



**Zayed University**  
**Early Childhood Learning Center**  
**Family Handbook**  
**2018 - 2019**

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## **General Information**

### **Early Childhood Learning Center**

The Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) is a state of the art, bilingual facility operated on both the Abu Dhabi and Dubai campuses. These facilities serve children from 6 months to 4.4 years of age. The Center primarily serves the needs of the ZU community; therefore, it will be populated mainly with the children of ZU faculty, staff and students. Community members who are not affiliated with ZU may submit a registration form and will be considered, based on available space.

In addition to serving the educational development of young children in Zayed University and the surrounding community; the Center acts as a lab school which supports the training of early childhood educators and serves as a research environment to study child development. Professors with expertise in early childhood education, educational psychology and child development train the faculty and staff and mentor student teachers. ECLC Teachers act as model teachers that implement a high quality early childhood curriculum and serve as mentors to new teachers. Outreach is also an important component of the ECLC's mission, as it will serve as a Center for parenting information, workshops and training.

We strive to use developmentally appropriate goals for young children as a framework for planning our educational program and assessing children's progress in all foundational areas necessary for success in primary schooling. Our individualized, developmental approach allows us to meet the unique needs of most children. Similarly, we use theories of adult development to support the lifelong learning of our faculty and staff, family members, researchers, undergraduate and graduate students, and colleagues that participate in our programs. We hope that the ECLC will inspire innovation and excellence in various disciplines to meet the changing needs of UAE society.

### **Zayed University**

Zayed University seeks to prepare students for meaningful and successful twenty-first century personal and professional lives; to graduate students who will help shape the future of the region and the world; to support the economic and social advancement of the U.A.E.; to lead innovation in higher education through teaching, learning, research, and outreach; and to do so in a culturally diverse, humane, technologically advanced, and increasingly global environment.

Zayed University is an educational center of excellence in an emerging and evolving nation. Proudly bearing the name of the founder of the nation– the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan – it stands for innovation, inspiration, and education.

### **College of Education**

The College of Education at Zayed University is the premiere teacher education and personnel preparation institution in the UAE. The College not only prepares its graduate for teaching and leadership in the schools of the UAE but also for the myriad roles in support of children and families in local service agencies. The College of Education is recognized for its quality undergraduate and graduate programs; its student-centered focus; and its internationally recognized and research-active faculty. The ECLC is operated by the College of Education.

### **Vision Statement**

Inspiring excellence in the care and education of young children

## **Mission Statement**

- To provide a safe, developmentally appropriate learning environment that offers a stimulating early childcare experience
- To promote each child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.
- To partake in innovative research; and
- To build community connections, networking and resource sharing opportunities between the ECLC, College of Education and the Early Childhood Community in the UAE and the region.

## **Statement of Beliefs**

All children can learn. Every child deserves a high quality, safe and positive learning environment in which to develop.

All children are unique. There are individual differences in the way in which children learn and develop. Programs, activities and assessments need to be flexible and mindful of individual learning needs.

Play, is an important part of learning for young children who are curious and naturally motivated to explore, experiment and discover. Children should have opportunities for all types of play including creative, guided and lesson based.

Socialization, is a major learning area for young children. Social and emotional development should be encouraged within a nurturing environment through setting rules and boundaries, consistency in care and behavior management, and good role-modeling.

Individual care and attention, is important in order for young children to develop self-awareness and esteem, confidence, and a sense of security.

Children flourish when they are supported by the entire community. Parents, educators and the wider community are partners, and all influence a child's development.

## **Philosophy**

It is the philosophy of the Zayed University Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) that children be encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate, child-centered experiences within a safe, positive and healthy environment.

We embrace a play-based curriculum drawing from best practices in teaching from international standards that encourage curiosity, discovery, self-expression, interactive learning and skill building. Our Center provides a stimulating environment for young learners that promotes cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and dual language growth.

The Center is a place where learning, teaching and research intersect with the objective of enhancing learning experiences of children. We view the education of children as a shared responsibility, encouraging purposeful partnerships between the Center, parents and community.

## Language Policy

The Zayed University Early Childhood Learning Center is responsive to its context. The Center uses Arabic and English as the main mediums for communication and instruction. This implies the use and maintenance of both languages in the daily teaching and learning experiences, as part of the implementation of a curriculum appropriate for young children's development.

A dual language approach is used. This approach uses two-way bilingual education and instruction with all the children, who may be dominant in one language or the other. The goal is to introduce the second language within the context of meaningful daily activities.

### Language Representation:

We strive to maintain a linguistically diverse student population to promote multicultural understanding and language enrichment.

