



# **Coker Early Learning Center** **2025-2026 PARENT HANDBOOK**

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## **1. Mission Statement**

The mission of Coker Methodist Church Early Learning Center (Coker ELC) is to provide a Christian ministry to the children and parents of the congregation and the surrounding community of Coker Methodist Church, one that is dedicated to the child's physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth and which encourages each child to grow in independence and to develop his/her own unique talent and ability.

## **2. Philosophy**

Coker Methodist Church Early Learning Center (Coker ELC) believes that through Christian caring, each child is helped to grow in independence and to develop his/her own unique talent and ability. Our program offers a variety of activities conducted in a Christian atmosphere, dedicated to the child's physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth. Our staff shows God's love through the Christian attitudes of Faith, Hope, and Love and we strive to accomplish our objectives using these attitudes. In faith the children learn to trust the dependability of those who love and care for them.

## **3. Enrollment and Employment**

As a ministry of Coker Methodist Church, Coker Early Learning Center welcomes children of any race, religious belief, or national heritage in Christian love and is an equal opportunity employer.

## **4. Program Goals**

Coker Early Learning Center offers a program that is based on the interest, needs, and abilities of children who range in age from 12 months old through Kindergarten. Children are enriched through experiences that provide opportunities to:

- ✚ grow in their understanding and enjoyment of themselves and others by learning to share, take turns, and play cooperatively;
- ✚ enrich their Christian values;
- ✚ become aware that their feelings and emotions are natural and acceptable;
- ✚ learn to express themselves in constructive ways;
- ✚ build a strong background of concrete experiences for language and cognitive development;
- ✚ journey through experiences of music, art, and movement;
- ✚ explore and extend new and familiar books, games, materials, and activities;
- ✚ experience different roles through dramatic play;
- ✚ express curiosity and wonder at all the varied and interesting aspects of God's creation;
- ✚ actively learn, explore, organize, and celebrate the world around them.

In partnership with other ministries of Coker Methodist Church, children of Coker Early Learning Center truly show ways to Love God - Serve Others - Change the World in ways that include collecting non-perishable food items for the CMC Food Pantry, retelling the story of Christmas for friends and family, and passing on donations of clothes, toys, and books to be a blessing to others.

Coker Early Learning Center is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The following policies are required by Child Care Licensing per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501.

## 5. HOURS OF OPERATION

The core schedule for Coker Early Learning Center is an 8:45 am-3:00 pm day, with flexible age directed scheduling offerings from 2 to 5 days a week, Monday-Friday. Extended hours are offered as early as 8:15am for children enrolled in the Before School Care and as late as 4:00pm for children enrolled in the After School Care program. Holidays for Coker Early Learning Center will reference the North East ISD traditional calendar holidays. (with the exception of ELECTION DAY in November, Early Dismissal Days & Staff Development Days) Additional days off are included in the Coker Early Learning Center school and summer calendars. Our traditional preschool calendar reflects a program start date in early September and an end date in late May. The extended program calendar, which offers summer enrollment options, is established and available in January.

## 6. ARRIVAL

Please allow enough time in the morning to ensure a smooth transition from home to school for your child. **(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Between 8:45am and 9:00am children are being led into their classrooms and the morning routine is well underway. When a child arrives after 9:00, it can be difficult for them to transition into the class routine with the rest of the children. Please do your best to have your child in class by 9:00am, to ease and support this transition time.

Texas Child Care Licensing mandates that each child be signed in and out each day. The arrival time must be recorded and initialed by the parent or caregiver. Children participating in carline will be logged in by the classroom teachers.

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Children enter the classroom and into their teachers' care, arm to arm, hand to hand, or independently. Parents do not enter the room with their child in support of their independence and the classroom routine set by the teachers. If a staff member notices anything unusual they are required to point this out to the parent at the time of arrival. Children may not enter the campus alone and must be escorted by an adult to their classroom.

## 7. DISMISSAL

The transition time of departure, from the classroom door to home, usually takes place between 2:30 pm and 3:00pm. **(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Texas Child Care Licensing mandates that each child be signed out each day noting time of departure and the signed initials of the parent or caregiver. All children in ratio at 3:00 will be signed-in by a teacher to an After School Care classroom in the Bertha Jones Building. The rate of \$1.00 per minute will be automatically assessed to the next month's statement for those not registered in the After School program.

### **ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL:**

*We encourage parents, guardians, caregivers,  
family members, etc. to refrain from using electronic devices when  
dropping off or picking up your child.*

*These are important times to be free to communicate with your child, your child's  
teachers,  
and other Coker Early Learning Center families.*

## **8. RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they must authorize another legal adult to supersede. Authorized adults must have their name, address, phone number, and relationship to child listed on the enrollment form. **(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** An authorized adult must bring a picture ID to the Coker Early Learning Center office before going to the classroom. Two members of the office staff will verify the ID before escorting the authorized individual to the child's classroom. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID. Children will not be released to a minor under the age of 18.

Please notify the Director of any person to whom your child should not be released to under any circumstances.

## **9. ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

Registration is held in January and February for the next school year. Parents will be notified of the registration dates in the program calendars in addition to being posted on the website. The first week of registration is open to families who are currently enrolled in the program, families who are members of Coker MC and alumni families. Open registration for new families begins the first week in February.

Registration for the current school year is ongoing as enrollment schedules remain available.

Upon selecting Coker Early Learning Center to meet your child's educational needs, enrollment paperwork must be on file and complete before the child can start our program. Forms for enrollment include:

- Admission Form
- Enrollment Schedule
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- Health Statement signed by the child's health care provider
- Current Immunization list
- Food Allergy Emergency Plan
- Tuition Agreement
- Tuition Express Form *-ACH Draft/Credit Card will be required*

Parents will be notified within 30 days of any policy change in writing and signatures from parents may be required.

Parents must notify Coker Early Learning Center in writing of any change in enrollment information, such as telephone numbers, home addresses, and email addresses.

## **10. LUNCH**

Parents provide a nutritious lunch each day in addition to a water bottle/sippy cup. Under the Department of Human Services guidelines, Coker Early Learning Center is required to request that children receive a protein, fruit, and vegetable in their lunch.

All food should be ready to eat - fruit peeled and cut up, sandwiches cut in small pieces. Parents help to keep meal time safe when grapes are sent cut in half and carrots and hot dogs are pre-cut into strips. Prepared food items are packed in plastic containers or a thermos. Glass containers and pull-tab cans are not allowed. Children also need eating utensils and a napkin-*just like at home.*

All food should be packed in containers that will keep it hot or cold if necessary. Please include a balance of foods chosen from the Basic 4 food groups: Dairy, Meat/Meat Alternative, Fruits/Vegetables and Grains. Well balanced meals provide the food children need to grow, think, fight infection and fuel their bodies. Parents are asked to limit cookies and sweets in their child's lunch. Water will be available for the children all day.

