

Staff Handbook

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Panther Cubs Learning center is committed to equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression, disability, veteran status, or other legally protected classes, in all aspects of employment.

We have an overall objective to help create a work environment where differences are encouraged and valued. We are a diverse family serving diverse families. In all aspects of employment it is the policy of Panther Cubs to:

~Hire without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, or any other category protected by local, state, or federal government.

~Base all employment decisions on furthering the principle of equal opportunity employment.

~Conduct analysis of all personnel actions annually to be certain that the policy of equal opportunity is being carried out.

Accommodations for Equal Opportunity

Equal employment opportunities are provided at our center to qualified individuals with a disability by making reasonable accommodations. Accommodations are considered reasonable if they do not pose undue hardship on the operations of the center. Qualified applicants or employees with a disability must be able to perform the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Record Checking

The Panther Cubs Learning Center employs only those people who meet our standards to provide quality care for children. We will make every effort to determine if an employee has a prior conviction or other record of criminal activity that would call into question his or her suitability to care for children. Thus, we conduct criminal records checks on all prospective employees.

All employment offers are contingent on the satisfactory results of a required background check. You must complete required authorization and release forms and receive satisfactory results of the background check prior to working with children. All offers of employment and continued employment are contingent upon the maintenance of a satisfactory record. Post-employment arrests or convictions for crimes that affect your suitability to care for children or perform your job duties may result in termination of employment.

Orientation and Training

When you begin your employment with the Panther Cubs Learning Center, you will be introduced to our policies by participating in an orientation.

We provide training programs to support your professional growth. We also provide special training programs for safety and health procedures that meet state and national regulations. The center, to the extent feasible, maintains a library of self-instructional programs and materials for your use.

You are strongly encouraged to participate in staff development opportunities and to provide documentation of this training for your training record. We may offer training opportunities, including training to satisfy state requirements.

It is your responsibility to obtain the required training hours established and those required by Panther Cubs Learning Center.

Job Description

A job description is written for each position. During the hiring and orientation process, you will receive a copy of your job description detailing the job requirements and physical demands of your position.

You are expected to familiarize yourself with the requirements of your position and to meet the performance guidelines outlined in the job description. If you have any questions regarding these requirements or desire any reasonable accommodation to meet the essential requirements of your position, please inform your supervisor.

Consistency of Care

Because of the critical importance of consistent caregiving to children, regular attendance is essential to the success of the center. Faculty absences require special adjustments to cover the job duties and responsibilities. Therefore, it is your responsibility to maintain a satisfactory attendance record. Attendance and punctuality are considered when determining pay increases and terminations. You should be in your classroom and ready to begin work at your scheduled time. If you are unable to report for work, know that you will be late, or know that you must leave early, notify your supervisor 24 hours in advance.

Frequent or repeated incidents of absenteeism, tardiness, failure to report to assigned location or return from break as scheduled, or departure without prior approval from your supervisor create inconsistency of care, and will be considered cause for Progressive Counseling.

Attendance

Although some unplanned absences are necessary, to minimize disruption, we ask that you make every effort to minimize disruption, we ask that you make every effort to minimize or avoid them. An unexcused absence includes any reason that hinders an employee from attending work, faculty meetings, or mandatory training that cannot be substantiated or that is within the

employee's control. Written documentation may be required upon return from an absence.

When you are unable to report to work for any reason, you must notify your immediate supervisor via a live telephone conversation before your scheduled work time. It is unacceptable to leave a message on the voicemail or with a coworker.

Tardiness

Employees are expected to report to the center prepared to work at their scheduled time. Late arrivals to your center will be considered excessive if you are tardy more than three times per every thirty days.

Mandatory Meetings

Paid monthly faculty meetings and trainings will be held in the evenings and occasionally on Saturdays. Attendance is always mandatory. Also, your attendance may be required at conferences, family intakes, open houses, and other center events. Anyone who cannot attend must notify their supervisor. Failure to attend a faculty meeting without providing the appropriate documentation, will be considered an unexcused absence. Absentees are fully accountable for information discussed in a missed faculty meeting.

Telephone

The telephone in the workplace is a business telephone. It must be easily available for business use and must be kept clear in the event of an emergency for communication with parents and for company business. All incoming calls should be answered immediately, identifying the center or department name and your name.

Except for emergencies, if you receive a personal call while at work, a message may be returned when you are not responsible for caring for children. Personal cellular telephones and pagers are not allowed in the

classroom or in office locations if they interfere with effective job performance or customer service.

Professional Appearance

We are committed to treating early childhood providers as professionals. You are required to present your self in a manner that allows comfort and flexibility and provides safety as you perform your job, while at the same time allowing you to be viewed with credibility by a parent or visitor. Appropriate clothing, jewelry and nail length will allow you to bend, stretch, get down on the floor, and work with a variety of materials while in close contact with young children. When dressing for work, please use your best judgment, if you are uncertain as to the appropriateness of your apparel, please speak with your supervisor.