## Admission Guidelines

In order to create a diverse children population, children will be admitted in accordance with the following guidelines:

### Class Size:

In an effort to serve as an exemplary school, the ECLC limits the number of children per teacher and classroom. The guidelines of the NAEYC (National Association for Education of Young Children) as well as ADEK/Ministry of Education are followed as a minimum. Classroom ratios are as follows:

- **Infants-** 1 staff member per every 3 children
- **Early Toddlers-** 1 staff member per every 5 children
- **Late Toddlers-** 1 staff member per every 6 children
- **Preschoolers-** 1 staff member per every ten children

### Affiliation with ZU:

Children of currently enrolled students of ZU, dependents of ZU employees and ZU alumnus will be given priority for enrollment. The remainder of the students may be admitted from the larger community, whose parents are not employees or students at Zayed University.

### Siblings:

Every attempt will be made to consider families. Some preference will be given to applicants whose siblings currently attend the ECLC.

### Ability:

The ECLC accepts students at varying developmental levels and does not seek to enroll only high-performing or developmentally advanced children. We are open and welcoming to all children regardless of ability. We strive to meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability. The ECLC believes in the power of peer modeling and children with developmental delays are included in classrooms with typically developing peers when appropriate.

### **Program Availability:**

Enrollment may be dependent upon the availability of appropriate programming for a specific student. The Admission committee may request an interview or additional information from any applicant to best determine whether the ECLC is a good fit for their child.

### **Inclusion**

The ECLC programs provides for all children, including those with identified disabilities and special learning and developmental needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff are aware of the identified/diagnosed special needs of individual children and trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. Therapy is developed appropriately and incorporated within classroom activities as much as possible. The lead teacher makes appropriate professional referrals when necessary. Family members are involved in development and use of individualized education plans. Staff address the priorities and concerns of families of children with special needs.

### **Notification of Admission**

Families of accepted children will have one week to officially notify the Center of their enrollment intentions.

### **Non-discrimination Policy**

The ECLC has a strict non-discrimination policy and does not discriminate against children and families on the basis of gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural origin or ability. We endeavor to be accepting of all children and families who enter our program.

### **Tuition Payments**

Medical and registration fees are non-refundable after the first two weeks of enrollment as well as non-transferrable to future semesters. Tuition payments must be made for the full semester or in two half semester payments. Refunds are only granted within the first two weeks of attendance when a written notice is provided.

### **Late Payment**

We understand that sometimes financial challenges arise, and families are unable to pay at the scheduled time. In such situations parents need to contact the ZU financial services center and discuss special arrangements. The center reserves the right to refuse children who have outstanding tuition balances and no financial arrangement on file.

### **Late Pickup**

All children should be picked up promptly from the center. Parents will be charged a late pick up fee of 25AED per ½ hour after the first half hour they are late. **Please note that this does not apply at 4:30pm as all staff are off duty by this time and we cannot provide regular supervision after this point without putting staff over time.** Continual lateness will result in a warning and a possible change to your registration timings.

### **Curriculum**

The ECLC follows the Creative Curriculum as a foundation. This curriculum includes resources in both English and Arabic. The Center endorses a dual language emersion model where teachers

interact with the children in both languages in the same classroom. The teaching teams to work collaboratively to develop the curriculum, integrate resources and subject content/developmental goals, plan complimentary lessons/experiences in both languages, and develop studies.

The ECLC program provides for growth and development of the “whole child” (social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive) and encourages positive interaction between family, school, and the community. It respects the role of the family as the first and primary teachers of their children. Young children learn best by becoming involved in experiential learning that is authentic, sequential and that provides hands-on developmentally appropriate activities.

### **Research-based**

The Creative Curriculum® is a leading scientifically based, comprehensive curriculum for programs serving children from birth to age 5. It combines the latest research and ideas into a forward-thinking approach to learning-one that honors creativity and respects the role that teachers play in making learning exciting and relevant for every child in their classrooms.

Research shows that your child’s early experiences are crucial to his/her development. We understand the role of the environment in the learning experience, and thus ensure that ours is stimulating, nurturing, and fun. We base our customized program on The Creative Curriculum of the United States. The Creative Curriculum is a well-rounded program that addresses the needs of early childhood education professionals, children, and their families.

Research demonstrates that when young children have nurturing, consistent and loving experiences, they flourish. They learn to trust, develop the confidence to explore their environment, make discoveries, care about others and respect individual differences, and begin to view themselves as competent learners. When young children receive high-quality care, they are more likely to become sociable, capable preschoolers who get along with others, demonstrate self-control, and love learning.

A strong program must incorporate academic content and skill development within a framework of appropriate (play-based) activities while allowing each child to grow and be successful in all of the developmental areas. Young children learn best by becoming involved in experiential learning that is authentic, sequential and that provides hands-on developmentally appropriate activities.

