



Inspire

Early Learning Academy

Employee

Handbook

2026-2027

313 Blane Drive
Hopkinsville, KY 42240
Phone: 270-887-7400

Inspire Early Learning Academy Employee Handbook & Personnel Policies 2026–2027

In addition to the Inspire Early Learning Academy Employee Handbook, all policies of the Christian County Board of Education are applicable to Inspire Staff.

Purpose of Handbook:

This handbook is designed to be a supplement to the Christian County Board of Education Personnel Policies for Classified Staff.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing and engaging early learning environment that effectively supports the diverse needs of children and families in our community and creates a foundation for children to be able to enter kindergarten as a lifelong learner and a critically-thinking citizen.

Vision: PLAY: Promoting Lifetime Achievement for Young Learners

Administrative Team:

- **Inspire ELA Program Coordinator:** Felicia Chapman
- **CCPS Early Learning Administrator:** Michelle Walden
- **CCPS Early Learning Assistant Principal:** Heather Carden
- **Inspire ELA Program Assistant:** Tia Allen

Personnel Policy Implementation:

The Director is responsible for the implementation of all personnel policies and will ensure that the current "**Employee Handbook Personnel Policies**" manual is accessible to all staff members and prospective staff candidates at all times. Each staff member will have access to the "**Employee Handbook**" and, after thoroughly reviewing its contents, must sign a statement confirming that they have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the policies outlined within the manual.

Equal Opportunity Employment:

Inspire ELA is committed to complying with **Federal, State, and Local** laws regarding equal opportunity employment. The center does not discriminate in employment on

the basis of **race, creed, national origin, political affiliation, marital status, age, gender, sexual orientation, or number of dependents**. We encourage a diverse staff with varied **religious, racial, and cultural** backgrounds to benefit the center and our community.

No employee shall engage in or encourage any actions that would lead to the dismissal or resignation of another employee based on illegal discriminatory factors.

Employee Classifications:

Hourly pay rates will be set and determined by CCBOE, based on education and experience of the employee.

A.) Full time hourly: 40 hours a week.

185 day employee

235 day employee

B.) Part time hourly: 19 hours (or less) per week.

C.) Substitute: Will be used as needed. Subs will be used on an hourly basis, and are not eligible for benefits.

Electronic Timesheets:

- **Electronic timesheets** will be monitored by the **Director**.
- Employees are required to record their **work hours daily**, including **arrival time, lunch time (in and out)**, and **end time**.
- Please ensure that hours are documented accurately.
- The Center will maintain **electronic copies** of timesheets for reference.
- Staff members are expected to be in their designated areas, **ready to supervise children** at the time they are scheduled to begin work.
- **Standard Invoice F-75s** will be provided for **overtime** worked, but this method will be used as a **last resort**.
- **Co-op student timesheets** are sent to **CCBOE Payroll**.

Payroll Deductions:

- Pay schedules are set by the **Christian County Board of Education**.
- Paychecks are **direct-deposited** on the **15th** and **31st** of every month.
- The payday is calculated so employees receive **evenly pro-rated checks** beginning with the first check and continuing through the final check of the school year, including the summer checks in **June** and **July**.

Lunch Break:

- Employees working a **9-hour day** will have a **1-hour unpaid lunch break**.

- **Lunch break times** will be determined by the **Director** and may vary daily depending on the center's needs.
- Please **return promptly** from your lunch break, as tardiness can affect the breaks of your co-workers.

Work Week Schedule:

- The center operates from **5:30 am to 5:30 pm**, Monday through Friday.
- The **Director** reserves the right to modify employee hours as needed to meet the operational requirements of the center.
- Work hours and lunch schedules are established by the **Director** and may be adjusted at any time based on the center's needs.

Chain of Command:

- All staff members are to report directly to the **Director** for guidance, support, and decisions.
 - In the absence of the **Director**, the **Program Assistant or Lead Administrator** will assume responsibility and make immediate decisions.
 - The **Director** has full authority to manage state inspections, business needs, and any other decisions that arise.
 - Staff should always report to the **Director** before escalating issues to an **Administrator**.
 - The **Director** reports directly to the **Lead Administrator** and the **Assistant Superintendent** of the Christian County Board of Education.
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Flow Chart for Staff Absences:

In the event of staff absence, the following flow chart will be used to determine who will oversee the needs of the center:

1. **Felicia Chapman, Director**
2. **Michelle Walden, Lead Administrator**
3. **Heather Carden, Assistant Principal**
4. **Tia Allen, Program Assistant**

Health, Safety, and Developmentally Appropriate Handling of Children

Commitment to Child Health, Safety, and Comfort

The Licensee is committed to providing an environment in which **each child's health, safety, dignity, and comfort are protected at all times**. To support this commitment, the Center has **developed and maintains specific policies and procedures** that govern the **safe, respectful, and developmentally appropriate** handling of all children in our care.

All staff members and volunteers are required to adhere strictly to these policies and procedures as a condition of employment or service.