Any food that is not eaten during lunch will be sent home using the lunchbox containers. This is a great way to assess how much and what a child is eating.

## 11. SNACK TIME

We would like each child to experience a variety of foods that are nutritious, flavorful, and appealing to the senses. Foods can provide many learning experiences and we hope to make snack time as much of a learning experience as other times of the day. Snacks must be low in sugar and contain natural ingredients. Listed below are some healthy ideas that are easy to prepare for your child's daily lunch and snack time routine.

### **Fresh Fruit**

Orange	Pear	Apple
Banana	Grapefruit	Pineapple
Melon	Seedless grape	Peach

### **Cooked Foods**

Banana Bread	Bran Muffin	Oatmeal Bread
Raisin Bread	Pudding	Banana Muffin

### **Uncooked Vegetables**

Carrots	Celery	Cucumbers
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### **Variety**

Chex Mix	Triscuits	Graham Crackers
Pretzels	Raisins	Cheese and Crackers

Peanut Butter/Crackers	Dry Cereal	Yogurt
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Goldfish Crackers	Wheat Thins	Animal Crackers
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Mini Cheese/Crackers

## 12. FOOD ALLERGY

The Coker Early Learning Center office must be notified of all known food allergies. A Food Allergy Emergency Plan must be completed by the child's health care provider. Children with known food allergies will not be allowed to attend until the Food Allergy Emergency Plan is completed and on file. Teachers review the Food Allergy Emergency Plan with the Director.

Per The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Food Allergy Emergency Plan must be posted where food is served and prepared.

The Food Allergy Emergency Plan must include:

- The child's name
- What food the child is allergic to
- Sign of allergic reaction if given the food
- How to treat this reaction
- Alternative food to be given when substituting
- Signature from the child's health care professional

## 13. SHARED FOOD ITEMS

Coker Early Learning Center loves to celebrate seasonal holidays, birthdays, and special events. All food items that are brought into the classroom **must be purchased from a registered kitchen such as a bakery, restaurant, grocery store, etc.**

## 14. BIRTHDAYS

Sharing a birthday is a special time for children. We will celebrate birthdays during lunch or snack time. **(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Store bought desserts such as cupcakes or cookies that are child-size and ready to serve, are welcomed for this celebration. In recognition of the special day, we will sing our birthday song to the birthday child(ren) as part of morning Chapel. Please do not send invitations through the school backpack unless everyone in the class is invited.

## 15. SPECIAL EVENTS

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Coker Early Learning Center is a campus-based program that offers scheduled enrichment assemblies throughout the year in lieu of field trips. Should an event be scheduled on a day that your child(ren) is not enrolled, you are invited and encouraged to attend the program with your child(ren).

## 16. ANIMALS

From time to time, Coker Early Learning Center may have classroom pets that meet the requirements by Texas Child Care Licensing. Prior to having animals on campus parents will receive notice in an email or in the monthly newsletter/calendar. Teachers and children will practice good hygiene and hand washing after handling or coming into contact with an animal and items used by an animal, such as water bowls, food bowls, and cages.

## 17. PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Open communication with parents is very important for children's success. Coker Early Learning Center has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging that communication has taken place. Listed below are ways that Coker Early Learning Center may communicate with parents:

- Through email notifications;
- Information bulletin board in the Bertha Jones building;
- Written memos placed in your child's travel folder;
- Social media site such as Facebook;
- Verbal communication with the child's teachers and Director.

Parents will be notified:

- If the child is injured and the injury requires medical attention;
- If the child has a symptom requiring exclusion from care;
- If the child has been involved in any situation that placed the child at risk;
- If any situation renders the center unsafe;
- If a less serious injury or incident takes place, parents will be notified at pick-up;
- If there are any changes to policies or procedures;
- If there is a change in the staff working with your child on an everyday basis;
- If there is an outbreak of any communicable disease.

Parents are encouraged to attend the Parent/Teacher conferences as your partnership and understanding of our curriculum and expectations is imperative for the success of your child. Conferences are held in January for children in the 3's and 4's classes. Conferences are scheduled during the fall and spring semesters for students enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten-Gift of Time and Kindergarten. In addition, parents are welcome to schedule individual conferences with their child's teacher.

## 18. PARENT PARTICIPATION

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** We encourage parent involvement and welcome parents on campus. Classroom teachers will communicate classroom needs in preparation of special events and activities.

Parents attending class parties or events will participate in the classroom activities. Positive memories are made when parents are engaged in the child-centered event and activities. Cell phone and extended personal adult conversations are not welcome as they are a distraction.

We ask that only the children enrolled in the class attend the party. Please do your best to make arrangements for siblings.

Parents who are on campus at the time of a drill or emergency event will be required to participate fully in the exercise or procedure taking place.

## 19. BREASTFEEDING

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Coker Early Learning Center provides a comfortable chair in a location away from the classroom for mothers who wish to breastfeed their child. In addition, parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care. Please contact the office for additional information.

## **20. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

Parents who have questions about the program, policies, or procedures are encouraged to visit with the Director. Parents are invited to call or email the Director to schedule a time to visit. Through open communication, we can ensure that all parties are well informed and working as partners in the child's education.

## **21. TRANSPORTATION**

Coker Early Learning Center is a campus-based program and does not provide transportation, except in emergency situations.

## **22. WATER ACTIVITIES**

Coker Early Learning Center does not include splashing/wading water activities as part of our program offerings.

## **23. DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY**

Coker Early Learning Center staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Just a few examples used in this situation include praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior, reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements and redirecting behaviors. Coker Early Learning Center does not use "time out" as a form of managing behavior. Coker Early Learning Center staff will never use Corporal Punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding;
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control; and
- A positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:
  - Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
  - Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
  - Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
  - Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. The focus is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules. Consistently giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them to develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior. Positive cooperation is required from the family when dealing with disruptive behavior. We feel that consistency between home and school is the best way to handle these issues.

#### **24. CEASING SERVICE**

Coker Early Learning Center reserves the right to terminate care for the child for discipline problems at any time. A child that exhibits recurrent or extreme behavior, such as but not limited to, biting or aggressive behavior, may be asked to leave the program. We reserve the right to refuse continuing service to a child due to a child, parent, or guardian's behavior as well. After a parent has been notified that service has been discontinued, there will be an opportunity to meet with the liaison pastor to resolve the situation. If the situation has not been resolved after meeting has occurred, then the discontinuance will result. No reduction or refund of tuition fees will be given in these situations.

#### **25. SERVING CHILDREN**

Although we attempt to meet the needs of each child, we are not equipped to serve children with certain physical, behavioral, and/or learning styles, needs, and/or disabilities. In the event we cannot adequately meet your child's needs, we will notify you.

