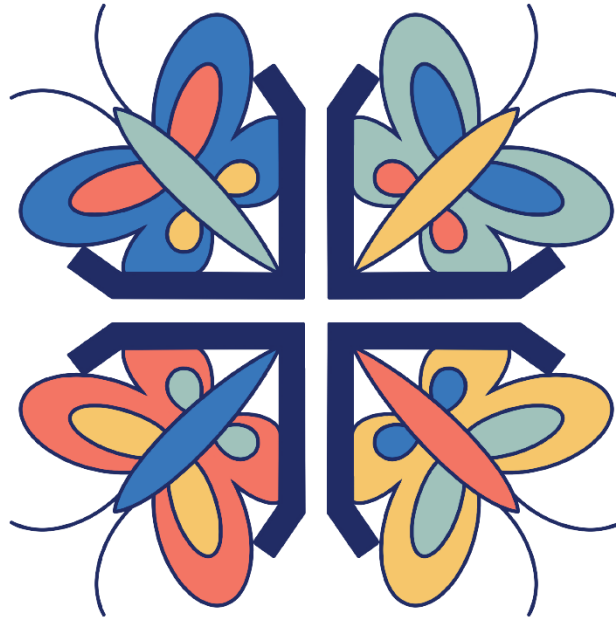


River Road Early Learning Center



2021-22 Parent Handbook

River Road Presbyterian Church

8960 River Road
Richmond, VA 23229
804.740.7083
www.rrpcusa.org

Early Learning Center

804.740.2003
www.rrelc.org

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Welcome to RRELC!

Welcome to the River Road Early Learning Center. We are pleased you have selected RRELC and want your experience to be positive and rewarding. Parents and families remain an integral part of RRELC, and we look forward to developing relationships that foster open communication and support. The Parent Handbook is designed to assist you and we hope you will refer to it as needed. Please be aware that these policies and procedures may change at any time at the discretion of the RRELC. We will make every effort to advise you of any changes in a timely manner.

Please let the Center know whenever we can be of help with information you may need, or otherwise be of assistance. An exciting year lies ahead for you and your child, and we are privileged to work together in sharing this crucial period of growth and development.

About River Road Early Learning Center

Ministry of River Road Presbyterian Church

The River Road Early Learning Center (RRELC) is owned and operated by River Road Presbyterian Church (RRPC) as a non-profit, faith-based early childhood education center and full-time day care for children ages 6 weeks – 5 years of age. RRELC operates at the direction and counsel of the RRPC Session and RRELC Ministry Board. RRPC views the Center as an integral part of the church and church family and welcomes Center families to church activities.

Hours of Operation

August – June - Monday- Friday, 7:30am-5:30pm / July – hours vary

Contact Information

River Road Early Learning Center - www.rrelc.org

RRELC Director - Darie Lee

Email: darielee@rrpcusa.org / rrelc@rrpcusa.org

Phone: 804.740.2003

River Road Presbyterian Church www.rrpcusa.org

Head of Staff - Dr. Raymond Roberts

Email: rayroberts@rrpcusa.org

Phone: 804.740.7083

RRELC Ministry Board:

Dana Moore, Chair

Howard Kies

Kristen Raper

John Simpson

Jane Sewell

Shelly Barrick Parsons

Kathy Hutchison

Cheryl Janney

Nancy Sundin

Anne Trexler

Our Mission

In partnership with family, church and community, the River Road Early Learning Center (RRELC) provides developmentally appropriate quality programs for children ages six weeks to five years in a Christian environment of love, encouragement, and acceptance.

Celebrating children as unique creations of God, RRELC recognizes the importance of nurturing and developing the whole child within a framework that promotes a sense of wonder and the enjoyment and benefit of learning through play.

Public Disclosure Statement

RRELC accepts all students regardless of race, ethnicity, color, gender, or religious preference. The Code of Virginia, section 63.2-1716 allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the exemption law. The statements below have been prepared and distributed to meet the requirements of the exemption law.

Exemption

In compliance with The Code of Virginia, section 63.2-1716, River Road Early Learning Center is exempt from licensure and is classified as a “Religiously Exempt” child day facility.

Facility

River Road Early Learning Center is located at 8960 River Road, Richmond, Virginia. Nine rooms in the Monroe Wells Education Building are used for childcare classes when the Center is in session. On occasion, the Center utilizes space in the main church building for enrichment activities. The playground consists of a fenced in play yard with bonded rubber surface material that is at the correct depths for critical fall.

