



Family Handbook

Emmetsburg Education Center

Welcome

The Emmetsburg Education Center extends a warm welcome to all our new families. We understand the importance of providing high-quality early care and education to children and are glad that you have entrusted us to be a “home away home” for your child(ren).

Please use this handbook to become familiar with our policies and philosophies surrounding care. We look forward to providing a safe, educational, and enjoyable place for your family.

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Mission

Learning by Doing: Strengthening Minds, Families, and the Community

Educational Goals

- *To spark creativity in children through exploration, independence, and play.*
- *To help children develop personal responsibility for themselves and the world we live in.*
- *To motivate children to have a passion for physical, intellectual, and social learning.*
- *To foster a development of self-confidence and motivation that encourages lifelong learning.*
- *To encourage children to strengthen and develop healthy relationships with others.*

Services

Center Overview

The Emmetsburg Education Center is open Monday through Friday during the hours of 7:00am and 5:30pm.

We are closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve. If a holiday mentioned above falls on a Saturday, the center will be closed on the preceding Friday. Likewise, if a holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed on the following Monday.

We provide the following services-

-Full-Time Care: Care for a child 5 days per week

(this could include school-aged children during the summer or holidays).

-Part-Time Care: less than 5 days per week but consistent each week

(this could include school-aged children during the summer or holidays).

-Drop-In Care: As needed care, please call ahead of time to confirm availability of a slot for your child based on their age. All drop-in children need to have enrollment and admission paperwork complete in order to attend the Emmetsburg Education Center.

-Before and After School Care: designated for children that attend school during the day and only need care before or after school.

The Emmetsburg Education Center is a tobacco, alcohol, and drug free facility.

Fee Schedule

The Emmetsburg Education Center provides the following services-

Type of Care	Brief Description	Rate of Services
Full-Time Care	5 full days per week	\$140/week
Part-Time	4 days or less	\$30/day
Drop-In Care	Daily, as needed	\$35/day
Before/After School Care	School-aged children	\$10/day

DISCOUNTS- For children enrolled in the part-time 3- or 4-year old preschool program at the Emmetsburg Catholic School, the following discounts will apply:

- 3 year old preschool program: \$10 off per week
- 4 year old preschool program: \$12 off per week

Fees are due on Friday for that week of attendance. A daily, flat rate fee is utilized. A signed financial agreement is required for admittance and outlines requirements for payment and consequences for late or returned payment. Child Care Assistance (State Subsidy) is accepted with a current "Notice of Decision" (NOD) from the Department of Human Services.

Admissions

General Information

The Emmetsburg Education Center admits any child regardless of their or family member's gender, race, ethnicity, creed, nationality, religious affiliation, and/or sexual orientation.

Children served must be between 6 weeks of age up until 12 years of age, as specified by the Emmetsburg Education Center and the Department of Human Services (DHS) licensing standards.

Enrollment Ratios

Age of Child	Minimum Ratio of Staff to Child
2 Weeks to 2 Years	1:4
Two Years	1:6
Three Years	1:8
Four Years	1:12
5-10 Years	1:15
Ten Years and Over	1:20

In order for your child to be admitted in the Emmetsburg Education Center, the following documents are required:

- i. Enrollment Form (including Medical Consent)
- ii. Developmental Profile for Infants
- iii. Physical Examination Form
- iv. Current Immunization Record
- v. Financial Agreement

Discipline and Discharge Policy

Children respond best to structure and consistency. The Emmetsburg Education Center will operate under the framework of positive behavior implementation and supports (PBIS). We will have clear and concise behavioral expectations that are taught to each family under our care. Our expectations are as follows:

- We help each other out.
- We show kindness to all.
- We keep our hands and feet to ourselves.

When these positive behaviors are observed, staff will immediately praise the behavior through verbal (i.e. "Thank you for helping set the table." "I noticed you sharing with your friend.") or nonverbal (i.e. thumbs up, high five, hug) feedback.

If a child is having a difficult time with the behavioral expectations, staff will re-state and/or re-teach the expectation through positive redirection and guidance. Patterns of behavior will be recorded to determine if an additional skills need to be taught to individual children (i.e. sharing with others, problem-solving, communicating frustration). As a last resort, a brief, age-appropriate, time-out may be used.