#### **26. ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Coker Early Learning Center will take precautions to provide a healthy environment for all children. This includes refusing to admit sick children into the classroom and isolating children who become ill while in our care. If the teacher suspects that a child is ill, the teacher will bring the child to the Coker Early Learning Center office. An office staff member (Director, Assistant Director, or Administrative Assistant) will conduct a basic health check which includes taking the child's temperature and a visual assessment of the child to identify any other potential concerns about the child's health.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child apart from the other children with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices.

**Parents need to pick up children within 1 hour of notification.**

If a child is sent home sick from our program, they may not return until the child is symptom-free *without* medication for 24-hours.

In addition, the teachers make every effort to help children observe good health habits such as using tissues for cleaning noses, washing hands, wearing jackets when needed, etc. These daily health practices will help keep down the incidents of viruses and other illnesses.

A child should not be brought to school if they have experienced or are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 100.4° or higher in the last 24 hours
- diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- taking antibiotics for less than 24 hours
- heavy nasal discharge
- constant cough
- sad, fussy, cranky, or generally not himself/herself

- contagious skin rash
- head lice or nits
- any symptoms of possible communicable disease.

All children will be involved in physical activities, indoors and outdoors, as an important part of the curriculum. If a child is well enough to come to school, they will be expected to participate in all activities.

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Parents are asked to contact the Coker Early Learning Center office should their child have a communicable disease such as, but not limited to chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, fifth disease, ringworm, pinworm, impetigo, Influenza, or head lice. An advisory health form letter will be sent via email, to the families of the class, notifying parents that their child has been exposed to a contagious illness.

Coker Early Learning Center is required to follow guidelines set by the state when the child may return to school after being absent due to a contagious illness. Children excluded from school because of a communicable disease or injury may be re-admitted when the child has received a letter from the physician, stating that he/she is no longer contagious and/or is free of symptoms and infection, and may participate fully in all activities.

## **27. MEDICATION**

Due to the length of the school day, the Coker Early Learning Center staff will **NOT** administer medication other than prescriptions that are used as emergency prevention such as inhalers and EpiPens with doctors' orders defining the 'when' and 'how' the medication is to be administered to the named child.

Please remember, Coker Early Learning Center is designed for **well** children. If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- All prescribed emergency prevention medication must be in the original container and may not be expired.
- All prescription medication must be labeled with the child's name, physician's name, the name and strength of the drug, the amount to be given, the frequency of administration, and the date of the prescription.
- Non-prescription ointment/cream must be labeled with the child's name and may only be administered by following the manufacturer's recommendation on the label.
- The initial dose of any medication must be administered at home.
- Before any emergency prevention medication prescription or non-prescription medication can be administered, Coker Early Learning Center must have the written permission of the child's parent or guardian. Parents/guardians must complete the Medical Authorization Form; available in the Coker Early Learning Center office.
- Medication must be taken home the last day it is to be administered.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent should be applied at home.

No medicine, vitamins, inhalers, ointment, cough drops, sunscreen, insect repellent, etc. should be placed in the child's backpack or lunch box. All medication is stored and administered in the Coker Early Learning Center Office by office staff; Director, Assistant Director, or Administrative Assistant.

Health forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment showing any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history.

Parents provide the Coker Early Learning Center office updated medical records, immunizations, and general health statements from their child's doctor. All student files must be kept current.

### **28. WELL CHECKS**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Coker Early Learning Center staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual they are required to point this out to the parent at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects.

### **29. VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES**

While the safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employees. Vaccines that we currently recommend our employees receive:

- Influenza (annually)
- Pertussis (Tdap)

If the employee is not exempt from having these immunizations, Coker Early Learning Center recommends that employees consider these immunizations. There will be no discrimination or retaliatory action against any employee who does/does not receive immunizations for vaccine-preventable illness.

### **30. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Immunization records must be current for all children. A copy must be in the child's file. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that your child's immunizations are current. Failure to keep children current on immunizations may lead to disenrollment.

From time to time Coker Early Learning Center may have children enrolled that have not received immunizations due to personal belief. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children. Per federal law, child care programs are prohibited from discriminating against a family's personal belief, including immunizations.

### **31. TUBERCULIN TESTING REQUIREMENTS**

Based on local health department guidelines, proof of TB testing is not required in order to be enrolled or employed in our program.

### **32. HEARING AND VISION REQUIREMENTS**

Parents must update their child's Coker Early Learning Center record to include documentation of the vision and hearing screening for children who turn 4 years old. The Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for children who are 4 years old and of certain grades. Parents may refer to 25 TAC Chapter 37, Subchapter C, relating to Vision and Hearing Screening, for specifics on vision and hearing screening. This information may be accessed on the Internet at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/vhs/](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vhs/).

### **33. EMERGENCIES**

If a minor injury or accident should occur, the staff will administer basic first aid. An Incident/Accident Report will be completed describing the nature of the injury and the first aid that was applied if necessary. This written notification will be sent home by the teacher to the parents.

If a medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency) should occur, the staff will administer first aid, if necessary dial 911 for assistance, and contact the parents. Parents will be notified immediately using the information provided in the child's enrollment packet. If the parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified.

If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance the staff will contact the Poison Control Center [1.800.222.1222](tel:1.800.222.1222).

**All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency. Please remember to keep your child's records up to date.**

Coker Early Learning Center has an Emergency Preparedness Plan in place. Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Routes are posted in every classroom. Fire drills are practiced every month and severe weather and lock down drills are held four times a year. Parents are encouraged to read this information carefully. In the event a parent is present in the building during an emergency, Coker Early Learning Center will ask parents to participate accordingly.

In the event of a disaster or emergency, all children will remain on the church-school part of campus until the Director or local authority declares they can be safely released to an authorized person. In the event of an emergency or disaster that would make it necessary for the Coker Early Learning Center program to evacuate the church-school part of campus, Coker MC Park/Scout Lodge, will be the place of evacuation relocation or Shearer Hills Baptist Church 12315 U.S. Hwy 281, San Antonio, TX 78216 - [\(210\) 545-2300](tel:2105452300) if required to evacuate the property of Coker MC.

Parents/guardians will be notified by phone and as soon as children are safely secured and will be given information on the status of the emergency pick-up procedures. The Emergency Preparedness Plan requires the same verification process for allowing adults to pick-up children from Coker Early Learning Center to be followed to release children. The only persons listed on

the child's enrollment form, as authorized to pick up, will be allowed to do so after showing photo ID.

In the event of a fire, teachers will guide their class to the proper fire exit and designated exterior meeting place. The fire department, Director, or person in charge will communicate re-entry to the building or to begin appropriate evacuation relocation procedures.