Enrollment Capacity

The maximum number of children that River Road Early Learning Center may enroll is 86. Proper child-staff ratios are adhered to as dictated by the Virginia Department of Social Services and the building inspector. Additionally, the Center complies with the Child Protection Policy of the church.

Admission/Dismissal/Behavior Policies

Non-Discrimination Statement

The RRELC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran.

RRELC is an equal opportunity employer.

RRELC prohibits harassment of and by its staff members on the basis of gender, race, age, color, national origin, religion, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, citizenship, disability, and other characteristics. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, making derogatory remarks about any of these characteristics, making jokes or stereotypical comments about ethnic or other groups, and engaging in verbal, physical, and visually offensive behavior. A staff member who feels harassed has the right to file a complaint with the Virginia Civil Rights Commission and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Admission Procedure

Registration for RRELC occurs annually. Students are admitted to RRELC on a first-come, first served basis with the following priority:

1. Current Students (Pre-registration begins in December)
2. Siblings of Current Students (Pre-registration begins in December)
3. Siblings of Former Students (Pre-registration begins in January)
4. Members of River Road Presbyterian Church - membership must be verified through the church office (Pre-registration begins in January)
5. Open to Public (Pre-registration begins in February)

Requirements for Admission

Students must have the following information on file in the RRELC office prior to their first day of attendance:

- Enrollment Form
- 2 Emergency Contacts (other than parents)
- Proof of Identity – original birth certificate or passport must be viewed by an RRELC administrator or designee. Copies cannot be accepted
- Enrollment Contract
- Medical Form

Medical Form

RRELC requires that your child have a doctor's Certificate of Physical Examination and Immunization record before entering RRELC for the first time. Immunization records must be updated as required by the state.

Refusal of Admission

Children are admitted to the RRELC on a first-come first-served basis, depending on availability. However, children can be dismissed from the RRELC or refused admission at the discretion of the center.

Before the center dismisses or refuses admission of a child, it will make every effort to complete the following process:

- Careful documentation by the staff of incidents where unacceptable behavior and attempts to correct unacceptable behavior have been unsuccessful.
- Written documentation to the parents regarding unacceptable behaviors
- Parents refusal of a conference to address unacceptable behavior or parent conferences to address unacceptable behaviors does not result in change of behavior.

Should the Center determine that a student cannot adjust or has not adjusted to the program routine or has behavioral issues that do not fit the expectations of the Center, the parents will receive written notice from the Director requesting a consultation to discuss the issues. The Director will inform the Ministry Board who will review and determine whether the student may continue in the program. If the Center discontinues the student's participation, the Center will refund a prorated portion of paid annual tuition based on the time in which the student was enrolled. The tuition deposit is non-refundable.

Guidelines for Challenging/ Inappropriate Behavior

RRELC teachers and support staff understand that children require guidance when learning self-control. Behavioral issues are addressed using redirection of the inappropriate behavior followed with positive correction. Our goal is to lead a child to self-recognition of a potentially troublesome situation. If necessary, teachers will redirect the child or use a separation time apart from the group in order for the student to have time to calm down. Teachers and support staff refrain from the use of physical punishment or yelling.

We do this by:

- Setting realistic limits for behavior
- Modeling appropriate behavior
- Treating children as people and showing respect for their feelings
- Teaching children that good behavior is expected
- Praise, reward and encouragement

Unacceptable Behavior of Children

Unacceptable behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Consistent, repeated or unusual aggressive behavior toward other children or adults at the RRELC such as biting, kicking or pushing
- Destruction of properties belonging to the RRELC or other children
- Disobedience of instructions, policies or procedures

The following general guidance measures may be taken in the event a child's behavior is not acceptable:

- Redirection
- Verbal discussion

- Time out in the classroom (averages one minute per year of age)
- Time out in the hall with a teacher or assistant
- Time out in the office
- Telephone call to the parent
- Child being sent home

Behavior problems will be documented, and parents will be notified.

Biting Behavior

For the safety of the children, the Center endorses the following policy for children who bite or consistently use inappropriate or aggressive behavior.

- 1st offense: Parents of students involved in the situation are notified verbally by the teacher. The teacher will inform the Director and written documentation will be placed in the child's folder.
- 2nd offense: Parents of students involved in the situation will be notified verbally by the teacher and Director, and documentation will be placed in the child's folder.
- 3rd offense: Parents of students involved in the situation will meet with the teacher and Director. Written documentation is signed by the Director and the parents and placed in the child's folder. A copy is provided to the parents.
- 4th offense: Parents of students involved in the situation will be notified by the Director to schedule a consultation with the Director and the Childcare Ministry Board to review the situation and determine if RRELC is the best option for the child.