The unique approach is designed to inspire teachers, to help them create a high-quality learning environment and, most of all, to support their important efforts as they open doors to successful learning and promote positive outcomes for all children.

### **Interest Areas:**

#### **Blocks**

When children construct, create, and represent their experience with blocks, they progress in each area of development and learning.

#### **Dramatic Role-Play**

When children engage in Dramatic Play, they deepen their understanding of the world and develop skills that will serve them throughout their lives

## **Playing with Toys and Games**

Children strengthen skills in all areas of development as they play with toys and games

## **Art**

Creative Art is another language that children use to express what they know and what they feel. The art area is a studio for children's development and learning.

## **Library Area**

As children hear stories, read aloud every day, look through books on their own, listen to recorded stories, retell familiar stories, and make up their own stories, they strengthen skills in all areas of development.

## **Discovery Area**

It is a place to spark children's curiosity. In the Discovery Area children use their senses to touch, feel, taste, smell and see.

## **Sand and Water Play**

Playing with sand and water involves sensory experiences that appeal to young children. It also challenges children's minds and promote all areas of development and learning.

## **Music and Movement**

Music and Movement experiences help develop both sides of the brain and contribute to children's social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and learning.

## **Cooking Experience**

When children participate in cooking activities, they learn how food is prepared and how it contributes to their health and well-being. They may also form eating patterns that can last a lifetime.

## **Physical Activity/Outdoor Classroom**

Physical activity is an important component of healthy practices for young children. Children will participate in daily outdoor play and engage in outdoor classroom activities when the weather permits. All children within the center will participate in outdoor activities. In general, if a child is well enough for school they should be able to participate. Please ensure that your child is always dressed appropriately for outdoor play. In the event that children are unable to go outside due to the weather indoor play experiences will be provided in the playroom/after care room.

## **Faculty and Staff**

All the ECLC teachers have one thing in common – their passion for young children. Each of the teachers has the enthusiasm and creativity that is critical to supporting young children in achieving optimal development. They are well versed in the fundamentals of child development, as well as classroom and behavior management, promoting development across the major developmental areas in a child-centered manner, and are adept at discovering each child's uniqueness and nurturing it. The ECLC teachers instill confidence in our children and place the utmost emphasis on the safety, security and emotional and physical comfort of the children. They are trained and feel passionately about getting to know each child as an individual – from what foods they like, to which skills they are beginning to master, to the kinds of activities they prefer. Each child is observed on a regular basis, daily or weekly, so that long term plans can be formulated for individual children, as well as for the group.

The ECLC is staffed by key administrators and teams of educators. The administrative team

includes a Director and Head Teachers. An administrative assistant supports this work. The Director teaches classes and conducts research within the College of Education and acts as a liaison between the university and the center. The Head Teacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the center and the effective deployment of resources within the center. Both the Director and Manager oversee curriculum implementation.

ECLC employees are hired and managed according to the Human Resource policies of Zayed University. All teachers and administrators have experience in education, as well as a bachelor's degree and often an advanced degree in early childhood education, psychology, or a related field. Student interns and student employees complement each team, and pre-service teachers often do field placements or student teaching at our Center.

## Training

Training on the curriculum, research-based strategies and best practices, leadership, child development, communication, mentorship of student teachers, action research and other areas are provided by the ECLC. Faculty and staff are also encouraged to develop either formal or informal Professional Development sessions for their colleagues in their areas of expertise or significant experience. Books, professional organizations, career opportunities, university courses, and workshop information are all provided to employees to enhance their professional development on a continual basis.

## Calendar

*The calendar is subject to change based on government announcements for public holidays. The ECLC reserves the right to change any event. Please check the Appendix.*

## ECLC Timings

**The ECLC is open from 7:30am-4:30pm Sunday-Thursday.** When the university cancels classes, delays opening or closes early due to any reason, the ECLC will follow the same schedule. Announcement of closing dates and times will be made via email, SMS and/or phone calls.

## Licensing, Quality and Standards

With the guidance of the ZU, College of Education faculty and other internationally recognized associations and professionals, we strive to follow quality standards set by the US-based National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The NAEYC ensures the quality of children's daily experiences in early childhood programs and promotes positive child outcomes via 10 Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria. The ECLC is also licensed through the Ministry of Education.

## Code of Ethical Conduct

ECLC employees follow an internal Code of Conduct based on the ZU Code of Ethics and general ECE best practices. We share the following core values as guides for interactions:

- We strive to **respect** each individual and work to create a positive emotional climate for all learners, with sensitivity to differences in age, ability, background, language, culture, religion, and family structure.
- We use direct eye contact, smiles, warm tones of voice, positive touch, social conversations, and joint laughter to support the development of effective working **relationships**.