If local authorities declare a Shelter-In-Place Emergency, due to an explosion, toxic fumes, etc. the children will remain or return indoors. The rooms will be closed and will not reopen for any reason until local authorities have declared the danger has passed.

In the event of a tornado or severe storm warnings all classes will be guided to the closest area designated as an inclement weather meeting place in a sitting position with their arms covering their heads. The campus will then be closed and not to reopen until advised by the Director or person in charge that the bad weather has passed.

In the event of a threat to the well-being of the children by an intruder, the facility will be placed in lock-down until the proper authorities declare the campus is secure. The staff will escort the children to the closest room, lock the door, cover the windows, and wait for further directions. If the threat of a bomb, or other threat, should be made, the Director or person in charge will immediately notify authorities by calling 911 and respond to the situation accordingly.

### **34. CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS**

Coker Early Learning Center staff members are **REQUIRED** by Texas State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) any instance when there is reason to **suspect** the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Our staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. Coker Early Learning Center has made a commitment to help increase awareness and prevention techniques to employees and parents through trainings, memos and monthly newsletters. Coker Early Learning Center will also coordinate with community organizations on strategies to prevent abuse and neglect.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or DFPS are called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of DFPS or the police when they are called.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues.

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit [www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html](http://www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html) .

The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, and the website is [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org) if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

### **35. GANG-FREE ZONE**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Coker Early Learning Center is a GANG-FREE ZONE.

### **36. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS**

Coker Early Learning Center is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and we follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review a copy of these standards in our front office or view the standards online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Child\\_Care\\_Standards\\_and\\_Regulations/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default.asp).

### **37. LICENSING**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services licenses the weekday program at Coker MC. All the enrollment, health, and operational details are inspected and approved by this body. If you would like to see a copy of the latest standards and/or inspection report, they are posted on our parent communication board in the Bertha Jones building or available at [www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Search\\_Texas\\_Child\\_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp).

Parents may also contact our local child care licensing office at (210) 337-3103. It is a state law and the responsibility of Coker Early Learning Center to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The Abuse Hotline is (800) 252-5400. The Website address is: [www.txchildcaresearch.org](http://www.txchildcaresearch.org).

### **38. REGISTRATION FEES**

A non-refundable annual registration fee is due with the application at the time of registration; \$200 for first child; \$100.00 for each additional sibling. Coker Methodist Church members will receive \$25 off the Registration Fee total. Registration fees are non-refundable without exception.

### **39. TUITION AND ADDITIONAL FEES**

***Families will be required to establish an account for  
Registration and scheduled Tuition payments.***

***Family Accounts may be processed as an ACH draft or Credit Card payment.***

One-half of the first month's tuition is due on the first Monday of June, prior to the beginning of the new school year. In addition, an Annual Supply fee is charged based on the number of days that a child attends the program. These fees are non-refundable without exception.

When registration takes place after the first Monday in June the above tuition and fees are assessed at that time.

The Coker Early Learning Center monthly tuition is figured by a calculated annual sum divided into 9 equal monthly payments, September through May. Tuition is due by the first of each month and is considered late after the 5th of each month. A \$25.00 late fee is applied to monthly tuition paid after the 5th. Any check returned or credit card processed for non-payment will be subject to a \$25.00 Returned Check Fee/Declined Processing Fee.

Any account delinquent more than 15 days will result in the participant being withdrawn from the program. Tuition for the last month of a school year must be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> (with late fee paid after the 5<sup>th</sup>) of that month or the participant will be withdrawn from the program effective on the 11<sup>th</sup> of that month. See Coker Methodist Church Tuition and Fees Policy in this handbook.

Coker Early Learning Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. These specified times are the only hours that Coker Early Learning Center is licensed by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to care for children. If you are late picking up your child, a \$1.00 PER MINUTE late penalty will be charged to your account. Late penalties will be automatically assessed to your account.

#### **40. DROP-IN**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** The opportunity for a child to attend, on a day that is in addition to their schedule, including Before and After School Care, is based on availability per classroom ratio. **The request to Drop-In must be made and confirmed by the Director or Assistant Director or Administrative Assistant.**

**Drop-Ins: Ages 12 months to 4 years:**

A \$50 fee per drop-in will be billed on the next month's statement by the CELC office. Drop-ins **must be prescheduled and confirmed through the Director's office, 494-5061.**

#### **41. ORIENTATION**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** "Meet the Teachers" is a scheduled morning event held the Friday prior to the beginning of a new school year. Parents with children starting after the start of the new school year are welcome to schedule a time with the Director for their child to meet their teacher and see the room. We will be happy to work with you in making the process of entering a new preschool as smooth as possible. Having children meet their teachers in the school setting is a valuable tool in building a trusting relationship between the child and their teachers and is most beneficial in helping to ensure a smooth and successful transition from home to school.

#### **42. MORNING CHAPEL**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** The preschool is a ministry of Coker Methodist Church, a Christian community. Children who attend Coker Early Learning Center gather each morning for a time of worship, learning, and celebration. During Morning Chapel, we come together in prayer as songs are sung and Bible stories are shared. Focusing on God's amazing love for us, we are encouraged to love others in His name. Our Coker Early Learning Center Family celebrates the birthdays of our friends and teachers during Morning Chapel, too! Parents are always welcome to join us during Chapel.

#### 43. MUSIC AND FITNESS

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Music and fitness are fun ways for children to learn to engage, inspire, and grow in the world around them. Coker Early Learning Center offers Music and Fitness, an average of once a week, for children 12 months old to Kindergarten. In addition, children 12 months old to Kindergarten participate in morning and afternoon play time outdoors.

Fitness time and early childhood go hand in hand. The Coker Early Learning Center Fitness Teacher provides opportunities for children to practice their growing skills. Directed play and physical education develops control and coordination, how to stop and start, and how to move within personal space. In addition, confidence and self-esteem are fostered as each child participates in fun skill activity challenges; individually and in large and small groups.

Music is an integral part of the Coker Early Learning Center experience. The Music Teacher uses songs and movement to stimulate brain development along with creating a love for music. Song lyrics develop language, instrumentation and rhythm develop logic, and dynamics and tone promote creative expression. Our music class encourages children to explore their world through creativity and sound, as well as helping to build their self-esteem and relationships with other children around them.

#### 44. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Attendance, health, and registration information records are kept on your child. These are considered confidential and will not be released to anyone other than qualified CELC personnel or State Licensing personnel without written permission from the child's parent(s).

#### 45. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Children must be signed in at the time of arrival and signed out at the time of departure by a parent or caregiver. Classroom teachers will support parents with reminders. The Director will provide additional support to this parent responsibility when needed. Parents who consistently fail to sign children in or out, after visiting with the Director, will be charged a \$5 penalty for each occurrence.

