

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Thank you for entrusting Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC with the important responsibility of caring for your child during their most impressionable years.

The Goal of Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC is to provide your child with quality care in a safe and secure environment, with many opportunities for physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. We will also build-up the children’s self-confidence and self-esteem with praise and positive redirection.

Here at Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC your child will experience a variety of exciting and stimulating activities each day so that your child can develop in all areas to the very best of his/her ability. Your child will be involved in literacy activities, arts & crafts, music and dramatic play. Our outdoor play area contains a wide range of age-appropriate toys and apparatus for children of all ages, including climbers, riders, a sandbox and sports equipment.

Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC will utilize a school-readiness approved curriculum, which encourages child-directed learning through activity and play. Our teaching method is through learning centers as well. Children will choose from art, blocks, home living, and puzzles and manipulative, where activities have been planned to help teach the children. We encourage the parents’ to become involved in your child’s learning experiences. We believe parents and teachers are partners when it comes to the children’s care. At Chutes N’ ladders, an open door policy is in place. Parents are welcome to observe the center and your child’s day at any time.

Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC is owned and operated by Phyllis Larkin, who has knowledge of policies in place to ensure the health and safety of your child. We will also work closely with the Early Learning Coalition to ensure every child receives quality care. Both the Department of Children and Families, and the Environmental Health Department have free and welcome access to our facility for the purpose of regulatory inspections. The DCF licensing inspections are available online at www.myflorida.com/childcare. They will also be posted on the parent information board near the facility’s child care license.

This handbook has been prepared especially for you, the parent of the child enrolled in our center. You will find many of our policies and operating procedures explained here. By reading this handbook, you will feel more confident in your family’s adjustment into our program. We suggest that you keep this handbook for reference throughout the year. Whenever you have questions, please feel free to call or take a

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moment to speak with the owner or Director.

OPERATING HOURS

The Center is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. The center will be closed on the following holidays for the 2017-2018 school year:

- Fourth of July
- New Year's Day
- Day after New Year
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas
- Day after Christmas

If any major holiday falls on a Tuesday or Thursday, there is a possibility the center will be closed the corresponding Monday or Friday. Chutes 'N Ladders LLC reserves the right to amend the days that the center is closed. If we do choose to close on an unscheduled day, ample notice (at least 2 weeks) will be given so you may make other accommodations.

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at the center, please discuss this with your child's teacher at least two weeks in advance. Any celebrations must be approved by the Owner or Director.

Children must be picked up by 6:00 pm, or a late fee will be charged at the rate of \$10 plus \$1 per minute / child thereafter.

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EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Chutes 'N Ladders LLC will observe the following guidelines in determining closing of the center due to adverse weather conditions:

- If the Charlotte County Public School is closed due to poor weather conditions, Chutes 'N Ladders LLC will be closed.
- In the event that evacuations begin to occur in Charlotte County after center hours, Chutes 'N Ladders LLC will be closed the following day.
- Should evacuations in Charlotte County begin to occur during center hours, parents will be called to immediately pick up their children.
- If at any time the center is out of power in excess of one hour, parents will be called to pick up their children immediately.

The center Director will conduct monthly fire drills. An emergency evacuation plan/route is posted in each classroom.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Your child will only be released to those listed in the child's file as authorized for pick-up. Anyone picking up your child should be prepared to show proper identification. **Please be sure your child is at the facility by 8:30 am.** If you are running late or have a morning appt. for the child, please call one of the Directors so we may discuss the best time to bring your child to the center that day. This will ensure consistency with the schedule and daily routines for the children.

All children must be signed in and out daily by a parent or authorized guardian. The sign-in/out sheet must include the arrival and departure times with a **full signature** for **each** child. This is not only for the safety of your child, but it is also a requirement of the Department of Children and Families and the Early Learning Coalition. **Failure to sign your child in and / or out on a regular basis may result in a \$1.00 per incident fee.**

** Please remember that tuition is for the full week, regardless of the number of days your child attends. If your child is severely ill for one full week, Monday through Friday, you may be responsible for half tuition. This option requires a doctor's note, and is at the discretion of the owner and/or Director. This pertains to the sick child only-no siblings.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Chutes 'N Ladders LLC provides care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Choosing the right childcare arrangements for your child is an important decision. You are welcome to

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spend some time at the center observing the staff and children prior to enrollment. For your child's safety, and to comply with state regulations, all health forms and enrollment papers must be completed and on file at the center prior to your child's first day of attendance. Paperwork necessary includes, but is not limited to:

- Application for Enrollment with parent signature
- Current immunization record on blue DH form 680 (or copy)
- Current physical on gold form DH 3040 (or a copy)
- Signed Parent Handbook Agreement Form
- Signed Tuition Rates and Fee Schedule
- About Your Child Questionnaire
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire with accompanying release form

Chutes 'N Ladders LLC does not discriminate in regard to religion, sex, national or ethnic origin in our admission policies.