- Our **partnership** in learning is supported by regular, reciprocal communication, affirming recognition of effort and accomplishment, predictable, developmentally appropriate responsiveness to initiative, emotion, and concerns, and proactive conflict resolution.
- We are committed to diversity and we strive to create an environment of inclusion that celebrates our differences and highlights our commonalities. Our program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child.

## **Media**

At the time of enrollment families are asked to complete a media consent form giving the center permission to use images of children in social media and marketing materials. If you would not like your child to be included, please state this on the form.

## **Academic Observations and Research in the Classroom**

Because the ECLC is a laboratory school, we often participate in academic observation and research activities carried out by faculty and students. This participation offers great value to increasing the collective knowledge regarding children and their development, and to the professional training of students who will pursue careers in early childhood education and related fields.

### **Informed Consent to Participate in Research**

All parents sign an informed consent agreement at the time of enrollment giving permission for their child to be observed in the classroom and to participate in research and projects that do not disturb the regular routines of the child. Observations in the classroom do not involve any intentional interaction between the observer and children. Children are not identified by name in the student's observational reports.

### **Informed Consent to Participate in Other Research**

When research activities involve interactions with the children that go beyond the regular routines of the ECLC, parents are asked for permission for their child to participate in the specific interactive research project.

Our Director, Head of Research and teachers interact with researchers, so our children eagerly participate in their "special games" and the resulting data meet scientific standards. Parents receive brief descriptions of ongoing studies and summary results of completed research on the website.

## **Community Outreach**

Building and maintaining relationships with the community and advocating for children and their families guides our mission and philosophy. All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community or region and beyond.

To support the professional development of both pre-service and practicing educators, the ECLC faculty models and shares the educational approaches that we develop. Faculty, staff and parents attend workshops provided by the ECLC and affiliated ZU professors. Therefore, the ECLC promotes outreach with activities such as:

- Lectures, workshops and trainings
- Open house events
- Newsletters
- Scheduled observations
- Family Resource Room

## Arrival at the Center

- Teachers and Teacher Assistants are available at school as of 7:30am. **Therefore, please do not leave your child unattended in the classroom if you arrive earlier than 7:30am.**
- Adults accompanying children to the Center must make sure that the child is taken directly to his/her class, not dropped off at the Center's main entrance or with security.
- For your child's safety outside the Center's Gates, especially in the car parking area, please make sure that your child is accompanied by an adult at all times.

## Help with Separation Issues

Every day, you and your child say good-bye to one another in the morning and hello again in the afternoon. These hellos and good-byes are children's first steps on a lifelong journey of learning how to separate from and reunite with the important people in their lives. Learning to say hello and good-bye to people we love is a process, not something to be achieved in the first week.

We understand young children often have difficulty with separation. We want to reassure you that we are always ready to talk to you and comfort your child.

- Always say good-bye with a kiss, hug or a wave! Be consistent.
- Be firm, but friendly about leaving.
- If your child whines or clings, prolonging the good-bye will only make it harder for yourself and your child.
- Follow the same routine each morning.
- Bring familiar items from home (family photo, special objects or toys)

After a short period of time, your child's anxiety about you leaving ends quickly after you leave. Should this not be the case, we want you to know that we would call you to let you know how he/she is doing. We recommend parents limit their good-byes to a few minutes if possible as not to prolong children's anxiety.

Your child will pick up on your confidence about having chosen a good place for him/her to be while you are away. Good feelings are contagious. So, the first step in adjusting to saying good-bye is to be sure you are comfortable with your decision to enroll your child in our program.

## Classroom Visits

Adult family members may schedule classroom visits to observe their child in the program. Please register in the office prior the visit. If you want to talk with a teacher, please schedule a time either before or after the teaching hours. We request this to ensure that while teachers are in their classroom all of their attention remains focused on the children for both academic and safety reasons. By having prolong impromptu chats with parents at pick up or drop off, teachers attention is diverted away from children.

## **Nursing Mothers**

The ECLC supports nursing mothers by providing them a comfortable private space in which to nurse their babies. Nursing mothers are welcome to call the front desk to check if their babies are awake for feeding. We ask that mothers use the provided nursing room and not nurse in the classroom as we have constant male visitors within the building. Our nursing room is for nursing mothers only and is not an appropriate social space for family and friends.

## **Nap/Rest Time**

Child development research recommends young children have adequate rest to assist in their growth and development. The ECLC adheres to a napping policy in alignment with best practices for young children. Afternoon nap is scheduled for children in the early toddler, late toddler, and preschool classrooms. Infants nap schedules are flexible and follow children's individual routines.