Please understand that due to liability issues, staff of Coker Early Learning Center are not permitted to take children home from our center.

#### 46. PARENT SUPERVISION AND PARTICIPATION

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Families are welcome to enjoy the playground areas on campus. With safety in mind, parents are required to supervise and participate in meeting the needs of their child while on campus **both before and after school.**

School playground expectations should be reinforced by the supervising parent and followed by the children. Safety standards include:

- Shoes are worn at all times.
- We look at the beautiful plants and never pick or pull off the berries, leaves, flowers, etc.

- Equipment railings are there to keep us safe from falling; not to climb on.
- Go up the stairs and down the slide.
- The bar or caps over the slides remind us to sit down; not to swing on.
- Feet stay on the ground around the mirrors, drums, play house, and log of the front and back play grounds.
- The side playground is designed to be used by children who are 12-35 months old, **only**.
- Play equipment used by 12-35 month-old children **must** stay on the side playground.
- Material that is in the sensory/sand tables (soil, sand, beans, etc.) must remain inside the sensory table.
- The lids of each sensory/sand tables are on and in place when not in use.
- Handrails on the stairs of the buildings are for hands only; no climbing or swinging.
- Children using the bathroom or getting a drink of water from the water fountain must be accompanied by a parent.
- Bathrooms and water fountains, **located by the Chapel** should be used before and after school.
- Children are in the immediate presence of a supervising adult when near the gate, whether it is open or closed.

If you find yourself unsure of a safety standard - feel free to ask your child, "What would your teacher say?" If you are still unsure, ask the Director. Respectfully, parents are asked to supervise and manage social issues that may arise between the children as they are playing. This is a fun place for parents and children alike! Thank you for working together to continue the tradition of fun family gatherings.

#### **47. PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** In order not to confuse school toys with a child's personal property, we ask that children not bring playthings from home. Please leave all valuable items at home since Coker Early Learning Center cannot be responsible for lost or broken items. It is very difficult for a young child to share a favorite toy brought from home, therefore, we ask that toys be left at home. Two exceptions to this would be for the purpose of naptime or Show & Tell. You will be notified by your child's teacher if and when the class will have Show & Tell.

Guns, swords, knives, and other war toys are not allowed at Coker Early Learning Center even on "Show and Tell" days.

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible teaching atmosphere for your child:

- Children arrive to his/her classroom by 9:00am.
- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to the teacher or Director.
- Pick up and read the notices and information left for you in your child's communication station or folder, posted outside your child's classroom, and/or in an e-mail.
- Pick up your child's papers/projects daily. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communication between parent and child and helps the parent share in the child's day.
- Routinely check on your child's supply of extra clothing. Please remove soiled clothing promptly.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services does not allow smoking, vaping, or the use of any tobacco product on the premises, either indoors or outdoors.

#### **48. CANCELLATIONS**

Since it is assumed at registration that each child has committed to the entire school year, parents must give the Director of Coker Early Learning Center a two week minimum notice if you decide to withdraw your child from the program. **NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN FOR CANCELLATIONS.** A child withdrawn from the school at any time during the last two months of school, April and May, will be required to make full tuition payments for those months.

#### **49. CUSTODY SITUATIONS**

Coker Early Learning Center prefers NOT to get involved with custody disputes. Coker Early Learning Center will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. *PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.* With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents' information. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on campus, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, Coker Early Learning Center has the right to terminate care.

#### **50. CLOSING DUE TO EMERGENCY OR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Parents are advised to watch the news and if NEISD schools are closed, then assume Coker Early Learning Center is closed as well. **NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN for holidays and Emergency Closings.**

In case of serious emergencies such as earthquakes, fire, storms, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified, if possible, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

## 51. ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

Coker Early Learning Center encourages each child to grow in their own independence as parents and teachers work together to encourage them in that direction.

The teachers each have a routine and a set of classroom guidelines that are shared during Parent Orientation. By the end of the first week or two, the children will already be familiar with those procedures. Grown-ups can help by:

- Telling the little one goodbye in the car (if using morning carline) or at the classroom door without walking into the room. **(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)**
- Teachers assist the children as backpacks, folders, water, snacks, etc., are properly placed. This, too, is a learning experience that is guided by the classroom teachers.

Parents and caregivers make their “goodbye” brief and positive. Coker Early Learning Center teachers are excellent at handling emotions that may arise when learning something new. During the day, parents can call the Coker Early Learning Center office, and one of us will gladly go and check on your child.

## 52. MORNING CAR LINE

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Parents who have children enrolled in our 3’s, 4’s, Pre-Kindergarten-Gift Of Time, and Kindergarten classes are able to participate in carline. Morning Carline begins promptly at 8:45 and ends promptly at 9:00 each morning. Coker Early Learning Center staff members follow three steps upon opening a vehicle:

1. assist each child safely out of the vehicle.
2. each child’s back pack and lunch box will be taken out of the vehicle.
3. the child(ren) will be assisted in his or her readiness to move forward safely in their day with their belongings before joining the group.

On occasion, a child may have a hard time transitioning out of the vehicle. In such situations, the Coker Early Learning Center staff member assisting to receive the child will ask that the parent/guardian park their vehicle and walk the child to his or her class.

Parents/guardians remain in the vehicle and in the receiving line at all times. Safety is a priority. The attempt to go around another vehicle is not acceptable.

## 53. CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Classroom assignments are based on each individual child’s chronological age, developmental age, emotional age, and physical age. Coker Early Learning Center transitions children to new classrooms at the beginning of each school year. Class assignments are finalized by the Director based on the individual needs of each child.

#### 54. CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

Coker Early Learning Center provides low classroom ratios in all age groups. From time to time, we may follow state ratios, but will never be non-compliant unless under emergency situations.

12-17 months- 2:8	3 years old: 2:12
18-23 months- 2:9	4 years old: 2:14
24-29 months- 2:10	PreK/Gift of Time: 2:14
30-35 months- 2:10	Kindergarten: 2:14

#### 55. OFFERINGS PER AGE GROUP

Children 12 to 35 months old love to play and love to learn! Coker Early Learning Center recognizes the importance of understanding developmental milestones. As children explore, create, and navigate their environment they are also growing socially and emotionally in relationships with their peers and teachers. Developmentally Appropriate Practices guide the implementation of age-appropriate experiences to include art, music, literature, and manipulatives to create an exciting and *wonder filled* environment.

**12 to 35 months old:** The child's age on September 1st of the school year.

##### **12-17 months**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

Select any number and combination of days, from 2-5 days per week.

##### **18-23 months**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

Select any number and combination of days, from 2-5 days per week.

##### **24-29 months**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

A minimum of two days is required; with the option to select any combination of two or more days per week.

##### **30-35 months**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

A minimum of two days is required; with the option to select any combination of two or more days per week.