Behavior of Parents

Cell Phone Use – so that the RRELC staff can properly communicate with parents regarding their child, please refrain from using cell phones when dropping off or picking up your child.

The RRELC may refuse admission of a child to the RRELC under the following circumstances:

- Parents fail to comply with the financial policies of the RRELC
- Parents are consistently late in picking their child up at the end of the day
- Parents do not pick up their child or make arrangements for someone else to pick up their child when the RRELC calls due to an illness
- Parents do not keep their child at home when he/she has not been free of a fever for at least 24 hours
- Parents do not follow drop off and pick up policies
- Parents who consistently fail to cooperate with the policies and staff of the RRELC

Code of Virginia Code 63.2-1813.

Visitation by parents or guardians in child day programs. A custodial parent or guardian shall be admitted to any child day program. For purposes of this section, "child day program" is one in which a person or organization has agreed to assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child under the age of thirteen for less than a twenty-four-hour period, regardless of whether it is licensed. Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program.

Financial Policies

Enrollment Policy

RRELC has an annual non-refundable \$100 registration fee that secures a spot for a child during the contract process. Contracts are given annually and must be returned along with a \$1000 non-refundable tuition deposit by the time set by the center.

Enrollment is based on space availability. Wait lists are formed each year after all available spaces are filled. There is no fee to be placed on the wait list. Wait list do not carry over from year to year. Enrollment priority is given to current students and their siblings.

Tuition Obligation

Enrollment in the RRELC is for the entire school year. The operating budget for the year is based on the assumption that each student will remain enrolled for the entire year. Parents agree to pay the entire annual tuition even if the student withdraws or is dismissed from the school for any reason. Parents are required to sign a contract and pay a deposit toward their annual tuition payment at the time of enrollment. Release from this contract is at the discretion of the RRELC Ministry Board.

Enrollment Contracts

The Student Enrollment Agreement and Contract (when signed by a representative of RRELC and the Parent(s) of the enrolling student) outlines the contractual agreement established between the Center and the family. The contract specifies the amount of money owed and the dates payment is due. In addition to the deposit which is paid with a signed contract and constitutes a non-refundable enrollment deposit, the tuition will be paid monthly by the first of each month running from August 1 through May 1.

Withdrawal Procedures

The student Enrollment Agreement and Contract covers the entire school year running from the opening in August to closing in June. The contract outlines withdrawal procedures prior to the August start date of the school year as follows:

If for any reason the student is withdrawn, the Center will make a good faith effort to fill the open space from the waitlist. If the space cannot be filled immediately, the parent is responsible for tuition payment accordingly:

- Withdrawal between July 1st and August 1st: 2 months tuition at contract rate
- Withdrawal after August 1st: 4 months tuition at contract rate
- Registration fees and tuition deposits are non-refundable.

Methods of Payment

Payment by Check - Tuition payment may be delivered to the RRELC office or mailed to RRELC – 8960 River Rd. Richmond, VA. 23229. Your student's name is your account number.

Online Payment – Each student will have an account in Brightwheel. Parents will received a notice each month when payment is due. Payment by online check can be made through Brightwheel. There is a \$.60/transaction fee for online payments.

Late Payments

The Center makes contractual commitments with its staff members and invests in equipment and supplies prior to the start of each school year. Therefore, if for any reason parents have not paid a tuition installment when due, the Center reserves the right not to permit the student to attend Center sessions until the account is brought current.

If the late payment is not received within 30 days of the due date, a 10% monthly interest charge will be imposed on the unpaid balance. If tuition remains unpaid after thirty (30) days, the Center reserves the right to terminate this contract upon written notice to the parents and to take legal action. Should this unpaid tuition be referred to a collection agency or attorney due to nonpayment, all costs of collection and all reasonable & customary fees & expenses incurred to collect the unpaid balance will be the responsibility of the parents.

Returned Check

A fee of \$40.00 will be charged for any returned checks. The 10% tuition late fee will also apply if the re-issued check is 30 days past due.

Children's Absence

Any time your child is absent from the Center school due to illness, travel, or family commitment please notify the office asap. You may call the Center at 804-740-2003 or email at childcare@rrpcusa.org.

The Center does not offer a make-up day policy.

Center Closings

Holiday closings are indicated on the Center calendar.