- Children will not be intentionally kept awake if they are tired during nap time.
- Naptime is a quiet time in the classroom and therefore the lights will be turned low or off and quiet restful music will be played.
- Children will be encouraged to rest but will not be required to take a nap.
- Children who choose not to nap will be given quiet activities to engage.
- Families are encouraged to provide a blanket and pillow for nap time.
- Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep unless the center is provided with information from a doctor stating otherwise.
- Children will not be placed on cots or in cribs with bottles.

## **Parent Interactions**

Here are a few guidelines for interaction:

- Teachers are available to talk with parents for short periods during drop off and pick up times only. Parents are requested not to approach the teacher if she is leading an activity with children.
- Please do not talk about children in front of any other children.
- Please do not talk to teachers about other children.
- Feel free to ask your child's teacher about your child's highlight from the day.
- Please talk with your child's teacher about any issues first, before going to the administration.
- The ECLC has official social media accounts which are used to document children's activities and experiences. Staff members are not allowed to use their private accounts to share information with parents.

## **Transportation**

The ECLC does not provide transportation. Parents are responsible for transporting children to the ECLC. There is a safe drop off and pick up location for children arriving and leaving with a clear one-way pattern in the loading area. Parents or designated adults who accompany the children into the ECLC at arrival time must notify teachers of child's arrival. Same procedures at pick-up times. Parents must their children inside must sign in and out daily on the sheet outside of the classroom door.

Security within the ECLC will also sign children in as they arrive, and parents are responsible for

walking children to their classrooms.

## Policy on Releasing Children

Only the authorized parent(s) or others identified by the parents can pick up a child. Parents provide a signed form with on file in the child's folder listing other authorized persons. **Under no circumstances can a child be released to anyone not on the signed form.** A copy of the Emirates ID cards of all the authorized people is required. Teachers will ask for identification if they do not know the person.

## Attendance

Attendance is taken and monitored daily for the safety of the children. This is done as children are entering and leaving the classroom for the day. Parents are allowed to drop children off anytime during their approved time. However, we request that parent try and avoid dropping children off during naptime (11:30am-12:30pm) as it is disruptive to the rest of the class.

## Absence

If your child is sick, or if you plan to take extended vacations with your child or withdraw your child for a certain amount of time, please notify the Center of the dates that your child will not attend. **Tuition refunds and transfers will not be made during this absence time.**

## Emergency Information

Please keep us informed and updated of changes in address, home phone number, work phone number, emergency contact numbers and medical information regarding your child. We need to reach you quickly in order to respond properly in case of an emergency.

## Emergency Procedures/Fire Evacuation

In the event of a fire, the ECLC follows a strict evacuation policy. Fire drills are held on a regular basis to ensure all staff members are aware of procedures. Over 50% of staff members are trained as fire wardens to assist with evacuation procedures within the center. The following practices are adhered to in the case of a fire:

- First staff member alerted to a possible fire presses the fire alarm to begin evacuation procedures.
- Staff will organize children for evacuation, taking emergency kit and daily attendance record.
- Children and staff members will be evacuated to a designated assembly point away from the building. Infants will be evacuated in evacuation approved cribs.
- Staff members will recheck attendance to ensure all children are accounted for.
- Fire wardens will sweep building to ensure all children and staff members have been evacuated.
- No individuals will be allowed to return to the building until it has been approved by fire personnel.

## Sickness

Health guidelines for Early Childhood are more strict than elementary schools because of the age of the children, the closeness in which they learn and play, and the fragile health of some children.

- If your child has any type of rash, he/she may not attend the Center without a signed note from a doctor stating the rash is not contagious. We will not accept a call from the doctor's office as proof, it must be in writing.
- If your child has a cold, he/she may not attend the Center. Coughing, sneezing and a runny nose spread germs to all of the other children and teachers.
- If your child has a fever (even slight), he/she may not attend the Center. They must have a normal temperature for 24 hours before returning to the classroom.
- If your child has diarrhea or vomiting he/she may not attend. They need to be free from diarrhea or vomiting for 24 hours before returning to the Center.
- Parents, you know your child better than anyone else...if they are tired, overly crabby, or just acting like they don't feel well, we recommend they stay home to stay home.
- Please understand that if your child comes to the Center ill or becomes ill after arriving, you will be asked to pick him/her up immediately. Sick children will be removed from their classrooms and supervised by the nurse until parents arrive.

## Accidents

Accidents are a part of life for young children and will happen even when the best precautions are provided. ECLC staff members are trained in First Aid procedures and there is a full-time nurse on staff. In the event that a child is injured the ECLC will follow best practices for First Aid. An accident report will be completed by the nurse and the staff member who observed the incident. For minor scrapes and bruises families will receive a copy of the incident report and will be asked to sign it. In the case of serious injuries including bumps and bruising to the head; families will also be notified and receive instructions from the nurse regarding recommendations for follow up procedures.