**\*\*If your child misses his/her regularly scheduled day, you may not substitute or switch days.**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this) Sample Daily Schedule**

8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Teachers welcome children into the classroom
8:45 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.	Centers
9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Chapel
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Centers/Art/Circle Time
9:30 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.	Scheduled Music and Fitness Classes on Assigned Days and Times
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Playground
11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Lunch
11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Music and Movement, Book and Puzzle Centers

12:00 p.m. to 12:20 p.m.	Playground
12:20 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Prepare for Rest/Nap Time
12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Rest/Nap Time
2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.	Snack/Centers
2:30 p.m. to 2:57 p.m.	Clean Up and Parent Dismissal
2:57 p.m.	Go to Extended Care
3:00 p.m.	Extended Care Begins

**Preschool - Children 3 and 4 years old:** The child’s age on September 1st of the school year. Coker Early Learning Center recognizes that children learn best by actively engaging with friends, teachers, and their environment. Teachers support children as they explore concepts through play and are involved in hands-on experiences. Coker Early Learning Center is a place where essential readiness skills are nurtured through music, art, literature, play, investigation, and of course, fun! Developmentally Appropriate Practices guide the implementation of age-appropriate activities and materials for exciting and curiosity-filled environments.

### **3 and 4 year olds**

Core Schedules: Minimum of any 3 days      Monday – Friday

Parents have the option to enhance their child’s core schedule by selecting any combination of **additional** days, Monday through Friday, space permitting. Contact the Director anytime you would like to inquire about the opportunity to increase your current schedule.

**\*\*If your child misses his/her regularly scheduled day, you may not substitute or switch days.**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)**

#### **Sample Daily Schedule**

8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Carline Begins and Teachers welcome children into the classroom
8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Table Activities/Manipulatives
9:00 a.m. to 9:05 a.m.	Clean Up
9:05 a.m. to 9:25 a.m.	Circle Time: Attendance/Pledge/Weather/Job Chart/ Calendar Let’s Get Ready. Today we will...
9:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.	Chapel
9:45 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.	Teacher Led Learning Activities (whole group/small group), Child Led Learning Activities, and Scheduled Playground, Music/Fitness Class
11:40 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.	Lunch
12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.	Teacher Led Learning Activities (whole group/small group), Child Led Learning Activities, and Scheduled Playground
1:45 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.	Quiet/Nap Time
2:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Snack/Centers
2:45 p.m. to 2:57 p.m.	Clean-Up/Circle Time/Dismissal
2:57 p.m.	Teachers will leave the room for After School Care
3:00 p.m.	Extended Care Begins

## Class Offerings for Pre-Kindergarten: Gift of Time and Kindergarten

**PRE-KINDERGARTEN - GIFT OF TIME:** This is a specially designed class for children who turn 5 years old during the late spring or summer months. The Pre-Kindergarten - Gift of Time class provides opportunities for children to grow emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually, and raises Kindergarten readiness skills. Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) are used to develop concepts in the areas of language, writing, mathematics, and science providing a relaxed and enjoyable classroom environment.

**KINDERGARTEN:** The Kindergarten class embraces each child's natural enthusiasm for learning as they grow intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally. The active learning environment in which academic skills and content are taught using Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) prepares children for First Grade. Students are engaged in academic content through hands-on activities and concrete experiences.

Core Schedule: Monday - Friday 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this) Sample Daily Schedule**

8:45 a.m. to 9:10 a.m.	Opening Activity
9:10 a.m. to 9:25 a.m.	Morning Meeting
9:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.	Chapel
9:50 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Snack
10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Small Group Rotations
10:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.	Playground
10:50 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Continue Small Group Rotations T/TH (Fitness or Music)
12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Quiet Time
1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.	Group Activity or Interest Area
1:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Story Time then Get Ready To Go Home
2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.	Outdoor Play
2:30 p.m. to 2:40 p.m.	Closing Circle
2:45 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Dismissal
3:00 p.m.	Extended Care Begins

### **56. QUIET/NAP TIME**

Supervised rest periods are provided for all children under five years of age, and for all other children who show a need for a rest time; as required by the state. Your child will be provided a mat to rest on for quiet/naptime. Parents provide a clean crib sheet for naptime and take them home each day for washing. You may also bring in a small blanket, pillow, or stuffed animal if desired, but they must be able to fit in your child's cubby/backpack. The stage is set for all children to experience a calm rest period as the classroom lights are dimmed, soft music is played, as teachers provide supervision and support. All children are expected to participate in quiet/nap time. A child who is awake after resting or sleeping will be provided an alternative, quiet mat activity until the class quiet/nap time is over.

Children enrolled in the 12-17 months old class: Each child participates in a supervised nap period that compliments their developmental needs and routine of the day in a crib that is labeled with

his or her name. Each day, parents provide tight fitting crib sheets to cover the firm full-size waterproof crib mattress. Children that are not yet able to turn over on their own will be placed in a face-up sleeping position, unless there is a Sleep Exception Form on file, that has been completed and signed by a health-care professional, stating that a different sleeping position, swaddling, or sleeping in a restrictive device is medically necessary. As long as the child is content and responsive, he or she may remain in their crib for 30 minutes after awakening.

### 57. DAILY NEEDS

Children enrolled for a full day, 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. will bring

- Well balanced lunch that is prepared and ready to eat.
- Healthy Snack.
- A freshly laundered crib sheet to use as a mat cover and a blanket to be sent each day. Nap/bed rolls are not needed. Coker ELC provides cribs/mats for nap time.
- Refillable water cup/bottle that is leak-proof and labeled with child's name. Parents will send the water cup/bottle with water each morning.
- Disposable diapers are required for children not yet potty trained. **We prefer NO PULL-UPS.**
- An extra set of weather appropriate, change of clothes in their school bag. Clothes are best contained in a gallon size zip bag labeled with your child's name. It is always best to be prepared for the unexpected accident or spill.
- Regular-sized backpacks are requested for Preschool children. Your child's backpack needs to be large enough to hold a class folder, water bottle, crib sheet and small blanket, and a lunch box inside or attached.
- ALL items brought to school must be clearly marked with the child's name.

Shoes should provide protection for the entire foot. Children need to wear rubber sole tennis shoes/sneakers. For your child's safety, flip-flops, shoes that are open on the sides, cowboy boots, and slip-ons shoes **are not** allowed. Washable, comfortable, and weather appropriate dress is best. Independence is supported when the fasteners on shoes are child-friendly.

### 58. CLOTHING

All children need to bring a complete, weather appropriate, change of clothes in their school bag. Clothes are best contained in a gallon size zip bag labeled with your child's name. It is always best to be prepared for the unexpected accident or spill. Accidents can happen, even for the older preschoolers, or if they spill during lunchtime. Boots, sandals and flip flops are prohibited. Please dress your children in play clothes since PLAY is what we do! Independence is supported when the fasteners on clothing are child-friendly. If rain boots/galoshes are worn, appropriate footwear must be available in the child's backpack.