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

The Center ensures that **all interactions and handling of children** are:

- **Appropriate to the child's age, developmental stage, and individual needs**
- **Respectful** of each child's personal space, emotional well-being, and cultural background
- **Supportive of positive guidance and constructive behavior management**
- **Free from physical, emotional, or verbal maltreatment**

Safe handling includes, but is not limited to:

- Proper lifting, carrying, and positioning techniques
- Age-appropriate supervision and physical support
- Safe diapering, toileting, feeding, and rest-time procedures
- Gentle redirection and positive guidance strategies
- Maintaining appropriate staff-to-child ratios and supervision standards

Under no circumstances shall corporal punishment, physical restraint (except when necessary to prevent immediate harm and in accordance with policy), humiliation, threats, or any form of degrading treatment be permitted.

Prevention of Maltreatment

The Center maintains a **zero-tolerance policy for child maltreatment**, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, or inappropriate discipline.

To prevent maltreatment:

- Staff and volunteers **must follow all supervision and safety procedures**.
- **Appropriate boundaries** must be maintained at all times.

- Any suspected or observed maltreatment must **be reported immediately** in accordance with mandatory reporting laws and Center procedures.
- Documentation **protocols must be followed** for incidents, injuries, and behavioral concerns.

Failure to comply with these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service, and may include reporting to appropriate regulatory or legal authorities.

Training Requirements

All staff members and volunteers (as applicable) will receive training on:

- The **Center's policies and procedures** for safe and developmentally appropriate handling of children
- **Child abuse and neglect prevention and mandatory reporting requirements**
- Positive guidance and **behavior management strategies**
- **Health, safety, and supervision standards**

Training will occur:

- Prior to unsupervised contact with children
- During orientation
- Annually, at minimum, or as required by licensing regulations
- Whenever policies are updated or revised

Documentation of all required training will be maintained in personnel files.

Accountability and Continuous Improvement

The Center will **regularly review and update policies and procedures** to ensure compliance with current licensing regulations and best practices in early childhood education.

Supervisors are responsible for **monitoring compliance, providing coaching when needed, and ensuring consistent implementation** across all classrooms and program areas.

Employee Expectations and Guidelines

Director/Program Assistant Duties and Responsibilities:

1. **Appointment/Selection**

The appointment of the Director/Program Assistant will be based on state qualifications and demonstrated competence for the position. Ideal qualifications include supervisory experience, training in early childhood education at a licensed facility, and experience in the field of child care and/or child development.

2. **Responsibilities**

It is essential for the Director/Program Assistant to build and maintain positive working relationships with both the staff members of Inspire and the parents of enrolled children.

3. **Selection Process**

Applicants for the Director/Program Assistant position will be screened and interviewed by the leadership team.

4. **Reporting Structure**

The Director will report directly to the Lead Administrator and Assistant Superintendent.

Staff Assignments:

1. **Assignment and Reassignment**

All staff members are employed with the understanding that assignments or reassignments may be made at the discretion of the Inspire ELA Director. Additional duties assigned to staff members may be modified or changed as needed.

2. **Mandatory Attendance**

Staff members will be required to attend mandatory orientation sessions, training, and staff meetings.

3. **Compensation**

The center may compensate employees for their time spent attending mandatory orientation, training, and staff meetings.

Personnel File Requirements:

1. **Completion of Paperwork**

Each staff member must complete all necessary paperwork for the Christian County Board of Education, starting with the **Application for Employment**.

2. **Required Documents**

The following documents will be kept on file at Inspire ELA for each staff member:

- Evaluations
- Training records
- CAN (Child Abuse and Neglect) checks
- Criminal background checks
- Application for Employment
- Resume
- Transcripts
- All other required documentation as per state and organizational regulations.

Health Requirements:

1. **Health Fitness for Job Duties**

Employees must be free of any health conditions that could hinder the performance of assigned job duties or compromise the health, safety, or well-being of the children. All employees must be capable of performing physical tasks required for the role, including the ability to visually and audibly supervise children.

2. **Physical Capabilities**

Employees must be able to lift children, bend from the waist, stoop, kneel, squat, and maintain a healthy back. Additionally, employees must be able to get up and down from the floor, either with or without reasonable accommodations, to engage with children effectively.

3. **Tuberculosis (TB) Test Requirement**

At the time of initial employment, all employees are required to provide proof of a Tuberculin test showing freedom from tuberculosis, conducted by a licensed physician or clinic.

4. **Additional Health Examinations**

Additional tests or examinations may be required at the discretion of the Director to ensure continued health and safety.

5. **Follow-up for Positive TB Test**

In the case of a positive tuberculosis test, the employee must provide documentation of follow-up action as recommended by a licensed physician or health professional.

Employee Evaluations and Coaching:

1. **Employee Coaching Time**

Employees will have regularly scheduled supervision and coaching sessions

with the Director, Program Assistant, or Principal. These sessions are designed to help employees identify areas for professional growth, encourage self-reflection, and develop key skills.

2. **Purpose of Employee Coaching**

The supervision/coaching sessions aim to foster professional development while ensuring that staff members are adhering to center policies and procedures. This time is essential for continuous improvement and support.

3. **Employee Evaluations**

Staff members will participate in the CCBOE classified evaluation process, which is an essential part of assessing performance, identifying strengths, and determining areas for improvement. Evaluations will be conducted on a regular basis to ensure staff development and alignment with the center's goals and expectations.

Staff Training Requirements:

- **Annual Training Hours**

In compliance with state licensing regulations, each staff member is required to complete 15 clock hours of child care training annually.

- **New Employee Training**

All new employees must provide documentation of 6 hours of Orientation for Early Childhood Education Professionals or attend the training within the first 90 days of employment.