## Medication

Medication should only be taken/ administered at school when essential (i.e. detrimental to a child's health if they are not taken during the school day). Please ensure that medication is given to the ECLC nurse for safety. All medication must be labeled clearly with the child's name. We do keep pharmacy medicines on the premises. If we have to administer these to your child, we will contact you and ask for your permission.

The following items are needed in order to administer medication to children:

- A signed medical consent form completed by the parent or child's guardian.
- Medication requirements must be written in the day book and signed by the parent / guardian.
- Medication must be in original container with doctor's instructions attached.
- Medication must not be expired.

## Immunization

By law all Early Childhood Centers are required to keep an immunization register. Once your child is fully immunized a copy of the Immunization Certificates should be given to the Center's Management.

## Head Lice

Head lice do not carry any disease and their presence does not indicate unsanitary conditions. It can infest anyone. Head lice are not a risk for carrying communicable disease as they are primarily spread through direct head to head contact and only live 18-24 hours off a host. Our goal is to keep children

in the classrooms as long as medically safe. If you suspect that your child has head lice, he/she should be kept home and given proper treatment to kill and remove the lice.

The subsequent steps will be followed if a child suspected of having head lice at the Center:

1. The child will be sent to the nurse for evaluation.
2. A thorough inspection for live lice and nits will be completed.
3. If live (crawling) lice are noticed, the Center's nurse will notify the parent/guardian immediately for pick-up of child. Children will not be allowed to return to the classroom until the nurse has verified that no live lice or eggs are present.
4. The parent/guardian will be provided with information on the biology of head lice.
5. The parent/guardian will be instructed to inspect other household members for live lice.
6. The parent/guardian will be instructed in methods for elimination of infestation focusing on inspection for LIVE (crawling) LICE and manual removal (combing.)
7. The parent/guardian will be instructed to continue daily combing until no live lice are discovered (approximately 1 ½ weeks). FOCUS IS ON THE REMOVAL OF LIVE LICE.
8. The parent/guardian will be instructed to change/laundry pillow cases, pajamas and towels.
9. The parent/guardian will be instructed in use of pediculicides if they choose to use as adjunct to manual removal.
10. The child will periodically be re-inspected for live lice by the school nurse.

Please note that a child will not be excluded from the Center permanently due to head lice infestations.

### **Center Attire**

Children are not required to wear a uniform at the ECLC but as we participate in many physical and messy activities we ask that you dress your child appropriately in loose fitting active wear that is easily washable.

### **Protection from Sun Policy**

Please remember that all children need to wear hats or caps for time spent outside in the playground. Children without hats will be restricted to shaded areas during outdoor play. Please make sure you clearly label all your child's belongings.

### **Footwear**

It is important to remember that in order for your child to take part in all activities safely, they should wear sensible (flat) closed toe shoes. For your child's safety, we recommend Velcro fastener shoes as these are the easiest for children to put on and may minimize accidents happening due to untied laces.

### **Extra Clothes**

We ask that you supply an extra set of clothing that can be kept in your child's backpack in case of emergencies. This pack may include pants, undergarments, shirts and socks to be supplied in a large Ziploc bag; all clearly labeled with your child's name on the inside. When you pick up your child, check their cubby and remove any soiled clothes. Please ensure that all items are replaced the next day.

### **Jewelry**

Ornaments, including gold, are strictly prohibited for children at the Center.

Please leave all valuable items at home. Necklaces, bracelets and dangling earrings are not allowed as they pose a safety hazard for children. If child comes to the center wearing these items they will be removed and safely stored to be returned to the parent.

## Hair Accessories

To maintain a safe environment for our youngest learners we ask that parents limit the hair accessories as young children are very curious about their environment and often will put items in their mouths or ears to experiment with them.

## Toys

The Center is a very busy place where things can easily be forgotten and misplaced. If things do get lost, children can be easily disappointed, especially if it is a much-loved toy. Please leave your child's toys at home, **unless it has been specified by the teacher to bring them.**

## Personal Items

In order to return lost or misplaced items effectively we ask that you mark all items with your child's name. "Lost and Found" boxes are located in the reception area. Please make sure to check the box if you are unable to find items your child has brought to school.

## Center Events

Throughout the year the ECLC will host multiple academic events and parents will be invited to observe and participate with their children. Notices will be sent out in advance so that parents can make appropriate plans.

