center
- Babysitting Arrangements
- Photography Approval
- Emergency Drills and Plans
- School Closings & Delayed Openings
- Withdrawal/Termination of Care

I have read and agree to fully abide by the policies and procedures as stated in the St. Stephen's Child Development Center Family Handbook.

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of CDC Director

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE CDC OFFICE