- **Training Opportunities**

The Director will inform staff members of available training opportunities throughout the year. Staff are encouraged to pursue additional training, including but not limited to CDA (Child Development Associate) and the Commonwealth Child Care Credential. However, these additional certifications are not mandatory.

- **CPR/First Aid Certification**

All required staff must complete CPR and First Aid certification. This is a mandatory requirement to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in care.

- **Additional Training Requirements**

The Director may mandate additional training beyond the state-required 15 hours as necessary, based on program needs or staff development goals.

Orientation:

1. **Mandatory Orientation**

All employees are required to attend the annual orientation, which will be scheduled by the Director at the beginning of each school year. The

information provided during orientation will be directly applicable to the work performed in the classroom.

2. **Staff Meetings**

Attendance at orientation and any additional staff meetings scheduled by the Director is mandatory for all staff members.

3. **Absence from Meetings**

If a staff member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, they will be required to make up the missed session at a time determined by the Director.

Attendance:

1. **Reliability and Punctuality**

All employees are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work. Consistency and stability are essential for providing the best service to children, families, and staff. Employees are expected to maintain regular and timely attendance.

2. **Importance of Attendance and Punctuality**

Excellent attendance and punctuality reflect reliability and a positive work attitude, both of which are key factors in performance evaluations.

3. **Disciplinary Action for Attendance Issues**

Recurrent tardiness, excessive absenteeism, and/or failure to provide adequate prior notice of absence without a valid reason will result in disciplinary action. The least of which will be a letter of concern placed in the employee's personnel file.

4. **Procedure for Reporting Absences**

Employees must notify the Director of an absence at least 2 hours before the expected start time for emergency absences or as soon as possible. Appointments and personal errands should be scheduled outside of regular working hours.

5. **No Call-No Show Policy**

An employee who fails to call and report an absence ("no call-no show") may be terminated at the discretion of the Director and the Inspire Leadership Team.

6. **Overtime Work**

Communication will be made with employees if overtime is required. Employees should not request extra hours for additional pay. Schedules will be followed, and teachers will be notified in advance if additional work hours are needed.

Staff Absences:

1. **Paid Holidays**

Employees are entitled to 10 paid holidays, which include:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (4th of July)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day

2. **Sick and Personal Days**

Full Time 185 **and** 238 day employees are provided with 12 sick days and 3 personal days annually. Unused sick and personal days will roll over to the next fiscal year.

3. **Days Not Worked for Full-Time (238 Day) Employees**

Full-time, 238-day employees receive 22 Days Not Worked annually.

4. **Notification of Absence**

Employees are expected to provide notification of their absence as far in advance as possible. Half and full days off must be recorded in Frontline.

Holidays/Breaks:

1. **Center Operation During School Breaks**

The center will remain open during certain school breaks.

2. **Employee Rotation Schedule**

A rotation schedule will be implemented to ensure that all employees have an equal opportunity to enjoy breaks while maintaining appropriate staffing levels at the center.

Severe Weather Closure:

1. In the event of severe weather, Inspire will close on the first day of closure due to hazardous road conditions.
2. The Lead Administrator along with CCPS Directors will decide on a daily basis if Inspire will open. Decisions will be based on road conditions within the city limits.

3. If Inspire is OPEN and all other CCPS locations are closed due to weather (NTI days), ALL Inspire Employees are expected to report to work at their designated time.

Sick/Emergency Call In:

1. **Notification of Absence**

To assist with scheduling and ensure proper coverage, staff members who are sick must contact the **Director** prior to 10:00 PM the night before their planned absence. If you become ill in the morning before work, please call the Director by 5:00 AM.

2. **Direct Contact Required**

Direct personal contact with the **Director** and **Lead Administrator** is required for sick or emergency call-ins. Leaving a text message or phone message is not acceptable. Ensure that you have the Director's contact information readily available at all times.

Phone and Computer Use:

1. **Telephone Use**

The outside telephone line in the daycare is designated for center business. It may be used by staff in the event of an emergency. Personal calls should be made during an employee's break or lunch period, not during work hours.

2. **Cell Phone Use**

Cell phones should be used for personal purposes only and should not be accessed during working hours except during breaks, lunch, or nap time. During work hours, cell phones should be kept in the desk and out of view of students to maintain a professional environment.

3. **Computer & Internet Access**

Computer and internet access are provided to staff for work-related tasks, such as updating Brightwheel and other center-related activities. Personal use of computers and the internet is prohibited during work hours.

Workplace Safety and Security:

1. **Safety Compliance**

It is essential that all staff members adhere to security measures and perform their duties in a safe manner. Following established safety rules is a shared responsibility, and we must work together to ensure the safety of the children, our colleagues, and ourselves. If you observe any potentially dangerous situations regarding personal safety, or the safety of children or coworkers, please report it immediately to the Director.

2. **Security of Center Doors**

The center doors will remain locked at all times for the safety of everyone. Staff members are responsible for ensuring that doors are secure at all times. Before opening the door, please verify the identity of any visitors to the center.

3. **Visitor Identification**

If an individual who is not familiar to you attempts to sign a child out, staff members must request identification and compare it with the child's emergency card. Children will only be permitted to leave with individuals listed on their emergency card.