## Birthdays

We understand that families often like to share joyous occasions such as birthdays with their child's classmates. In order to arrange any kind of celebration for your child, the ECLC Administration should be informed at least two days ahead and a special form must be filled out. Food should be restricted to small pieces of cakes or cupcakes. Celebration will take place during the snack and lunch times only. We are happy to acknowledge children's birthday's however; no formal parties will be held at the center.

## Nutrition Policy

We try to promote a healthy attitude toward food. We teach children about good food choices and encourage children to explore new tastes. At this crucial developing stage, your child needs a certain amount of nutrients each day. We ask parents to join in our efforts to promote good eating habits and good food choices with any food coming into the Center. Please do not send sweets, cookies, chips and fizzy drinks etc., for any meal times.

Throughout the day, children will be having two meals i.e. snack and lunch. Parents are required to send a healthy snack or two, if the child attends all day. Here are some healthy snacks ideas:

- ✓ C e r e a l (low in sugar) with milk
- ✓ Slices or small cubes of cheese
- ✓ Spread cheese/butter or chicken sandwiches
- ✓ Whole-wheat crackers
- ✓ 100% fruit juice (unsweetened)
- ✓ Yogurt (plain or flavored)

- ✓ Slices or chunks of fresh fruit
- ✓ Dried fruit (raisins, apricot, plums, pineapple...)
- ✓ Wedges of raw vegetables (cucumber, carrot, celery, lettuce, cherry tomatoes...)
- ✓ Hard-boiled eggs
- ✓ Pasta
- ✓ Rice
- ✓ Cooked vegetables (with or without sauce)
- ✓ Cooked meat/chicken/fish (with or without sauce)
- ✓ or any other home-cooked meal

### **Allergies**

ECLC has an anaphylaxis policy that bans all food with nuts and traces of nuts. Please avoid packing peanuts, peanut butter or products that contain peanut oils. Parents should communicate with staff regarding their child's food intake concerns or special requirements. Families of children with special diets should provide a letter from a medical practitioner/dietitian outlining the condition or allergy.

### **Food Storage**

Each child should have a lunch box. Infants and Toddlers' food will be kept in the fridge; while Pre-School children's food will be kept in their cubbies. Therefore, please make sure you put an ice pack inside their lunch boxes to keep their food and drinks cool throughout the day. If there is any item requiring heating, inform the teacher. The staff ensures that foods are not served to children beyond their recommended date of use.

### **Mealtimes**

Teachers encourage group discussion, self-help skills, independence and social skills at meal times. Teachers offer alternative activities for children who have finished their food early. Children will be guided to brush their teeth after each meal as oral health is included in our curriculum.

We are committed to providing your child with a healthy and hygienic environment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

### **Parents as Partners**

Parents are the first teachers of their children, and therefore an integral part of the ECLC team. We believe the role of the family is critical to the wellbeing of the child and aim to develop and foster strong connections with parents and other important family members. Communication between the teacher and parents happens on a daily basis through informal and formal channels (diary, verbal communications, newsletters, etc.). Parents are informed of the activities their child participated in each day, as well as the daily routines (eating, napping, toileting etc.).

### **Home-School Connection**

The ECLC offers adult family members and other caregivers a variety of ways to become involved in the ECLC community, to participate in family activities, and to confer with the staff to build a strong bond between home and school. Regular communication is encouraged among families, caregivers, and the ECLC staff so that multiple perspectives on the child's development and interests can be used to enhance the child's learning experience.

The ECLC facilitates communication in the following ways:

- detailed Family Handbook
- scheduled parent meetings and conferences
- regular newsletters

- frequent spontaneous interaction
- reception area offers information, extra copies of forms, interesting articles, flyers about local family events and resources, and other parent resources
- Parent Resource Room with materials and activities for checkout.

Finally, the administrative team provides reminders and other tips for families via the university website and e-mail. Most materials are available in Arabic and English. If any parents would benefit from translation services for key documents, they may contact the ECLC main office for assistance in finding a translator who is fluent in the relevant language.

## **Evaluation and Reporting**

On-going observations will be gathered about each child throughout the year and will be used to support learning. Each child is observed as they partake in daily activities and routines and comments will be made on a regular weekly basis in their communication diary. These observations also help teachers formulate long term plans for individual children, as well as for the class group. This information is shared formally with you through their portfolios. There are also opportunities for a scheduled parent/teacher conference each semester during the year.

## **Annual Program Evaluation**

All adult family members are invited to participate in the ECLC's annual program evaluation via a survey conducted in May, as well as to contribute to our continuous quality improvement. Evaluation results, plans and opportunities are highlighted in the Parent Meeting held prior to the school year, and updated as necessary via newsletters thereafter.