In case of inclement weather, RRELC will take into account the safety of staff and students as well as accessibility to the building in making a determination for remaining open or closing. An email/text communication blast will notify families of Center delays and closings. In the event the Center delays opening or closes, all efforts will be made to let families know as soon as possible.

Closure Due to Emergency or by Government Officials

If flood, fire, wind, hail, hurricane, tornado, or similar severe weather events or other acts of God or acts of the government, epidemics, and quarantine restrictions prevents RRELC from conducting normal activities, or if, in the judgment of the Director, or pursuant to order from an insurance official, building inspector or fire official, that a similar event caused sufficient damage to the facilities to result in the staff and students being unable to safely remain in, at, or have access to the facilities, the RRELC Director, in consultation with RRELC Executive Committee, shall suspend RRELC activities until such time as the facilities can be safely re-opened.

If RRELC or RRPC facilities must close due to a health emergency, including, but not limited to, the outbreak of any contagious illness, sickness, bacteria, virus, or disease, any epidemic or pandemic, as declared by government officials, then RRELC and its facilities shall remain closed until it is deemed safe and appropriate to resume normal activities.

In the event of such closures, the following will apply:

1. If RRELC is closed for 10 consecutive school days or less, then tuition and related fees will remain fully due and payable
2. If RRELC is closed more than 10 consecutive school days but less than 20 consecutive school days, then tuition and fees shall be credited by 50% for the number of missed days occurring after the 10th school day.
3. If RRELC is closed for more than 20 consecutive school days, then tuition and fees shall be credited for the number of missed days occurring after the 20th school day.
4. Any tuition credits due at such time will be applied to accounts and will be based on the average daily rate of the program in which your child is enrolled.
5. If more than two periods of prolonged closure (more than 10 consecutive days) occur during the school year, RRELC will re-evaluate our structure at that time and provide tuition adjustments appropriate to the situation.

Health and Well-Being

Emergency Medical Procedures

RRELC is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe environment for the children and staff.

Preventive infection control procedures have been established for the protection of staff and students. In order to provide a healthy environment at RRELC, the staff endorses proper hand washing techniques with the children throughout the day and have been trained to follow proper procedures in sanitation of all surfaces and toys used in the Center.

Teachers and support staff receive regular training in Daily Health Check, First Aid, and CPR. Written emergency medical procedures and protocols will be followed should a severe injury or medical emergency occur while your child is at the Center. All staff members receive an annual health check, and each child's medical history, including immunizations, allergies, and other medical information is updated each year and kept on file in the office and classroom.

Children's Illness

Children **MUST be symptom-free for 24 hours** without the aid of medication to attend school at RRELC.

Children **MUST** be able to fully participate in class activities in order to attend RRELC. Minor illnesses such as the common cold are to be expected in small children and are not necessarily a reason to exclude a child, however during times of public health crisis RRELC reserves the right to expand these provisions.

Children and staff with the following symptoms must remain at home:

- Fever of 100.3° or higher
- Severe coughing
- Rapid breathing

- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pinkeye including drainage from the eye
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Diarrhea
- Sore throat
- Ear pain or redness behind the ears
- Infected skin patches
- Vomiting
- Heavy nasal discharge or a very runny nose that the child cannot keep wiped without help
- Severe itching on the body or scalp
- Headache and stiff neck
- Fussy, cranky behavior that is atypical for the particular child
- Blisters that are open or have not scabbed over
- Other signs of communicable disease

If any of the above symptoms are present in your child, or your child appears less active than usual, cries more than usual or seems generally unwell at home, please contact the Director.

RRELC uses the guidelines listed by the Virginia Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control for determining when a child should be excluded from school.

RRELC reserves the right to require a doctor's note for readmission after an illness.

If your child becomes ill at the Center and does not require immediate medical help, the Center will determine if the illness:

- prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities
- results in the need for care that is greater than the staff can provide
- poses a risk of spreading a harmful disease to others

If your child appears unable to participate or your child's condition grows worse during the day, the Center will notify you immediately and you will be asked to pick up your child as soon as possible.

When a child experiences severe illness, communicable disease, or body infestation, the parent will be contacted immediately to pick up the child. The child will be removed from the classroom and placed in a supervised area in the office until leaving.

Lice

If a parent discovers that their child has a case of head lice, they **MUST** notify RRELC.

If RRELC discovers that a child has lice while at the center, parents will be called to pick-up their child. RRELC will take appropriate measures to clean classrooms and perform head checks for children who could have been exposed.

Children **MUST** be NIT FREE before returning to RRELC.