4. **Transportation of Children**

Center staff members may not transport children unless they are specifically listed on the child's emergency card.

5. **Mental Health Breaks**

If an individual at any time becomes overwhelmed or feels the need to step away from the classroom, please notify the front desk staff so that arrangements for coverage can be made.

Visitor Policy:

1. **Visitor Approval**

All visitors to the center must be approved by the **Lead Administrator**. This ensures the safety and security of the children and staff while maintaining an organized and effective environment.

2. **Parent Involvement**

Parents are always welcome to visit the center at any time. Their involvement is encouraged and valued, as it fosters a positive connection between the center and families. Inspire ELA upholds an open-door policy for parents of enrolled children, promoting a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

Staff Dress Code:

1. **Professional Appearance**

Staff dress should reflect a positive image of the center and demonstrate professionalism. It is important to dress comfortably while maintaining a professional appearance in accordance with the CCBOE dress code.

2. **Dress Code Guidelines**

- **Shorts** are not permitted.
- **Leggings** are allowed; however, the bottom must be appropriately covered to ensure a professional appearance.

3. **Attitude Toward Work**

The way staff members dress plays a key role in setting a tone for the center

and shows respect for the work environment. Adherence to the dress code supports a positive and professional atmosphere for both staff and children.

Confidentiality:

At **Inspire Early Learning Academy**, we prioritize the **confidentiality, rights**, and **privacy** of our families, children, and employees, in full accordance with applicable laws.

- **Child Records:** All children's records will be kept **private and confidential** at all times, ensuring that sensitive information is **protected**.
- **Authorized Access:** Confidential information regarding your child, your family, or our employees will only be shared with those individuals listed on the **authorization form**. No one else will have access to this information.
- **Confidentiality Paperwork:** All necessary paperwork regarding confidentiality and signatures will be completed upon **registration**, ensuring that all privacy guidelines are clearly understood and agreed upon.

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of confidentiality and protecting the privacy of all involved.

Classroom Instruction

Lesson Planning and Curriculum Expectations:

1. **Creative Curriculum Adoption**

Inspire ELA has adopted the Creative Curriculum as the foundation for our teaching practices. In addition, we provide thematic materials and other childcare resources to support teachers in delivering effective and engaging lessons.

2. **Lesson Plan Submission**

Teachers are required to submit lesson plans, using the Childcare Aware Template, to the Director by Friday for the upcoming week. These plans should be well-prepared and reflect a clear outline for the following week's activities.

3. **Utilizing Nap Time for Collaboration**

We encourage teachers to use nap time as an opportunity for collaboration and planning. This dedicated time will help ensure that lesson plans are created in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner.

4. **Incorporating Early Learning Standards**

Lesson plans should incorporate Early Learning Standards in specific academic subjects each week from August through May. This will ensure that the curriculum is aligned with developmental and educational goals.

5. **Timeliness of Submissions**

Submitting lesson plans in a timely manner is critical to the success of the program. Failure to adhere to this request may be reflected in performance evaluations.

Classroom Management:

1. **Building Social Skills**

A childcare setting provides an excellent environment for children to develop and practice their social skills. In this setting, children will face challenges that require problem-solving, sharing, conflict resolution, leadership, and empathy toward others. Teachers are expected to actively build positive relationships with children to help them develop these important skills.

2. **Maintaining Classroom Authority**

It is essential for children to remain in the classroom and work through difficulties as part of their growth process. Teachers should encourage children to face challenges and resolve conflicts within the classroom environment, helping them build stamina and resilience. When children are sent to the office, authority is relinquished, and it may create an opportunity for the child to avoid following rules and expectations. This can lead to behavioral patterns that undermine classroom management.

3. **Seeking Assistance**

If additional support is needed, teachers should call the office for assistance. The office staff will come to help, ensuring that the teacher retains authority in the classroom and that the child has the opportunity to resolve issues in the appropriate setting.

Ratio:

- **18 - 24 month old classes (1:6)**
- **24 - 36 month old classes (1:10)**
- **3-4 year old classes (1:12)**
- **4-5 year old classes (1:14)**

It is crucial that the director is notified immediately if, for any reason, you find yourself out of ratio. If you require anything, please call the office using the school phone. Leaving the classroom is unacceptable, as it compromises our ratio and the safety of the students.

Co-Op Students:

High school students from Christian County Public Schools may be assigned to work in the center and will complete necessary paperwork with the Personnel Department. Students are expected to carry out duties as assigned by the Director and the teacher.

While working in the center, students must adhere to the Employee Handbook and all school rules. Teachers are responsible for reporting any inappropriate behavior exhibited by the student workers to the Director.

Please note the following important guidelines:

- CCPS Co-Op Students will **not** be counted in the staff-to-child ratio and **must never** be left alone with a child.
- CCPS Co-Op Students are **not permitted** to discipline children in the center (for example, telling a child “no” is considered discipline).
- CCPS Co-Op Students are **not allowed** to change diapers or pull-ups.

These rules are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and maintain proper staffing standards.

Health and Safety

Suspected Abuse or Neglect:

At **Inspire Early Learning Academy (ELA)**, the safety and well-being of every child in our care is our top priority. In accordance with the **Child Protective Services Act**, our staff is **legally obligated** to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect:

- Our staff undergoes **mandatory training** to recognize and appropriately report any suspected abuse or neglect.
- If any staff member suspects abuse or neglect, they are required by law to **report the situation to the appropriate authorities** immediately.