Each child will be granted one week's vacation time annually after 12 months of attendance. Written notification must be received two weeks prior. If this notice is not received, you will be billed for the two weeks taken, due prior to your child's return to the center.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Payments should be deposited in the tuition box by the front door. Payment is due on the Monday of the week your child attends. A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged to all who do not make their full tuition payment by due date. We accept cash, check, Money order, for payment of tuition and fees; if a check bounces you will have to pay the service charge, if bounce two checks in a row you will have to make all payments in cash. If payment is not received by Friday, the child cannot attend school for the following Monday or thereafter until payment is made. Please refer to the Tuition Rates and Fee Schedule at the back of this book for more details. We do not issue refunds. Rates are subject to change. You will be given 30-days notice prior to a rate increase.

DRESS CODE

There is no dress code for our children. However we would prefer that you send your child to the center in simple, comfortable clothing and sturdy rubber soled shoes, preferably sneakers. **Flip-flops, sandals, or slippery-soled shoes will not be permitted.** Please remember to send a jacket or sweatshirt on cool weather days.

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All children will be required to keep a spare set of clothes, including socks and underwear, in their cubby. They may also store a blanket and one small item to sleep with during nap time, **everything the child brings to the center must fit into his cubby**. These items will be sent home every Friday for cleaning. Due to space and safety issues, no other outside items are permitted. Please do not send your child to the center with toys, food etc. from home. Toys and other belongings may be permitted only on scheduled Show and Tell days.

CURRICULUM

The center will utilize the Creative Curriculum as a basis for lesson plans and activities in all classrooms. This is a school- readiness approved & research-based curriculum, which encourages development of all areas through interactions with the environment. A typical day would include activities and materials that promote brain development, imaginative play, problem solving, literacy, music and arts, organized and free-choice activities,

sharing, and free play time, both indoors and outdoors. Learning centers will be set up in each classroom, which offer children a variety of opportunities to explore and discover at their own pace and according to their own interests. Some of the learning centers you will see in your child's classroom may include: Creative Expression/ Art Center, Dramatic Play/ Housekeeping, Blocks and Beyond, Puzzles Plus, Literacy Corner, and Science and Discovery Center. Children will be placed based on age ability, maturity, and teacher recommendations. Periodic movements may be necessary throughout the year. We will also utilize the kindness Curriculum to aid in teaching Character Development. A daily schedule and lesson plans will be posted in your child's classroom, so that you will be aware of what your child is doing at each time of day.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is also in the integral part of your child's developing years. We encourage parents to become involved in your child's learning experiences. Communication between teachers and parents is essential in providing quality care to children. Parents can help teachers understand each individual child, background, habits and behavior. Please be sure to check your child's file next to sign-in sheet daily for any important information regarding your child, such as daily reports or evaluations.

SNACK AND MEAL TIME

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Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC is authorized for food service by the Department of Health. We provide breakfast, lunch and snacks. The food children eat affects their learning and behavior, as well as their growth and development. It is our job to introduce nutritious eating habits to children early in age. Cakes, cookies, and any other food that contain large amounts of sugar or fat are not permitted at the center. Foods and serving sizes is in accordance with the USDA Food Pyramid for Young Children. All four food groups is represented. A monthly menu will be posted on the parent information board. Snack will be comprised of two food groups, such as graham crackers and fruit juice

Infants: Please supply the center on each day with breast milk if applicable each day. Each bottle will be labeled with your child’s first and last name. You will need to supply the center with diapers and wipes. Please bring enough to last two weeks. Your child’s teacher will inform you at least one week in advance when the supply needs to be replenished.

***** Please be sure to inform the owner or Director at enrollment of any known allergies. If a special diet is required, please provide a physician’s note.**

REST TIME

All children will be required to participate in afternoon rest time, approximately from 12:45 to 2:45 pm. The one-year-old age group naps from 11:45 -2:30. **Please do not bring your child to the center during naptime.** This may disrupt the children that are already sleeping. Your child will be provided with a 1” thick kinder mat for napping. If your child is not tired or cannot sleep, we will allow for quiet book time during this period.

POTTY TRAINING

We will work with you and your child during this important step. Each child is a unique individual and has his or her own pace when it comes to potty training. We all need to have patience and encouragement for your child. Please remember that this is a team effort. Consistency in practices at home and school are essential for your child’s success. Therefore, communication is necessary. Please be sure you send diapers for naptime and an extra set of clothing. Any soiled clothes will be returned to you in a plastic bag for

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laundering.

STAFF

All staff members must be of good moral character and clear background screening and criminal records checks, including local law, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and FBI, as well as a thorough employment history check.