Communication of Communicable Disease

Parents **MUST** contact the center if their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease. Parents will be notified if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease.

Injuries and Accidents

In the event of a minor injury (head bump, scrape etc.), first aid will be administered by a first aid certified staff member. Parents will be notified in writing through Brightwheel.

In case of a major injury that may require medical treatment (such as stitches), the parents will be contacted by phone immediately.

In the event the of an injury that requires emergency medical treatment, 911 will be called first, then the parents will be notified. Staff members will follow center policies for responding to medical emergencies as outlined in the RRELC Emergency Preparedness Plan.

All injuries will be documented in writing and kept on file in the RRELC office.

Allergic Reactions

Should a child without a documented allergy develop hives, complains of itching or other minor discomforts, the child will remain under close supervision until the reaction subsides or requires further attention. The parent will be notified of the situation and updated regularly.

Children with known allergies **MUST** have an allergy action plan on file in the RRELC office. If symptoms of an allergic reaction develop, the child's allergy action plan will be followed. Allergy action plans require a doctor's signature. All medicines related to an allergy action plan **MUST** be kept at RRELC at all times. Parents will be notified immediately if their child's allergy action plan is put into place.

Medication Administration (including emergency medications)

Only staff members who have completed MAT training can administer certain types of medication. Medications can only be administered if proper and complete paperwork are on file in the RRELC office.

When bringing **Over the Counter and Prescription** medication to the center, the following applies:

- Over the Counter (OTC) and Prescription Medications **MUST** be dropped off in the RRELC office
- Medications may only be applied by MAT certified staff members
- Medications **MUST** be provided in their original, labeled containers
- Medications **MUST** be clearly labeled with the child's full name and dosage
- Medication **MUST** be appropriately labeled for the child's age – RRELC cannot administer medication that is labeled for ages 2 and up to a child under the age of 2.
- Medications **CANNOT** be kept by RRELC after 10 business days without a doctor's consent
- Parents are expected to administer the initial dose of a medication prior to arrival at RRELC.
- RRELC will only administer one dose of medication per day.

- A medication waiver that includes the child’s name, dosage and type of medication and the day/time needed and any known adverse reactions MUST be completed when medication is left at the center.

When bringing Over the Counter Skin Products (Diaper cream, sunscreen, lip balm, bug spray)

- OTC Skin Products can be administered by any staff member. MAT training is not required.
- OTC Skin Products will be kept in the classroom in a cabinet that is inaccessible to children
- OTC Skin Products should be applied prior to school. RRELC will reapply sunscreen and bug spray as needed prior to outside afternoon play time.
- OTC Skin Products MUST be in their original container and labeled with the child’s full name
- OTC Skin Products will only be used in accordance with manufacturer’s recommendations for age, duration, and dosage.
- A waiver that includes the child’s name and any known adverse reactions MUST be completed when OTC Skin Products are left at the center

Diapering/Restroom/Potty Training

Children will have diaper changes or bathroom opportunities every 2 hours, or as necessary. Teachers and support staff in the toddler and two-year-old programs have outlined a successful potty training strategy and are open to discussing this with parents at any time.

Children are considered completely potty trained when they:

- are able to wear underwear for extended periods of time (2-3 hrs) without having accidents or being reminded to use the toilet;
- are able to communicate their toileting needs to an adult other than a parent;
- are independently able to take care of their toileting needs.

2-year-old Classes – children are not required to be potty trained to attend RRELC. Our 2 & 2½ year old teachers will work with parents to encourage and support healthy potty training. Children in the 2 & 2½ year old classes may wear disposable diapers or pull-ups (with Velcro sides) depending on where they are in the potty-training process.

3-year-old Classes – if the child is not completely potty trained prior to entering the 3-year-old class, they are expected to be in the process of being potty trained. Our 3-year-old teachers will work with parents to encourage and support healthy potty training. Children in the 3 year old class who are not completely potty trained are required to wear disposable pull-ups with Velcro sides (no diapers) as they will be participating in the daily class routine of taking turns using the potty.

We expect all children to be completely potty trained by their 4th birthday unless there is a documented medical reason for a delay. A collaborative meeting between the parents, teacher and the Director will need to take place to determine a plan of action for any child who is not completely potty trained by their 4th birthday.