We believe that through collaborative efforts with our families and the community, we can ensure the safety, security, and well-being of all children. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy or need assistance, please don't hesitate to contact our administration team.

Medical Emergency Procedure:

1. **Notify the Lead Administrator and/or Front Office** immediately.
2. **Assess the extent of injuries** to determine the appropriate response.
3. **Perform first aid or CPR** as necessary.
4. **Call 911** to request emergency medical services.
5. **Stay with the child** until medical help arrives.
6. **Notify the parents or guardians** using the information on the child's emergency card.
7. If staffing allows, the **Lead Administrator or another employee** will accompany the child to the hospital. If no one is available to accompany the child, the **Director/Coordinator** will contact the hospital or parents to provide updates on the child's condition.
8. The **Director** will submit an **incident report form** to the Cabinet of Health and Human Services within 24 hours of the incident.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Drill/Fire Escape Plan:

Fire drills are initiated monthly to practice the appropriate procedure in case of fire in the building. In the event of a fire alarm, teachers are responsible for following the proper procedures to ensure a safe, orderly, and efficient evacuation of the building.

When the Alarm Sounds:

- Teachers/staff should **call the children together** immediately upon hearing the alarm.
- Teachers/staff must **wait for the "ALL CLEAR" announcement** before exiting the building.
- **Exit:** The **exterior door** in each classroom should be used for evacuation.
- Toddlers and preschoolers should **line up** when exiting the room/building.
- Teachers/staff should **guide toddlers and preschoolers** to the nearest emergency exit (refer to the evacuation map on the wall).

If Smoke is Present: Crawl to the nearest available exit to avoid inhalation of smoke.

General Procedures:

1. **Initiate the above procedure** and proceed with the following steps:
2. **Evacuate** the building, moving at least **100 feet away** from the structure.
3. **Pick up emergency bags with updated rosters** to account for all children and staff.

4. **Assign a staff member** to check the classroom and bathroom to ensure that everyone has exited. This staff member should **follow the last child out**.
5. Instruct the staff member to **close the door** and **turn off the lights** when leaving the room.
6. Once in the designated assembly area, staff should **immediately call the role and account** for ALL children and volunteers.
7. If the count does not match the number of children/volunteers present that day, **notify the Lead Administrator** immediately.
8. **Remain in the designated area** until proper personnel provide instructions on the next steps.
9. All of this must be done **calmly** to avoid frightening the children.
10. **Do not stop to gather coats, shoes, or personal items**—leave the building **immediately** after hearing the alarm.

Teacher Responsibilities:

- At the beginning of each month, teachers must instruct children on the appropriate evacuation routes and procedures to follow when the alarm sounds.
- The **fire evacuation route map** must be posted on the wall or door of the classroom at all times.
- **All doors and windows** should be closed by staff before evacuating.
- Children are to leave the building quietly and gather at least **100 feet** away from the building.
- Each teacher/staff member should determine the best way for their specific age group to exit the building and remain together as a group.

In the Event of a Bomb Threat:

- Instructions will be communicated by the Early Learning Center Administrator or Director regarding further actions.

Severe Storm Warning/Drill:

Severe Weather Drills are practiced 3 times each school year. When the National Weather Service issues a severe storm warning for our area, all children and staff must immediately take safety precautions as directed by the teacher/staff.

Procedure:

1. All children will be escorted to the **interior hallway** to ensure safety.
2. Children will **assume the safety position**: kneel down, with their hands covering their head, and position themselves near a wall. **Do not block the door**.

3. Teachers and staff should always have an **updated roster** of students and general accounting of those present, to ensure that all children and adults are accounted for.
4. Ensure the **number of children/adults** matches the roster and make any necessary notifications if discrepancies are found.

Tornado - On-Site Emergency Plan:

- The **Lead Administrator** will issue the "**tornado warning**" for the building.
- Upon receiving the warning, teachers and staff should follow the instructions outlined for **severe storms**.
- An "**ALL CLEAR**" announcement will be made once the emergency is over, signaling that normal activities may resume.

The **Lead Administrator** will assess the situation, determine the level of the emergency, and notify the appropriate authorities. **Emergency response officials** will take command upon their arrival. Any communication with the media from the school system will be handled by the **Superintendent's Office**.

Emergency Weather Evacuation Procedures:

1. **Upon Hearing the Alarm:**
 - Teachers and staff should immediately **call the children together**.
 - Toddlers and preschoolers should **line up** to exit the room/building in an orderly manner.
2. **General Procedures:**
 - Staff should **pick up emergency bags with up-dated rosters** to account for all children and adults.
 - Assign a staff member to **check the classroom and bathroom** to ensure everyone has exited. This staff member should **follow the last child out**.
 - Instruct the staff member to **close the door** and **turn off the lights** when leaving the room.
 - All children will be **escorted to the interior hallway** for safety.
 - Children will **assume the safety position**: kneeling with hands covering their heads, positioned near a wall inside the classroom. **Do not block the door**, and ensure they are **away from windows**.
3. **Student Accountability:**
 - Once in the designated area, staff should have an **updated roster** of students and general accounting of those present to ensure the number of children and adults is accurate and known.