All staff members who have lived out of Florida for 5 years have to provide criminal records check from that other states see new regulations on <http://www.myflfamilies.com/>.

All staff members at Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC are qualified, well-trained child care professionals. Staff will be required to complete the 40-hours of state-mandated childcare training, as well as a 5-hour Early Literacy course.

They must pass 40 hours training exams to demonstrate their competency. No staff can work in the childcare facility until they have their background screening plus passed the 40 hour training exams. The state-mandated training includes courses on Child Growth and Development, Behavioral Observation and Screening, Developmentally Appropriate Practices, and Child Abuse and Neglect.

They are also required to complete an additional 10 hours of annual in-service training.

Staff members will also have a written plan to obtain their CDA or CDAE, which is the Child Development Associate Credential, if not already achieved. Here at Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC, staff members are encouraged to participate in as many training opportunities as available. Childcare is an ever-changing industry, with much to learn. All staff members are also certified in infant/Child CPR and First Aid.

HEALTHY CHILD POLICY

Basic Rule: If your child is not well enough to play outdoors, the child is not well enough to come to school

To ensure the health of the children and staff at Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC, a child displaying any of the following signs or symptoms of illness should not be brought to the center:

1. Severe Coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face, or make a Whooping sound
2. Difficult or rapid breathing

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3. Stiff neck
4. Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period)
5. Temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, when in conjunction with any other
Signs of illness
6. Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
7. Exposed, open lesions
8. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
9. Yellowish skin or eyes
10. Any unusual sign or symptom of illness or other undiagnosed condition
11. Nausea, vomiting or abdominal pain

Staff members will monitor each child's health during the day. Any child observed to be with any of the above symptoms, you will be called to pick up your child within one hour of notification. If your child is sent home with a fever, he/she may not return until they have been symptom free for a 24-hour period. If your child is prescribed antibiotics, you must have a doctor's note stating the child may attend school.

** We have a no-nit policy at Chutes 'N Ladders LLC. Any child found with lice or nits will be sent home immediately. They will not be permitted to return until they are completely nit and lice free. A head check will be conducted at the entrance to the facility. Each child will need to keep current health and immunization records on file. You will be notified 15 days in advance of an expiring health or immunization form. If by the due date the forms are still not in your child's file, your child will not be permitted to attend until the updated records are received. Please keep in mind that your child's place will only be held one week, unless regular payment is still received.

MEDICATION

Chutes 'N Ladders LLC staff do not given any Medication

BITING POLICY

Our program recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when toddlers are in group care. Biting is a common and natural behavior for young children, especially toddlers. Unfortunately even with constant direct supervision, biting still occurs. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program, and we recognize how upsetting it

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is for parents. While we feel biting is never the right thing for toddlers to do, we know that they bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not due to behavioral problems, but result out of frustration and the inability to express themselves due to lack of verbal skills. Our program, then, does not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

- Care for and help the child who was bitten. The child who bit will assist the teacher in applying the ice pack on the bite mark to help the child learn responsibility for their actions and compassion for their classmates.
- Help the child who bit learn other behavior. We will try to teach the child alternative ways to express their frustrations.

Work with the child who bit and examine our program to stop biting. The program will make changes necessary to alleviate the possible reasons for biting that occurs. Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there are episodes of ongoing biting, we develop a plan of specific strategies, techniques and timeless to address it. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the biter if the child is willing. IF the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water, or an antiseptic cleansing wipe.

When a biting incident occurs, parents will be informed via the school's standard accident/incident reporting form. This form is completed and signed by a teacher and Director. This form is given to the parent on the day of the biting occurrence and must also be signed by the parent. This form is kept in a file with all of the accidents/incidents for the month. A copy can be made for the parent if requested.

We keep the name of the child who bit confidential. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting. Whenever possible, toddler caregivers will attend training sessions on biting. In addition, we have current resources on biting available for staff and parents. We encourage parents to bring their concerns and frustrations to the teachers and/ or Director.

**Those enrolled in the toddler program will receive additional information regarding policy and practice with reference to biting as it becomes available.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

At Chutes 'N Ladders LLC, children will receive guidance and discipline-never punishment. Discipline is a positive approach, consistent with age and needs of the child.