Once children have begun potty training at home, our teachers will work with the parents to reinforce potty training at school. For sanitary reasons, children must wear a pull-up (with ‘velcro’ sides) or a

disposable diaper until they can remain accident free at school for two weeks. For children who are beginning potty training or are newly potty-trained, appropriate clothing is essential. Please dress your child in pants with elastic waist bands that are easy to pull up and down. Onesies, overalls, belts and pants with snaps at the waist are not easily maneuvered by a small child and can cause delays in getting to the toilet 'on time', thus leading to accidents and frustration.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The Virginia Department of Social Services guidelines state that child day centers must have an emergency preparedness plan that addresses staff responsibility and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation and shelter-in-place.

Our Emergency Preparedness Plan is on file in the administrative office and a copy is available for your review upon request. The RRELC has developed an Emergency Preparedness Plan in consultation with local authorities, which addresses the most likely to occur emergency scenario or scenarios, including but not limited to natural disaster, chemical spills, intruder and terrorism specific to the locality. In the event of an actual emergency requiring evacuation from the building, parents will be notified via all center-wide communication methods as to where to pick up their child.

Security

Fire alarm systems and a sprinkler system enhance the security of the RRELC. Fire drills are practiced at least once a month. Emergency Preparedness Drills are practiced each semester.

Authorized pick-up of a child is something that RRELC takes very seriously. At the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete an Authorized Pick-Up form. RRELC can release children to anyone listed on this form, with appropriate identification. RRELC will not release a child to anyone without written consent from the child's parent or guardian.

When there is a change in the regular pick-up routine, it is very important that the teacher be notified in writing.

In the event of a last-minute emergency, additional measures will be taken to ensure the child's safety.

In the event of a custody issue, RRELC MUST have legal documentation on file stating the custody arrangement.

The RRELC maintains emergency information on each child. This information includes parents' home and work phone numbers, special medical conditions, allergies and other information important to your child's health and safety. Please make sure that any information changes are noted on your child's record in the RRELC office.

Daily Routine

Arriving at RRELC

For the safety of our children, parents are required to “sign-in” their child upon entering the building and bring them to the teachers in the classroom. Parents **MUST** make contact with the teacher to acknowledge they are dropping off their child.

Carpool drivers are responsible for signing in each child in their care. Dropping off children in the parking lot will not be allowed.

Children **MUST be with an adult AT ALL TIMES** during drop off.

For security purposes, the Center doors will be locked at 8:30am. Parents may enter the building between 8:30am and 5:30pm by ringing the doorbell at the main entrance.

We want each child to get the most out of our program which is why it is important that all children arrive no later than 8:30 a.m. If your child will be arriving after 8:30 a.m. due to unusual circumstances such as a doctor’s appointment, etc. please let your child’s teacher or the RRELC office know in advance as to what time to expect your child.

Please note: During times of heightened health concerns, our drop off procedures may vary to ensure the best atmosphere for all children in our care. Those procedures will be communicated to all parents through all of our communication resources.

Leaving RRELC

All students **MUST** be picked up by 5:30pm. Preparations for pick-up begin at 5:00pm unless you have indicated otherwise with the teacher.

A \$15 late fee will be issued if parents or caregivers do not pick students up by 5:30pm; an additional \$10 will be charged for each subsequent 10 minutes you are late.

Each child must be picked up in the classroom by the parent or guardian and signed out at that time. Carpool drivers are responsible for signing in and out each child in their care.

Children **MUST be with an adult AT ALL TIMES** during pick-up.

Please note: During times of heightened health concerns, our pick-up procedures may vary to ensure the best atmosphere for all children in our care. Those procedures will be communicated to all parents through all of our communication resources.

Classrooms & Playground

The RRELC provides activities for learning experiences geared to each child’s age and developmental level. RRELC meets or exceeds DSS student to staff ratios at all times. The outdoor playground equipment is checked on a regular basis for safety.

Snacks/Lunches

RRELC does not provide daily snacks or lunches for students.

- Parents must provide 2 healthy snacks and one lunch each day for their child. If parents desire snacks/lunch to be eaten at specific meals, please label with name and indicate AM or PM Snack and Lunch.
- Parents must provide any utensils needed to feed their child.
- All refrigerated foods and liquids will be disposed of after meals.
- Dirty containers, utensils, and cups will be put in the child's bag.
- Containers for water will be refilled throughout the day.
- All containers for food, as well as bottles and/or sippy cups must be labeled with your child's full name and date. All food and drink items will be sent home daily.

Food Allergies

Because RRELC shares space with RRPC, we cannot guarantee a completely peanut-free environment. RRELC is not peanut/tree nut free. However, if a child in the center has a food allergy, ELC will work with the teachers and families in a specific class to ensure the safety of the child.