- **Notify the Lead Administrator** immediately of any students or staff members not present.
4. **Post-Evacuation:**
- **Remain in the designated area** until the proper personnel notify you of the next step.
 - All actions should be carried out **calmly** to avoid frightening the children.

Earthquake Procedures/Drills:

All schools conduct a minimum of **three earthquake drills per year**. The primary objective of these drills is to educate students and staff on how to minimize the risk of injury during an earthquake and to identify/address any problems encountered during the drill itself.

Earthquake Procedures: (INDOORS)

When the announcement for the drill occurs, students and staff should:

1. **Take cover** under their desk or a table, or next to an interior wall.
2. **Sit on the floor** and cover their head and neck from falling debris.
3. **Listen** to the teacher or staff for any additional instructions.
4. An **announcement** will indicate the completion of the drill.

Earthquake Procedures: (OUTDOORS)

When the announcement for the drill occurs, students and staff should:

1. **Stay in open areas** that are free from overhead hazards such as power lines, trees, covered walkways, concrete block walls, and chain link fences.
2. **Remain in a safe area** until further instructions are given. **Do not re-enter the building** unless instructed to do so.

During An Earthquake:

1. Follow the procedures as there may be no announcements.
2. Assess your surroundings and the medical needs of any children.
3. Stay where you are if it is safe. If it is not, scout a safe way to an interior room that is safer.
4. Guide students to a safer room calmly.
5. **Wait in a safe area** for an administrator or designee to give further instructions.

6. **Keep children in a safe area** with their heads and necks covered, especially during aftershocks.
 7. If instructed to **exit the building**, be aware of **overhead hazards** such as debris.
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After an Earthquake:

- You will be informed of the next actions as soon as possible. The course of action will depend on the severity of the damage and the areas affected.
- **Do not evacuate** unless instructed to do so. If the fire alarm is pulled, **do not evacuate** unless you see clear evidence of a fire (such as smoke). **Smoke and dust** are common after an earthquake.

Lockdown Procedures/Drills:

Lockdown drills are practiced monthly in a variety of areas, including classrooms, outdoors, and common areas. A lockdown is initiated to ensure the safety of students and staff by moving all students out of hallways, off playgrounds and exterior buildings into the school grounds, securing all entrances and exits, and denying access to any unauthorized persons. During a lockdown, all building occupants should be behind a locked door, on the ground and out of sight from hallways and windows.

General Procedures:

1. **Remain calm** and stay with your students at all times.
2. **All doors**, both interior doors and exterior, **are locked at all times**. Teachers should help escort all children into a classroom, using Flare to identify any students out of the area.
3. Cancel all outside activities until further instructions are provided by the Director.
4. Close all doors and windows, ensuring that blinds and curtains are closed.
5. Keep **students and staff quiet** and away from doors and windows.
6. **Maintain a calm environment**, reassuring students and staff that all necessary actions are being taken to return to normalcy.
7. If a gunshot or explosion is heard, immediately get everyone on the floor.
8. Never leave students unattended at any time during the lockdown.
9. Conduct frequent counts of all students. Immediately report any missing students to the Director or designated center authority. Contact the office

immediately, using the Flare app, if you have a “missing or found” child in your room, but only if it is safe to do so.

10. No unauthorized persons will be allowed to enter the building during a lockdown.
11. **DO NOT communicate** with **ANY** outside individuals during a lockdown incident. All communication will be initiated by District Directors.
12. The lockdown will remain in effect until canceled by the Lead Administrator and an all-clear announcement is made.

Inspire ELA Teacher Expectations

A. Personal Qualities:

1. **Friendliness**
Maintains a positive attitude toward others, being attentive and sensitive to the moods and needs of others.
2. **Honesty**
Demonstrates truthfulness regarding work hours, sick leave, personal leave, and other matters. Takes responsibility for personal errors and respects the property of others.
3. **Integrity**
Fosters wholesome interpersonal relationships, refraining from gossip about colleagues, parents, or the organization.
4. **Punctuality**
Adheres to an agreed schedule, arriving on time and respecting the designated time limits for relief periods.
5. **Dependability**
Fulfills responsibilities as promised and ensures work hours are used productively for center-related tasks. Self-motivated and avoids abusing privileges.
6. **Positive Attitude**
Refrains from openly complaining. Addresses concerns privately with the Director or appropriate person.
7. **Appearance**
Maintains a neat, well-groomed appearance, dresses appropriately, and presents oneself in a poised and well-mannered manner, adhering to the guidelines outlined in the staff handbook.
8. **Patience**
Exhibits self-control when dealing with others, using a calm and respectful tone of voice without resorting to an uncontrolled or abusive manner.

9. **Enthusiasm**

Demonstrates a visible and genuine interest in the job, projecting energy and passion.

10. **Team Player**

Recognizes that success is a collective effort. Every team member plays a crucial role in the overall success of the organization.

B. Relationships with Children:

1. **Individualization**

Demonstrates awareness and concern for the personal differences among children. Tailor interactions to address each child's unique needs, interests, and capabilities. Ensures each child feels comfortable and valued, offering a personal greeting upon arrival.

2. **Knowledge**

Plans a variety of activities that are developmentally appropriate for each age group and skill level, fostering exploration, investigation, and creativity. Strives to create an environment that encourages growth and learning.