-The Emmetsburg Education Center does not support or tolerate any form of discipline (by staff or families) that involves physical intervention (spanking, shaking, slapping, etc.) nor discipline that shames, humiliates, and decreases the self-confidence of a child.

-If a child continues to have behavioral difficulties that interfere with the operation of the program or safety of staff and other children, the Center Director will meet with the child's family to discuss how to address the issue. The Emmetsburg Education Center reserves the right to dismiss a child whose needs may be better met in another setting.

Biting Policy

At times, children may resort to biting in order to communicate frustration, anger, or hurt. Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of other children and staff through teaching behavioral expectations and high-quality staff supervision. In the instance that a child bites another child or staff member, a bite incident report will be

completed and provided to both families- maintaining confidentiality of each child. Proper first aid procedures will be utilized if the bite penetrated skin. The child will be re-taught behavioral expectations and a “replacement behavior” will be taught to the child (ex. asking for help, saying “no”). If biting continues to occur, a plan will be made between the center and family to ensure safety and criteria for dismissal from the center.

In addition to behavioral issues, a child may be discharged from the Emmetsburg Education Center for failure to make appropriate payment or provide appropriate documentation as required by DHS. Parent/Guardian will be notified and given a specific timeframe to submit payment or appropriate documentation; this will be addressed in a written and signed contract from both parties. Failure to complete requirements in time given will result in discharge.

Meals and Snacks

Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are offered at the Emmetsburg Education Center. All meals are nutritious and comply with standards outlined by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Children are encouraged to taste a variety of foods but not required to eat everything offered. Meals for the week will be posted for viewing.

Children are encouraged to be active in the preparation for meals by assisting staff with setting the table and cleaning up their meal space. Food is served “family-style” with emphasis on proper use of silverware and good manners. Hand-washing will occur before and after meals.

If your child has specific meal (medical or religious) or allergy information, please provide documentation in writing and accommodations will be tailored towards their needs.

Sleep

Every child will be provided the option to rest during the day. For children under the age of 2, a crib will be provided. For children over the age of 2, an individualized cot will be utilized. More detailed sleep information will be gathered through the “Developmental Profile” sheet to help staff understand how to best meet your child’s sleep/rest needs.

All children will be placed on their backs to sleep in their crib or cot unless medical documentation specifies otherwise. If an infant arrives asleep in their car seat, they will be transitioned into a crib in a reasonable amount of time. In order to ensure the safety of children, no blankets or toys will be allowed in the cribs. Sleeping sacks may be utilized.

Health Guidelines

Health and safety of children are top priorities for staff and families at the Emmetsburg Education Center. For that reason, your cooperation with health policies will ensure greater benefits to our children.

Health Status Policy

If your child has one of the following conditions, they will not be allowed at the Emmetsburg Education Center and you will be required to pick them up:

- vi. Contagious Disease
- vii. Fever over 100 degrees
- viii. Vomiting within the past 24 hours
- ix. Active Diarrhea
- x. Accident requiring medical attention

To return to the Emmetsburg Education Center, your child must be symptom free from diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours. If a fever was present, the child must be fever-free for the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Notify a staff member if your child has been exposed to a contagious disease as this affects other children/staff in the center.

Best Practice Center Policies

First Aid Kits are available in each room and include a copy of medical consents should an emergency arise.

In the event that a child with a contagious disease has had access to other children, this information will be posted anonymously and provided to families that may have been exposed.

Staff and children will engage in proper hand-washing before and after meal preparation/meal time in addition to after diapering/toileting. The staff will employ standard requirements for sanitizing and disinfecting the Emmetsburg Education Center in order to reduce instances of contamination and spreading germs.

Incident Reports

Incident Reports will be completed for any instance involving minor/major injury, significant changes in health status, significant behavioral issues, or sexually-acting out. Following any incident, parents will receive a written incident report to sign and have placed in their child's file. All incident reports will maintain confidentiality of other children that may be involved.

Minor and Major Incidences

In the instance of an accident or medical emergency (i.e. fractures, bleeding that won't stop, injuries requiring stitches, injuries to the head/face/genitalia) parents/guardian of the child will be notified immediately. In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact(s) will be telephoned. In serious cases, the child will be taken to the local hospital for treatment with parents/guardians being notified as soon as possible.