Clothing

Clothing should be comfortable and easy for the child to manage. Tennis shoes are required for participation in preschool activities. Infants and crawlers should wear socks or footed bottoms. Sandals (including Keens), flip-flops, jellies, crocs, and boots are not allowed! All clothing items should be labeled with the child's name.

The Center will store 2 changes of clothes for each child. Clothing is to be secured in a large Ziploc bag clearly labeled with your child's full name. RRELC staff will remind parents when clothing needs to be replaced or changed due to season changes.

Nap/Rest Time Supplies

RRELC provides sheets for cribs, cots and rest mats. Parents are asked to provide a sleepsack (for children under 12 months of age) or light blanket (for children over 12 months of age). Sleepsacks and blankets will be sent home each Friday to be washed and need to be returned to the center each Monday. Sheets will be washed and sanitized at the center each week. For children over the age of 12 months, parents may also send in a small 'lovey' as needed for nap time.

Student Tote Bags

RRELC will provide each student in our PreK 2's -4's program with a tote bag upon enrollment. Students are required to use the RRELC tote bag for bringing in their belongings each day. RRELC tote bags are sturdy enough to last for several years. RRELC encourages parents to help their child personalize his/her tote bag. Please check and empty your child's bag daily.

Parent/Teacher Communication

- RRELC provides each child with a communication folder. Please check this folder daily for important information.

- Brightwheel Messaging will be used to communicate day to day needs between the parents, teachers and administration. Brightwheel messaging is designed to ensure that effective communication takes place between all caregivers and parents.
- Brightwheel Activities - Infant and Toddler daily activities (feeding, diapering and napping) will be recorded periodically throughout the day through Brightwheel.
- Parent/Teacher conferences – RRELC will offer 2 opportunities each school year for parents and teachers to meet and discuss their child’s progress.

Parent/Center Communications

- Administrative Email – A general email address (childcare@rrpcusa.org) that is accessible to all center administrators is available for questions relating to administrative questions. The Director and Assistant Director each have private email addresses to allow for confidential communication as needed.
- Email – A center-wide email will be sent on Sunday afternoon with information about the coming week.
- Paper Newsletters – as needed, printed calendars, flyers and newsletters will be sent home.
- Social Media – RRELC will regularly post activities and events to social media for the purpose of parent communication as well as advertising for the center.
- Brightwheel will be utilized for center-wide reminders and announcements as needed.

Educational Philosophy/Curriculum/Staffing

Program Philosophy

RRELC is dedicated to providing a nurturing and loving family environment for children with high quality, individualized care to families. The Center acknowledges the importance of building sound relationships and seeks to encourage a sense of community. Children, staff, and volunteers interact with one another, fostering an atmosphere much like an extended family.

RRELC is a play-based center where a child’s curiosity is valued and nurtured. Children are encouraged to be children; we do not view them as small adults. Primary focus is on the individual care, progress, growth, and development of each child as well as their approaches to play and learning. Classes provide an environment which promotes learning while having fun during the process. Children are active learners at RRELC: learning by engaging, exploring with a variety of materials, moving throughout the classroom, and interacting with one another. Teachers and care providers serve as facilitators and guide the learners using educational materials and effective questioning to encourage them to think in new and creative ways. Developmentally appropriate hands-on experiences through individual and group activities assist in building cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills necessary for all aspects of life and growth.

At RRELC, we strive to:

- Celebrate the joy of living in God’s world.
- Recognize that learning occurs in an environment centered on hands-on experiences through activity and play, enhanced by developmentally appropriate challenges and support.

- Offer highly effective, developmentally appropriate curriculum to expand the child’s inherent and learned strengths and develop cognitive skills.
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in activities that involve physical and social experiences.
- Build self-esteem and confidence.
- Encourage children to respect others and their property and develop empathy for others.
- Teach children to become independent and learn to express their emotions.
- Assist children in developing a life-long love of learning and build upon their natural curiosity.

Curriculum

“Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and Man” Luke 2:52.

RRELC’s curriculum is designed to encourage children to grow as Jesus grew: Wisdom (Cognitive Development), Stature (Physical Development), Favor with God (Spiritual Development), Favor with Man (Social/Emotional Development). This is accomplished by offering a variety of developmentally appropriate play-based experiences that engage children and help them develop a strong foundation for continuing education and a love of learning. RRELC incorporates resources and strategies utilizing Teaching Strategies™, Learning Without Tears™, and thematic units for children ages birth – 5 years. Activities, experiences and classroom environments integrate key learning and development domains.