3. **Resourcefulness**

Displays creativity in program design and the use of materials, ensuring a rich and stimulating environment for the children. Finds innovative ways to engage children in meaningful activities.

4. **Flexibility**

Able to work effectively with both individuals and groups of children, adapting to different needs and ensuring inclusive participation.

5. **Professional Manner**

Uses appropriate language and links behaviors to child growth and development. Promotes the building of self-esteem in children. Frequently bends to eye level when speaking with children to enhance communication and create rapport.

6. **Responsibility**

Monitors and evaluates each child's growth, development, and performance, noting any changes. Maintains accurate records and provides timely reports to ensure that the needs of each child are being met.

7. **Tolerance**

Treats all children with respect, dignity, and empathy, ensuring equality. Demonstrates an open-minded approach and avoids any prejudicial attitudes or biases.

8. **Good Example**

Models positive attitudes and behaviors such as sharing, concern for others'

feelings, interest in individuals, and cooperation. Acts as a role model for children in both actions and attitudes.

9. **Parent and Child Interaction**

Greets both parents and children with a **smile** and a **positive attitude**, fostering a welcoming and supportive environment for all.

C. Professionalism:

1. **Personal Growth**

Demonstrates a commitment to ongoing personal and professional development. Actively pursues studies, training, or reading to stay current with advancements in the field of early childhood development and education.

2. **Loyalty**

Supports the goals, objectives, and philosophy of Inspire. Adheres to all relevant policies, procedures, and state regulations, contributing to the mission and success of the organization.

3. **Integrity**

Respects the confidentiality of all information, maintaining a high standard of ethical behavior and safeguarding sensitive data related to children, parents, and staff.

4. **Cooperation**

Commits to teamwork by sharing ideas, materials, and resources. Works collaboratively with peers and directors, offering guidance in positive, constructive ways. Demonstrates a willingness to share responsibilities and take on additional tasks, particularly during emergencies.

5. **Friendliness**

Maintains a friendly yet professional relationship with parents and co-workers. Creates a positive and welcoming environment for all interactions.

6. **Tolerance**

Treats all parents and colleagues with equal respect, avoiding favoritism. Acknowledges and appreciates individual differences, accepting all members of the community at their own levels and respecting diverse viewpoints.

7. **Receptiveness**

Open to new ideas, feedback, and constructive criticism. Willing to accommodate new perspectives and incorporate them into daily practice for continuous improvement.

8. **Responsiveness**

Responds to communication and feedback via the designated platform in a timely and thoughtful manner, demonstrating active participation in team discussions and evaluations.

D. Safety, Health and Wellness:

- **Safety and Health**

Prioritizes the health and safety of children at all times, ensuring a secure environment where their well-being is the primary focus.

- **Organization**

Maintains a well-organized environment, keeping materials and equipment orderly. Ensures that the facility is presented in a neat, clean, and attractive manner at all times.

- **Responsibility**

Takes responsibility for the proper use and care of materials and equipment, avoiding waste and ensuring resources are utilized efficiently. Assumes personal responsibility for addressing minor environmental issues that may be overlooked by others.

E. Additional Responsibilities: (to include but not limited to)

- **Attend All Mandatory Trainings**

Participate in all required training sessions to maintain and enhance professional knowledge and skills.

- **Encourage Nutritional Practices**

Promote and encourage the development of sound nutritional habits among children, fostering healthy choices and habits.

- **Foster Group Roles**

Help children become aware of their roles as integral members of a group, teaching cooperation and community-building skills.

- **Attend Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Attend parent/teacher conferences as needed to discuss children's progress, address concerns, and collaborate with parents to support the child's development.

- **Supervise Activities for Safety**

Supervise all activities to ensure the safety of children at all times, maintaining a secure environment for learning and play.

- **Have Fun**

Create an enjoyable atmosphere where children feel encouraged to follow your lead. Relax, engage with the children, and ensure that both learning and play are fun.

- **Complete Additional Tasks**

Fulfill any additional tasks as assigned by the Director to support the overall functioning of the center.

Director Responsibilities

- 1. Maintain Staff-to-Child Ratios**

Ensure that staff-to-child ratios are maintained in all classrooms, in accordance with licensing and regulatory requirements.
- 2. Staff Management**

Interview and hire staff members, ensuring that they are assigned roles in accordance with their job descriptions. Oversee and manage staff performance, development, and compliance with program expectations.
- 3. Budget Management**

Maintain and manage the program's budget, ensuring resources are allocated efficiently to support program operations.
- 4. Record Keeping**

Maintain all program-related records for a minimum of five years, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements and proper documentation.
- 5. Staff Meetings**

Manage, conduct, and document regular staff meetings to ensure communication, collaboration, and the sharing of essential information among team members.
- 6. Office Management**

Perform general office duties on a daily basis, including managing mail and email correspondence, making and receiving phone calls, filing documents, maintaining database systems, and overseeing overall office activities.
- 7. Task Supervision**

Supervise all daily and weekly tasks, including reviewing staff and children's schedules, observing classroom management practices, and overseeing the implementation of the curriculum.
- 8. Support Daily and Weekly Activities**

Provide support for daily and weekly program activities, such as approving time-off requests, leading recruitment efforts, and managing program calendars to ensure smooth operation.
- 9. Parent and Visitor Engagement**

Greet parents and visitors, address inquiries, arrange meetings, conduct facility tours, and perform other customer service tasks to maintain positive relationships.
- 10. Family Engagement**

Plan and implement activities that engage families, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for all program participants.
- 11. Supply and Food Ordering**

Oversee supply and food ordering to ensure compliance with state licensing

regulations, ensuring that all necessary materials are available and properly managed.