In the event of a minor incident, staff will respond by tending to the child using information gathered from their First Aid/CPR and Universal Precautions coursework. An incident report will be completed and parent/guardian will be notified at pick-up about incident unless otherwise arranged.

Dental Emergencies

In the event that a major injury occurs to a child's teeth, gums, and/or mouth, a dental professional will be notified immediately. Minor dental incidents will be tended to using proper First Aid requirements and recorded on an incident report.

Medication Information

The Emmetsburg Education Center is appropriately trained to store and administer medication as prescribed to children. Medication must be brought in the original container, labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, medication, and dosage information (time, amount, and directions). A written parental permission form to administer medication needs to be placed in the child's file.

Medication will be kept in a locked storage system, away from children access. Each dosage instance will be recorded in the medication record book.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellant will be applied as necessary with parental consent.

Access Policy

The Emmetsburg Education Center is a "locked facility". All doors will be locked at all times except during high-traffic drop-off and pick-up when a staff member is standing at the front entrance. Staff and parents are encouraged to knock on the door should a staff member not notice their arrival.

Parents

Parents are encouraged and welcome to come and visit during the day while your child is at the Emmetsburg Education Center. If your schedule allows, we would love to have you join us over lunch. Please let us know if

you will be joining us for lunch when you drop off so we can make necessary arrangements. A private feeding area will be available for parents that wish to come and feed their child during the day.

Anyone picking up your child from the center needs to be listed on the enrollment form. A photo identification card may be requested at pick-up. Please inform the center if someone new will be picking up your child so their name may be added to your enrollment form.

Visitors

All visitors that are not designated staff, volunteers, or family picking up a child will be asked to show proper identification and remain under supervision by staff at all times. If a visitor has no reason to be on the premises, they will be asked to leave by staff.

Registered Sex Offenders

Any parent/guardian or other individual that is required to register on the Sex Offender Registry must meet with the center director and establish an individualized written agreement with DHS approval in order to have access to the Emmetsburg Education Center premises.

Diapering and Toileting

Diapers

Diapers will be changed at least every two hours or as needed. We ask that you send enough diapers and wipes for your child to get through the day. We will gladly store extra diapers/wipes for your child to use throughout the week.

Toilet-Training

Potty-Training is such an important milestone in your child's life. We understand that every situation is different and will help establish a plan that is appropriate for your child when the time is right. In order to maintain cleanliness and sanitary environments for our children, we ask that your children wear pull-ups or diapers for one week and keep them dry before coming to the center in underwear. Please communicate with us when you believe your child is ready so we can make an individualized plan for them.

Staff and Volunteers

The Emmetsburg Education employs various staff members and utilizes volunteers in our community to provide high-quality care and attention for your children. All staff members must have completed a background check, national fingerprint record check, and physical examination. In addition, staff are trained in First Aid, CPR, Universal Precautions, and Mandatory Reporting. As mandatory reporters, all staff members are required by

law to report any suspected abuse or neglect. Volunteers are crucial to helping provide more individualized attention to the children. They will be required to have completed a background check and will always remain under the supervision of a staff member.

Employees will receive continued education on how to best serve children and various ways to ensure compliance of the center. They will be required to abide by the standards outlined by DHS and the Emmetsburg Education Center (staffing ratios, discipline procedures, and center rules) in addition to maintaining confidentiality.

Procedures/Requirements by Age Group

Children 6 weeks up to 2 years of age

Parent/Guardian must provide diapers and wipes as needed. Please provide a spare change of clothes for your child. If bottle-fed, provide enough bottles for one day. Used/dirty bottles will be sent home at the end of the day.

Meals will be outlined on the "Developmental Profile" filled out at enrollment or upon request by staff. This sheet will determine how the center can best feed your children through formula, breast milk, or pureed/solid foods. The Emmetsburg Education Center will provide fresh, homemade pureed or solid food.

Children 2-3 years of age

Parent/Guardian must provide diapers and wipes as needed. Please include a spare change of clothes for your child.

Children 3-6 years of age

If your child is still diapered, please provide enough diapers/wipes for the day. Please provide a spare change of clothes for your child.

TOYS

We ask that children do not bring toys or items from home. The Emmetsburg Education Center provides age-appropriate toys, materials, and activities for your child during the day. If your child has a specific item that provides them comfort, please let us know so we can figure out an appropriate arrangement.