## **Volunteering**

At the ECLC we love volunteers! Information about volunteering opportunities will be sent home and adult family members are welcome. If you have a few spare hours either weekly or monthly, please consider volunteering; or if you have special talents or hobbies, please contact us. Please complete a Volunteer Form and return it to the office if you are interested. We will use this information to schedule activities according to parent preferences as much as possible.

## **Behavioral Expectations**

The ECLC adheres to a positive discipline strategy. Children are reinforced and encouraged to engage in positive and acceptable behaviors. Aggressive and/or disruptive behaviors are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and great care is taken to conduct rigorous observations of the child to determine the cause of the behavior so that it can be addressed appropriately. Corporal punishment, humiliation, emotional or physical isolation, or punishments that may negatively impact the child's self-esteem are never used.

## **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse**

Any ECLC staff member who suspects that a child has come to the Center abused or neglected must report that information to the Director or Head Teacher immediately. These designated Child Protection Officers will then investigate and follow up, escalating concerns if needed. A record of all incidents and alerts will be kept on file with the Center. It is the mandate of all safety officers to contact the appropriate authorities.

## Grievance Procedure

The ECLC believes in open communication with families regarding their children and the practices of the center. All ECLC staff members are held accountable for their behaviors and interactions within the center setting. The concerns of parents are taken very seriously, and all attempts will be made to address and resolve issues as quickly as possible. We ask that families use the following steps as a guide when registering a complaint.

**Step 1:** - Determine if your concern can be directly addressed to the staff member involved. Have you already spoken to the staff member, but no solution was reached?

**Step 2:** - Family member/s complete Complaint form (available at ECLC front desk)

**Step 3:** - ECLC Director will investigate complaint and allow all parties to provide an explanation.

**Step 4:** - ECLC Director will schedule a meeting with family member/s to review findings and discuss solutions.

**Step 5:** - ECLC Director will follow up with family to ensure a positive outcome has been reached.

## Suspension or Termination of Enrollment Policy

Termination is always a last resort action which is carried out only when the ECLC Administration feels that such action is in the best interest of the child or the other children enrolled. If the ECLC is unable to meet the needs of the child and/or family, every effort will be made to refer the parent to a more appropriate program for their child.

The circumstances under which a child's enrollment may be terminated are explained below:

1. The child exhibits extremely aggressive behavior which endangers others.
2. The child's health and safety at the preschool cannot be assured due to circumstances such as impulsive, risk-taking behavior.
3. Unwillingness of the parent(s) to work with teachers in the management of their child's behavior, and/or refusal to follow the ECLC's recommendations for support services.
4. The child's developmental needs are not being met at the ECLC due to general immaturity. Behavior indicative of a child's immaturity may include severe ongoing separation issues, excessive need for teacher attention, and inability to function independently or within the group.
5. The child has individual special needs which require accommodations causing an undue burden on the ECLC staff.
6. Nonpayment of tuition or excessively late payments.
7. Parent's display of inappropriate behavior towards staff or children, such as disrespectful language, disregarding program policies, verbal and/or physical harassment or any unlawful behavior.
9. Falsifying information on child's enrollment forms.

Parents will receive a written warning with an explanation of the reasons for possible termination or suspension of a child's enrollment, prior to a formal suspension or termination letter. and the circumstances under which the child may return.

## Statement of Understanding and Handbook Receipt

The purpose of this Family Handbook is to ensure that we provide children with a safe and secure learning environment. All of the information outlined is important for the education and protection of your child. Please read the entire handbook, sign this form and return it to the administrative office of the ECLC.

In doing so, you acknowledge the ECLC has provided you with a copy of the Family Handbook. You also acknowledge you have read and understand all policies and procedures presented in the ECLC Family Handbook. Lastly, you agree to follow all policies and procedures as written.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Child's Name (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# 2018/ 2019 ECLC Calendar

August '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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September '18						
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30						

October '18						
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28	29	30	31			

November '18						
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December '18						
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30	31					

January '19						
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27	28	29	30	31		

February '19						
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March '19						
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31						

April '19						
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28	29	30				

May '19						
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June '19						
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30						

July '19						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

ECLC closed/ holidays *	Teacher in-service days
Regular ECLC Semester days	Possible holiday camps
Start/End of the Academic year	

**Holidays:**

- Arafat Day  
Mon 20 Aug 2018
- Eid Al-Adha  
Tue 21 – Thu 23 Aug 2018
- Islamic New Year  
Tue 11 Sep 2018
- Prophet's Birthday  
Mon 19 Nov 2018
- Martyr's Day  
Fri 30 Nov 2018
- National Day  
Sun 2 – Mon 3 Dec 2018
- Isra Wal Miraj  
Wed 3 Apr 2019
- Eid Al-Fitr  
Tue 4 – Thu 6 Jun 2019