### 59. OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine. Children should be prepared to play outside two times every day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. Per the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children too sick to go outside should not be at school. Children may not wear flip flops, boots or sandals due to the danger these may cause on the playground. No playground if temperature is below 40 degrees F. or wind chill is below 35, Or temperature is above 98 degrees F. or heat index above 100.

## **60. PARENT OBSERVATION**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Parents who wish to observe their child at work may do so at any time. Please keep in mind that for infants, toddlers, and children new to attending school, a visit can be confusing and demands yet another separation adjustment for them. To observe their child, or assist teachers with activities, parents must sign-in with the office and wear a name tag while on campus. Visitors in the room are asked to respect the schedule of the teachers and children by not intervening or interrupting activities and lessons.

## **61. SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES**

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Parents of children enrolled in the 12 to 35 month classrooms are required to personally escort their child(ren) to their classroom to sign their child into and out of care each day. Children enrolled in the 3 years to Kindergarten classes, who are not participating in Morning Carline, must be personally escorted to their classroom and signed in by their parent each day.

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Parents are welcome to visit the center any time during the day to observe their child without prior approval. To observe their child, parents must sign in at the front desk and wear a name tag while on campus.

Coker Early Learning Center practices components of the emergency preparedness plan; fire drill every month; sheltering drill for severe weather at least four times in a calendar year; and lock-down drill for a volatile or endangering person on the premises or in the area at least four times in a calendar year.

Parents will be notified of any incidents other than minor scrapes or bumps with a phone call. We will also give you a written report at pick up time. First aid will be applied to minor incidents. In the event medical attention is required, we will notify you immediately. Parents are responsible for all medical fees.

## **62. PHOTOGRAPHS**

Coker Early Learning Center believes in the benefit of using real life pictures in our educational program. Images of children may be taken individually, with classmates, of work samples, during special events, for classroom displays, or to be used for special projects/crafts

**(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Please note: during certain parent events, such as the Fall Parade, Friendship Feast, Christmas program, Art Walk and Fiesta, photographs and video may be taken. As a part of the enrollment package, each family will sign a Media Release form indicating their preference for video/photographs of their child.

## **63. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Coker Early Learning Center staff members are prohibited from outside employment with parents of children **in their current classroom**. This includes, but is not limited to, babysitting and/or nanny- type jobs.

#### 64. BITING

The best way to deal with biting is consistency between teachers and parents. Biting could occur for multiple reasons. Proper communication will help determine why a child is biting. Coker Early Learning Center will work with parents when biting becomes a problem. When working to find the proper solution, every effort to support the child will be made in ways that may include and reflect awareness, communication, redirection, environment, time away, and dismissal.

#### 65. CELL PHONES

Proper parent communication is imperative when working with young children. It is difficult to communicate when cell phones are in use. Effective December 1, 2010, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services passed new regulations prohibiting the personal use of cell phones in classrooms. For the safety of our children and families **cell phones are NOT to be used**. Once you enter the campus, parents, guardians, and caregivers are asked to put phones away until you have departed the church campus. Whether driving or walking, we ask that your attention be on your little one and the other families around you - *enhancing campus safety and friendliness*.

#### 66. PARKING LOT SAFETY

- Park ONLY in areas designated for parking – ***between two yellow lines***.
- Children should never be allowed to run freely in the parking lot. Please hold your child's hand at all times in the parking lot.
- Do not leave the engine running in the parking lot.
- Drive slowly through the parking lot at all times.
- Follow directional arrows and signs in the parking lot.
- Refrain from cell phone use at all times while driving in the parking lot.
- Make sure your child is properly restrained in their car seat before leaving your parking space. It is unlawful to transport a child without a safety belt or restraint.
- Do not leave personal articles (purses, etc.) in your car while entering the building. Coker Early Learning Center and CMC are not responsible for items stolen or damaged in your car.

***Do not leave a child unattended in a car at any time. This is against the law!***

***If you need assistance please call the***

***Coker Early Learning Center Office, 494-5061, and ask for assistance.***

#### 67. POTTY TRAINING

It is expected that children entering a three year old preschool class will be potty trained. The Coker Early Learning Center definition of "potty trained" is:

- The child is able to inform the teacher of their need to use the potty, so the teacher can take him/her to the restroom.
- The child can independently take clothing on and off.
- The child can independently get on and off the toilet and wipe his/her own bottom and wash their own hands.

If parents feel this may be difficult for their child, they should discuss the situation with the

Director as soon as possible. If after two weeks of school the teachers feel that a child is not potty trained, the child may be asked to take a break from school until potty training is accomplished.

Teachers and parents of children in the younger classes will work together during the potty training process. Consistency between home and school ensures success for the child.

When potty training or once potty trained, children need to be able to remove and put on their own clothes. Belts, overalls, pants with snaps, long dresses or shirts that fall into the toilet are difficult for the children to manage. ***Dress for Success... isn't only for adults.*** 😊

## 68. CAMPUS SECURITY

- **(Please see the attached COVID-19 Policies & Procedures for updates regarding this)** Parents with children enrolled in the Rector Building classrooms must enter through the black courtyard gate at all times.
- After peak drop-off and pick-up times, all visitors will be asked to sign in/out of the campus and wear a name tag. All other visitors will be directed to other entrances that do not have access to the preschool area.
- Classroom Dutch-doors in the Wesley Building will be closed, locked, and secured promptly at 9:00 each morning.
- Should the entry doors of the Wesley Building be locked, parents will be asked to ring the doorbell for assistance.

## 69. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY RECALLS

Coker Early Learning Center receives email notifications from the CPSC whenever infant/child products and sports and recreation products are recalled. If we have an item that has been recalled we immediately remove it from use. As a parent you may view a list of current recalls and notices on the DPSC website at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). You may also sign up to receive email notification from the CPSC by going to <https://www.cpsclist.aspx>.

## 70. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

We strive to work with your family in partnership to love and teach your child(ren). You are welcome to share your ideas, questions, or concerns with the Coker Early Learning Center Director, Director of Children's Ministries for Coker Methodist Church, or members of the Coker Early Learning Center Board.