OUTDOOR PLAY

The Emmetsburg Education Center will actively encourage outdoor play and incorporate it into our daily schedule. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and has shoes that are designed for outdoor play. Proper winter attire includes: coat, snow pants, boots, hat, and mittens/gloves. If you would like to leave winter gear at the center, please let us know so we can make space for it.

Daily Schedule and Curriculum

Our daily schedule will involve a variety of experiences that incorporate fine and gross motor movement, indoor and outdoor play, structured and free play, and off-campus activities. Daily lesson plans are posted in each classroom of the center for viewing.

Field Trip Policy

At times, staff may utilize off-campus activities to enrich the activity/lesson at that specific time or help increase skills in children. For instance, a trip to the grocery store could provide the following lessons but not limited to: how to appropriately behave in a grocery store, how to make a list and find items, how to count money and receive change, how to engage in appropriate social greetings to others.

For activities off-campus, parents must consent in the enrollment forms for walking and driving trips. Parents will be notified of off-campus activities prior to the occurrence. If a parent does not consent to off-campus activities, a stimulating, related activity will be provided on-campus for that child. All safety precautions will be utilized while walking or driving off-campus. At times, other organizations or persons may provide programming to children at the Emmetsburg Education Center. These individuals/organizations will be supervised at all times. Some examples may include: art classes, nature programs, or business professionals that provide skills that are of interest to the children.

Transportation

For school-aged children (Kindergarten and above), the Emmetsburg Community School District Bus will have a pick-up and drop-off right outside the Emmetsburg Education Center. Children will be under staff supervision during pick-up and drop-off at the center. Pick-up in the morning will occur between 7:30-7:40am and drop-off shortly after 3:30, on BUS #5. It is vital that children arrive prior to this time if school bus transportation is needed. In the event that school bus transportation is not available, parents/guardian will be responsible for securing alternative arrangements.

Policy for Children with Special Needs

The Emmetsburg Education Center strives to provide the best care for all children regardless of special needs. If your child has special needs, please address them with staff so we can ensure we provide the best care for your children and/or receive appropriate medical training as needed.

Emergency Plan Policies

Fire/Tornado/Earthquake

In the event of a fire, children under the age of 2 and staff will be evacuated and meet at the Emmetsburg Post Office. Children over the age of 2 and staff will be evacuated and meet at the Courthouse Square across the street. An emergency bag is included in each room, including parental contact information.

In the event of a tornado or earthquake, children and staff will move towards the center of the building. Plans for fire and tornado are posted throughout the building.

Blizzard

If severe blizzard conditions should arise while children are in attendance, staff will continue to operate as scheduled. In the event that the center needs to close to allow staff and children to safely return to their homes, parents/guardians will be notified to pick-up their child(ren).

For weather-related news or cancellations, refer to our Facebook page or the radio.

Lost or Abducted Children

Staff will follow all safety procedures and policies as designed to ensure the safety of all children while at the Emmetsburg Education Center. Should a child become lost, staff will immediately notify the Center Director and Law Enforcement personnel will be notified. In the event of child abduction, staff will immediately call 9-1-1, record down any identifying information about the abductor (physical appearance and vehicle, as necessary), and ensure the safety of other children at the center. The Center Director will determine if the building should be on "lock-down" or if children should be evacuated to the Courthouse for further safety until law enforcement arrives.

Intruders in Center

Should a person without consent or reason enter the Emmetsburg Education Center, staff will inquire about their purpose and/or request photo identification. Staff will notify Law Enforcement officials to escort the individual out of the building if they are not willing to leave themselves and/or to notify them of suspicious activity. If the safety of the children or staff is at risk while the intruder remains in the building, staff will evacuate the building as specified in the Fire procedures. Parent/Guardians will be notified as soon as possible if Law Enforcement was summoned or an evacuation occurred.

Bomb Threats

In the event that a bomb threat occurs, staff will immediately notify Law Enforcement personnel and evacuate the building. Children and Staff will walk over to the Courthouse until it has been determined by Law

Enforcement personnel that the building is safe to return to. Parents/Guardians will be notified as soon as possible.

Intoxicated or Impaired Parent/Guardian

If a parent or designated person is suspected to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at pick-up, center staff will assist them in identifying an alternative arrangement for pick-up. Law Enforcement will be contacted if an alternative arrangement is not established and/or staff fear for the safety of the child(ren).