12. Paperwork and Licensing Compliance

Ensure that all required paperwork for children, staff, and licensing are obtained and organized in a timely manner, in accordance with state licensing regulations. This includes ensuring that all required emergency plans and drills are conducted and documented.

13. Other Duties as Assigned

Perform any other tasks as assigned by the organization to support the continued success and operations of the program.

Program Assistant Responsibilities

1. Prepare and Deliver Lessons

Prepare lessons that align with educational requirements and present them in an age-appropriate manner. Teach in a way that addresses the diverse needs of all students, adjusting for their ages and abilities.

2. Classroom Management

Effectively manage a busy classroom environment, providing the structure and discipline necessary to foster successful learning for all students.

3. Support Educational Milestones

Help children achieve educational milestones through personalized instruction and supplementary assistance, catering to individual learning needs.

4. Collaborate with Staff

Work closely with other teachers, instructors, and staff members to create an optimal learning and care environment, ensuring consistency and effectiveness in the educational approach.

5. Provide Feedback to Parents

Regularly provide helpful feedback to parents and guardians regarding their child's progress, behavior, and development, as needed or requested.

6. Work with Diverse Populations

Work effectively with children and adults from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, promoting inclusivity and respect for all individuals.

7. Prepare Age-Appropriate Lesson Plans

Develop lesson plans tailored to the developmental maturity and needs of children, integrating fundamental vocabulary, simple shapes, basic colors, letters, and numbers into the curriculum.

8. Address Interpersonal Skills

Foster the development of basic interpersonal skills in children, such as sharing, taking turns, and asking for permission, within the classroom setting.

9. **Other Duties as Assigned**

Perform additional tasks and duties as assigned by the Director to support the overall goals and success of the program.

Disciplinary Action:

In the event that an employee violates center policies, procedures, or instructions, disciplinary action may be taken. The severity of the disciplinary action will be determined at the discretion of the Director, in consultation with the Early Learning Center Administrator, and other district office staff as deemed appropriate.

****Failure to comply with these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service, and may include reporting to appropriate regulatory or legal authorities.***

Adult Conflict Resolution and Confidentiality:

1. **Conflict Resolution**

All staff members are expected to make reasonable efforts to resolve conflicts directly with the individuals involved. When a resolution cannot be reached, staff members should seek assistance from the Director to help facilitate a fair and constructive resolution.

2. **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is paramount when addressing grievances. Staff members who discuss conflicts or issues with individuals not directly involved in the situation may be subject to disciplinary action. This policy applies both during working hours and on a staff member's personal time, ensuring that sensitive matters remain private and handled appropriately.

Accountability and Continuous Improvement

The Center will **regularly review and update policies and procedures** to ensure compliance with current licensing regulations and best practices in early childhood education.

Supervisors are responsible for **monitoring compliance, providing coaching when needed, and ensuring consistent implementation** across all classrooms and program areas.

Inspire ELA Staff:

Please refer to this handbook as needed by keeping it in a location that is easily accessible to you at all times. It is important to note that all information concerning children at Inspire ELA is legally protected and must remain confidential.



Inspire ELA

Employee Handbook Orientation

Employee Acknowledgment

I, _____ (Employee's Full Name), have read and understand the contents of this Employee Handbook. I agree to abide by the staff requirements and expectations outlined within the handbook. I acknowledge that failure to uphold these expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Staff Signature

Date

**Inspire ELA Employee Handbook was adapted from the Todd County Tots Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies*

Early Learning Center Staff Directory

Districtwide Early Learning Administrator	Michelle Walden
Assistant Principal	Heather Carden
Inspire Childcare Director	Felicia Chapman
Program Assistant	Tia Allen
Inspire Early Learning Center Lead Teachers & Assistant Teachers	Ms. Amber Duvall, Ms. Sierra Burgess and Ms. Ariatna Almaguer
	Ms. Kelly Wilson, Ashlee Rainey and Ms. Sania Richards Ausenbaugh
	Ms. Quatasha Waddell and Ms. Jakala Young
	Ms. Donna Peterson and Ms. Linda Hernandez
	Ms. Jessica McGar and Ms. Kayla Lamb
	Ms. Aubreanna Chapman and Ms. Ruby Carlson
	Ms. Kia Hoskins and Ms. Addie Edwards
	Ms. Shelby Johnson and Ms. Madison Warren
	Ms. Meghan Carneyhan and Ms. Brianna Rubio
	Ms. Myra Laux, Ms. Shemeka Hollowell
	Ms. Zariyah Manning
	Ms. Tia Allen and Ms. Shannon Kay
Gatekeeper/Receptionist	Madeline DeJager
School Nurse	Blair Arnold
Cafeteria Supervisor	Tiffany Babb
Custodians	Jesse Ezell/Wendy Jones/Michael Hollowell

Community Resources for Early Learning Christian County, Kentucky

Christian County Community Early Childhood Council

Pennyrile Area KEIS- First Steps

Hopkinsville Christian County Library

Birth Certificate Ordering

Christian County Health Department

Team Kentucky