## **71. COKER MC TUITION AND FEES POLICY**

***Approved By: Board of Disciples***

***Date Revised: Aug 2008***

***August 2011 Coker ELC***

### **100. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

110. This policy pertains to certain weekday ministry programs at Coker Methodist Church (CMC), which collect fees to offset the costs of providing the program or service. The policy pertains to fees of a recurring nature such as daily, weekly or monthly, depending upon the service being offered. At the time of adoption, this policy applies specifically to the following program: Coker Early Learning Center. The application of this policy to other programs will be decided by the Finance Committee on a case by case basis.
120. The program will be responsible for maintaining accurate accounts receivable records for the primary purpose of managing cash flow and monitoring the length of time accounts have been outstanding.
130. Even though these fees are for works of ministry and are due from church members, families, and friends, slow pay or delinquent accounts will occur from time to time. It is the responsibility of program personnel to contact participants and request payments of outstanding balances.
140. All open accounts receivable with late or delinquent payment activity will be handled in a timely and effective manner to ensure maximum collections and an optimum accounts receivable turnover for the CMC operations.

### **200. POLICY**

210. Fees and/or tuition for programs are due and payable on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month or session in which services will be provided. Fees will be prorated for new participants entering a program after this date.
220. Fees not paid within five (5) days of the due date are subject to a late payment fee of \$25.00 or 10% of the outstanding balance if the balance is less than \$100.00. Any check returned for non-payment, for whatever reason, will be subject to a \$25.00 Returned Check Fee.
230. A. School year: Any account delinquent more than 15 days will result in the participant being withdrawn from the program. Policy for the last month of the school year is as follows:
  - (1) Tuition for the last month of the Coker ELC school year must be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of that month or the participant will be withdrawn from the program effective the 11<sup>th</sup> of that month.
- B. Summer session(s): Tuition and fees for summer sessions are established by the CELC Board annually.
240. Cash payments may be required at Program Director's discretion.
250. In cooperation and support of all the weekday ministry programs at CMC, delinquent payments owed to one program will result in the withdrawal of all other household members (after 30 calendar days from the due date), from all CMC weekday ministry programs.

260. Once withdrawn, a participant(s) may be readmitted or admitted on a space available basis to any CMC program once all outstanding fees are paid in full, plus payment of a re-enrollment fee of \$25.00.
- 270. In the event CMC facilities are closed due to acts of nature, or other reasons beyond its control, CMC reserves the right not to reschedule the activity or make up the lost day(s). In any event, CMC is not liable for repayment of fees on any pro-rata basis.**
- 300. PROCEDURES**
310. Program personnel will document collection efforts. All correspondence and discussions will be documented.
320. Coker ELC will produce a monthly report that shows the amount of any outstanding balances. This report will be forwarded to the Financial Administrator no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.
330. If funds are not received within 5 calendar days from the due date, a formal letter on CMC letterhead will be sent for each past-due account. *See Appendix A.* A copy of this letter will be kept with the collection documentation.
340. If payment has not been received at the end of 15 calendar days from the due date, the Director will withdraw the participant. If payment has not been received at the end of 30 days, all other household members will be withdrawn from their respective programs. All efforts will be made to collect the fees including, but not limited to, sending the account to a collection agency.
350. A Tuition and Fees Team will be established to monitor this policy. Members of this Team will be the program Director, the Director of Children's Ministries, the Church Business Administrator, and the Church Financial Administrator.
360. The Tuition and Fees Team must approve any exceptions to the policy. Any Team member has the authority to convene a meeting at any time. A quorum, for voting purposes, shall consist of each of the program Directors and one or more of the following: the Director of Children's Ministries, the Church Business Administrator, and the Church Financial Administrator.

*Appendix A*

Date

Dear Parent,

The Tuition and Fees Policy of Coker Methodist Church (CMC) requires all fees/tuition to be paid by the first of the month. All of our programs are ministries of CUMC and the fees charged are necessary to pay for salaries, supplies, classroom and building maintenance, and other expenses necessary to keep these programs operating. We count on your payment.

The Tuition and Fees Policy requires that any tuition and fees not paid within five (5) calendar days of the due date are subject to a late fee. In addition, the policy also requires that if a balance remains outstanding after fifteen (15) calendar days of the due date, the student can no longer participate in the program. According to our records, you have an outstanding balance in Coker Early Learning Center in the amount of <<Amount Owing>>.

I'm certain this was merely an oversight. However, the purpose of this letter is to remind you that, according to <<Program Name>> policy, unless payment is received by <<Due Date Plus 15 Days>>, <<Child Name>> will be unable to attend Coker Early Learning Center after that date. If other family members are also enrolled in other CUMC weekday ministry programs, they will no longer be enrolled in their respective program(s) at the end of 30 days (Due Date Plus 30 Days>> unless the balance is paid in full at that time.

If you have already made payment by the time you receive this letter, thank you. If you have not yet paid, you may deliver or mail your check to either the Director of the program, or to me. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to your continuation in the Coker Early Learning Center.

Sincerely yours,  
Becky Kirbo  
Financial Administrator  
494-3455, ext. 1222

## **72. Additional Resources and Information Related to Young Children and Programs:**

### ***The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood***

Contributing authors Marilyn Goldhammer and Laura J. Colker  
Published by Teaching Strategies, Inc.  
Internet website: <http://www.teachingstrategies.com/>

### ***Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs***

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
Internet website: <http://www.naeyc.org/>

### ***Healthy Child Care Texas***

Office of Program Coordination for Children and Youth  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission  
Internet website: <http://www.healthychildcaretexas.org/index.htm>

### ***American Academy of Pediatrics***

Internet website: <http://www.aap.org/>

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

I have received a copy and/or have access to the Coker Early Learning Center Handbook on line at [www.coker.org](http://www.coker.org). After reading it carefully, I understand the policies, procedures, and regulations of the program including Tuition and Fee Payments, Cancellations, Parent Responsibilities, Transportation, Discipline and Guidance, Photographs, and Cell Phone Use as included in the handbook.

I hereby express agreement with these policies, procedures, declaration of photo release, and regulations. I accept these conditions for enrollment of my child in the Coker Early Learning Center.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Coker Early Learning Center – FALL 2022**  
**COVID-19 Policies/Procedures (revised 08-11-22)**

In conjunction with CDC guidelines as of August 11, 2022, the following procedures will be followed regarding children or CELC staff regarding COVID-19 infections:

- 1) If a child or staff member has been exposed to COVID-19 but shows no symptoms, no quarantine is necessary and they can attend the CELC. It is recommended that a Covid test be taken on day 5.
- 2) If the day 5 test is positive, then the CELC office must be notified immediately. A notice will then be sent to the families of other children in that classroom. The infected child/staff member will need to isolate until they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- 3) If the day 5 test is negative, the child/staff member may return immediately.
- 4) If a child or staff member has been exposed to COVID-19 and does show symptoms, they should isolate until a COVID-19 test can be administered and results known. Further action will follow points 2 & 3.
- 5) Under any of these scenarios, CELC classrooms will remain open and not close down.
- 6) More detail of COVID-19 CDC guidelines can be found at [CDC.gov/releases2022](https://www.cdc.gov/releases/2022)