Teachers at RRELC use enrichment activities to balance the overall program. Engaging and interactive activities related to music, art, science, math and language expose children to different types of learning, setting them up for success in the years ahead.

Weekly Chapel is held in the worship spaces at River Road Presbyterian Church. RRPC ministers and staff participate in the leading of chapel.

Assessment Policy

RRELC uses assessment as part of a system for tracking a child’s progress on a developmental continuum. Formal and informal testing, including checklists and observations, help teachers know how to structure curriculum to best meet the needs of each individual child as well as the group as a whole. Children ages 4 and 5 years participate in formal testing twice a year using the PALS Pre-K testing program.

Teachers keep parents informed of their child’s progress on a regular basis. Parent Conferences occur in the spring; however, at any time you may contact your child’s teacher to schedule a meeting. The Director is available to meet with parents upon request.

Teachers and Support Staff

The RRELC staff brings extensive experience and education to the program, coupled with a passion for teaching and working with young children. Teachers are role models guiding children in a friendly and secure setting. Classes are engaging, interesting and activity centered. A team concept is incorporated into each class with lead teachers and assistant teachers aided by support staff. Ongoing training and

exposure to effective teaching strategies and resources ensures the staff is equipped to provide quality learning experiences and engaging environments for the children in our care.

RRELC Staff members are CPR and First Aid certified and MAT certified as necessary to provide the best care for our students.

Miscellaneous

Confidentiality and Privacy

RRELC holds all information regarding our students and their families in strict confidence. Information is not released unless requested in writing by the parent or ordered by a court of law.

Use of Student Images

Photographic images of each child will be used in the classroom to identify personal belongings and assist with name recognition.

Teachers will document certain daily activities and events with photographs to share with the child's family, in Center newsletters, on the RRELC website, and in marketing materials. No image of a child will be shared with the public without written consent from the parent. For images to be shared, a signed permission form is required each year.

The center will not be held responsible for pictures or videos distributed by parents through social media.

Child Abuse and Neglect

If a teacher suspects that one of her/his students is being abused or neglected the following procedures should be followed:

- The teacher immediately reports the suspected abuse or neglect to the Director.
- Teachers document what they have seen to cause them to be suspicious.
- The Director then reports the suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities as required by the State of Virginia, making sure to make a record of the steps taken in the preschool files.
- The Director notifies the RRELC Ministry Board of the suspected abuse or neglect and the action taken by the Center.

Any teacher who is accused of abuse or neglect will be dealt with in accordance with the Center grievance policy listed in the "Parent Handbook."

- A written complaint must be brought to the Director or the RRELC Ministry Board.
- The Director will investigate the accusations and if necessary, place the teacher on immediate "administrative leave" until the matter is resolved.
- Any teacher being found to abuse or neglect children will be immediately dismissed and replaced by another teacher.
- Any teacher being found to abuse or neglect children will be reported to the proper authorities.

All RRELC employees submit to a criminal background check at the time of hiring as required by the Virginia Department of Social Services and are required to participate in Child Abuse Training.

Grievance Procedures

RRELC staff members care deeply about the satisfaction of the students and their parents.

The Center encourages parents to convey questions, suggestions and concerns regarding the care their children receive at RRELC to teachers and administrative personnel. Parents express concerns to the teachers first, and if needed, schedule a conference outside of class time for a longer discussion. The Director may attend this conference, or a separate conference may be arranged with the Director alone.

The RRELC Ministry Board may also be used to assist in solving different issues that arise at the Center. If concerns are not resolved by a teacher or the Director, parents may share their written concerns with a representative of the ministry board. The Board then addresses the issues to reach a solution.

Social Media

River Road Presbyterian Church recognizes the value of social media and internet communications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other online tools that allow staff and community families to communicate and share with the greater community. The Center also recognizes the importance of privacy and the need to maintain respect for privacy on the RRELC social media accounts. RRELC expects all members of our community to follow our Social Media Policy and guidelines so that content posted reflects positively on the individual and the Center.

Website, Facebook Page Administration, Use and Guidelines

The RRELC Director is authorized by the Ministry Board to create and utilize a Facebook page as an interactive social media tool. The Director has the right to remove any content deemed inappropriate. The RRELC website is monitored by RRELC administrative personnel. Information shared by RRELC, the staff, and parents is a reflection on the entire Center community and is subject to Center policies as outlined in the RRELC Handbook. When choosing to use your Facebook page, Twitter account, YouTube, or Instagram account, please consider how your post will be viewed by the wider community.