Training Pay

Your attendance at lectures, meetings, and training programs will be considered hours worked and will be paid if attendance is required. On occasion Panther Cubs Learning Center may offer voluntary trainings and education programs. Your attendance at voluntary programs will not be considered as time worked and will be unpaid, unless the program occurs during your normal working hours.

Guidelines for Positive Guidance

Panther Cubs Learning Center is committed to creating a supportive environment where young children can thrive. Adults should view discipline as an important aspect of teaching and learning, but accept children as they are. Development is viewed as a growth process, with each age and stage having its own characteristics, its own challenges and needs. The following standards have been developed to create a caring environment that teaches children to behave in responsible ways and to feel good about themselves:

Set realistic expectations for young children's behavior.

Create a "yes" environment that encourages children's

Positive behavior.

Model appropriate behavior.

Encourage children's efforts to build feelings of self-worth.

Give children alternatives to turn destructive situations into Constructive ones.

Use natural and logical consequences to motivate and empower children to make responsible decisions about their behavior.

Encourage behaviors such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and Problem solving.

It is inappropriate to discipline a child using punishment that is inconsistent with the principles of positive guidance. In particular, the following uses of punishment are absolutely prohibited:

Corporal punishment, including spanking.

Shaking, jerking, squeezing or physically indicating disapproval.

Shaming, or using humiliation, harsh/inappropriate tone of voice, or Verbal abuse.

Labeling or otherwise implying that the child, rather than the behavior, is the problem.

Using bribes, false threats, or false choices.

Denial of food or special activities or events as a form of punishment; or force feeding a child.

Retaliating or doing to the child what he or she did to someone else.

Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Supervision, Health and Safety

Maintaining proper supervision, health and safety of children is our primary concern. As a Panther Cubs Learning Center employee it is your responsibility to be familiar with and implement all applicable supervision, feeding, diapering, or toileting, and other health and safety policies, procedures and guidelines. You must, as a minimum requirement:

Keep children within sight and sound supervision at all times.

Give children full attention while they are in your care, focus on their needs, and refrain from engaging in activities that interfere with your ability to give children your full attention such as:

Talking on the phone

Reading a newspaper or book

Using the computer or internet

Engaging in lengthy conversations with others in the classroom, or on the playground.

Sleeping or resting in the classroom

Maintain staff/child ratios set by Panther Cubs Learning Center and licensing at all times. Never leave a child unattended.

Be aware of the number of children in your care at all times and implement center head count procedures.

Learn and implement our procedures regarding feeding, diapering, and toileting children.

Secure children's health and safety by learning, following and implementing individualized feeding, nutrition, allergies medication and hygiene guidelines.

Follow all Panther Cubs Learning Center and licensing health and safety requirements and guidelines.

Going on Walks

Teachers are allowed to take the young children on walks, provided they leave a note listing the time they left, estimated time to return and a destination. The class must stay on the high school campus and teachers must be able to see the students at all times.

Each teacher will take with them a pack containing a sealed bottle of water, a first aid kit, emergency cards, and a checklist of all students in attendance that day.

Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect

If there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect, individuals working with children are mandated reporters and are required by law to report cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. If you have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect has occurred due to any cause you should report the incident to the appropriate authorities within 24 hours and inform your director of your actions. The appropriate child protective service agency will determine appropriate actions and may conduct an investigation. Absolute confidentiality is required concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

Universal Precautions

If you provide direct care of children you will receive initial and annual training on the risks of occupational exposure to Blood-borne Pathogens and measures to reduce or eliminate risk. Attendance is mandatory for Blood-borne pathogens training. As an employee of Panther Cubs Learning Center, you must adhere to the company's infection control policies based on Universal Precautions.

Universal Precautions require that you consider every person, all blood, and most bodily fluids to be potential carriers of infectious disease. The policy of adherence to the concept of Universal Precautions is strictly enforced for the benefit and protection of every employee and child.

First Aid/CPR Training

We require that you complete and maintain approved first aid training. CPR training is required for faculty to meet center-specific and licensing requirements. You are required to keep first aid and CPR certifications current and up-to-date, and to submit a certificate of completion to be placed in your personnel file.

Emergency Preparedness

In order to secure the safety of children and faculty, standard emergency response procedures have been developed for each center. You are required to follow center policies for emergency response in the event of fire, earthquake, or other natural disaster. You are required to participate in safety training programs and drills as required by state and federal regulations and licensing standards.

Documentation of safety training and emergency response drills is required. Copies of documentation are maintained in center logs and your personnel file as needed.

I have read and understand the requirements, policies and procedures in the staff handbook. I realize that the policies and procedures listed in this document are a requirement for working for the Panther Cubs Learning Center.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____