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It is our goal to encourage a child's self-respect and develop a personal responsibility for his/her actions. It is important for each child to learn self-control and to respect the rights of others while learning in a safe and caring environment. This involves learning how to make responsible choices and accepting consequences. Children will be allowed to express all their feelings both positive and negative. The staff will listen to children and help them deal with their feelings. Positive behavior will always be promoted first through routines, effective commands and reinforcement of good behaviors. Appropriate behaviors will be rewarded, as adult approval is very important to children. Children are encouraged to be kind, polite, use good manners, and get along well with others. Discipline techniques may include:

- Teaching by example- children learn based on what they see. Staff members will be sure to behave appropriately as a way for children to model their own behavior. Staff will try to remain calm and respectful at all times, and impose any discipline consistently.
- Acknowledging and accepting each child's feelings, and allowing the child to express his/her emotions in an appropriate manner. Teachers will encourage older children to solve their own problems verbally.
- Positive Reinforcement- direct praise will be provided at all times for acceptable behavior. By the same token, staff members will be sure to tell children what "to do" as opposed to what "not to do."
- Re-direction- In response to inappropriate behavior the staff will:
 - Gain the child's attention verbally or by physically going to the child
 - Intervene and stop the unwanted behavior or action
 - Speak to the child/children regarding the action
 - Remind the children of the rules
 - Redirect the child to an appropriate activity or give the choice of an activity
- If the behavior continues, the child will be removed from the situation completely. The most common behaviors requiring interventions are hitting and pushing. When this occurs, the child will first be stopped from the inflicting harm to others. If one child is hitting another, we will stop the child non-violently. For example, we could pick up the being hit, make sure they are OK, and remove them from the reach of the child who hit them. This is often preferable to removing the child who is hitting, because it does not reinforce the negative behavior with special attention. We will tell the child who hit, in a firm manner, that what they did is not acceptable. If the other child is injured, the child who hit/pushed/pinched will assist in caring for the victim (I.e. help apply the ice pack). We will refrain from judging the child (I.e. Don't ever tell a child that he/she is bad -only that their behavior is not allowed). If we know what brought about the hitting,

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- or can find out from the other children, suggest an alternative behavior that would have been acceptable. For example, we encourage the children to use their words to tell other children to stop their offending behavior instead of hitting them. We also encourage children who are fighting over a toy to take turns or share. However, if a particular toy is repeatedly fought over, the object can be temporarily removed to prevent further problems.
- Time-Out/Thinking Time- will only be used at last resort. This will give the child time to take a few deep breaths and relax. The child will always be in view, with time-out lasting 1 minute per age of the child/ If a child continues to be physically aggressive, he/she will be separated from the group. If the teacher is unsuccessful in calming the child by using the above techniques, the child will be referred to the owner or director. If the child still cannot calm down, a parent will be called to pick up the child within 30 minutes. A parent /teacher conference may be scheduled to discuss ongoing behavior issues. Frequent incidents of aggressive behavior may result in dismissal from the program.

* No child shall be subject to disciplinary action that is severe humiliating, or frightening, associated with food, rest or toileting. The use of physical punishment is never permitted, despite approval by parent.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, DRUGS

Smoking, alcohol, and drugs of any kind (except for valid prescription medication) are absolutely prohibited on or near Center facilities, inside or outside. The manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale, purchase or use of a controlled substance on Center property is prohibited. The illegal or improper use of alcohol or drugs on Center property is prohibited. Any employee found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be immediately dismissed. The center may perform random drug tests to ensure compliance with this policy.

DIMISSAL

We reserve the right to dismiss a child at any time after a continued effort to search the reason why the child is too unruly (i.e. disrupts the class, undesirable language, physical abuse of self, teacher or other children etc...) or if the child or parents are not satisfied with our center.

GRIEVANCES

Any concern or displeasure with policies, treatment of your children or staff members should be handled immediately through a conference with the Phyllis Larkin (Director/owner), Major concerns that may lead to withdrawal should be brought to the attention of the owner. Most problems can be solved in a reasonable manner when approached promptly and maturely. Situations left to fester will only disrupt the program and be detrimental to the children.

*** A minimum of two weeks notice is required prior to withdrawal.**

Position Statement on Expulsion and suspension Prevention
In early Childhood Settings

Director of Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC has the authority to expel any student from Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC with or without warning.

In the event that any policy has been breached by a student or any individual associated with a student, the said student becomes “at risk” of expulsion, It is the responsibility of the primary guardian to assure that all other associated with their child clearly understand and agree to adhere to our policies.

By signing this form you are agreeing to view and adhere to our disciplinary policy which is posted on www.chutennladders.net.

Immediate expulsion will occur in the event that an action or comment of a threatening nature occurs, by any person associated with Chutes ‘N Ladders LLC.

In the event of a grievance please refer to the grievance policy protocol.

Parent/Guardian Date

Phyllis Larkin (Director) Date

No Smoking on Property Policy

According to the Department of Children and Families regulations #65C-22.002, it is a hazard to smoke on the property of a Child Care Facility. By signing this form you are agreeing to **No Smoking** anywhere on campus property. This includes all of the following locations.

1. Front of the Building.
2. Side of the building.
3. Sidewalks (must go beyond the sidewalk)
4. Parking Lot- this includes you and passengers in your vehicle

Parent/Guardian Date

Phyllis Larkin (Director) Date