

Parent Handbook



*One of a Kind
Progressive Early Education*

Non-Profit Childcare Center
4640 West 27th Street
Lawrence, KS 66047
785-830-9040

Email: ooakdirector@yahoo.com
www.ooak.org

January 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.....	3
OUR MISSION.....	3
OUR STAFF & THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.....	4
OUR CURRICULUM.....	4
COMMUNICATION	5
WHAT TO ANTICIPATE.....	5
SERVICES.....	6
HOURS OF OPERATION.....	6
SEVERE WEATHER CLOSURE POLICY	6
TEACHER/CHILD RATIOS	7
NUTRITION AND FOOD POLICY	7
TUITION AND ENROLLMENT	10
LATE TUITION FEES AND CONSEQUENCES	10
ADDITIONAL FEES	10
ENROLLMENT	10
WITHDRAWAL.....	11
ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE POLICY	11
HEALTH.....	11
PROOF OF CURRENT HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS	11
SENDING CHILDREN HOME/EMERGENCY CONTACT POLICY.....	11
MEDICINE ADMINISTRATION POLICY	13
BITING AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIORS POLICY	13
SAFETY	14
PARENT SUPERVISION AT THE CENTER	14
SOMEBODY ELSE PICKING UP	14
STAFF SAFETY/HEALTH TRAINING	14
SAFETY HAZARDS.....	14
PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY	15
FIRE	15
TORNADO AND SEVERE STORM	15
SERIOUS INJURY	15

Introduction

Welcome from the Board of Directors

Welcome, we are delighted that you have chosen One of a Kind (OOAK) to help your child grow and learn! OOAK is a nonprofit organization run by the parent Board of Directors, the Director, and the Associate Director. The Director and Associate Director handle day-to-day operations while the Board of Directors makes high-level administrative and policy decisions. OOAK offers an advanced facility designed specifically to stimulate children and promote their learning. Taking special care of your child is our goal and we strive to provide services that fit the needs of you as a parent as well as the development of your child/ren.

OOAK offers a unique curriculum in a positive learning environment. Each child's educational program is tailored to the child's abilities and incorporates the parent's goals. For our infants, we teach baby sign language for early communication development. We provide individualized curriculums for our toddler, preschool, and pre-kindergarten classes. Children who graduate from OOAK are well prepared for public school.

We invite you to get involved on the Board, in parent workdays, at social gatherings, and in fundraising activities. We welcome you to stop by your child/ren's classroom/s and to observe from our observation booths located between the toddler and preschool classrooms. Your involvement is a foundation of our center and is critical in your child/ren's education.

This handbook includes general information about our center. Please feel free to stop by the front office and talk with the Director or Associate Director, attend a monthly Board meeting, or email us with questions or comments any time. The Board meets monthly. We welcome your comments and your participation.

Again, welcome and thank you!

Our Mission

OOAK is a private, non-profit, parent-directed early education center. Our mission is to provide individualized care and curriculum that stimulates and nurtures each child in his or her social, emotional, physical, and academic growth.

Our Staff & Their Qualifications

The staff members at One of a Kind truly are “one of a kind!” They come from a variety of backgrounds and all share a love for children. Many of our teachers are university students studying various subjects; others have chosen early education as a career.

Each teacher receives specific training from the classroom’s lead teacher and Director that is appropriate for the children under their care. In addition, staff development training is held regularly. All teachers/staff are educated on the following: symptoms of illness, signs of abuse and neglect, and CPR/first aid (see Safety section for details).

Each classroom has a lead teacher and assistant teachers. The lead teacher is in charge of structuring your child’s day using age appropriate lesson plans. The assistant teachers help carry out the lesson plans.

Our Curriculum

Our high-quality curriculum is structured around the children’s abilities and readiness to learn and focus on the areas of gross motor, fine motor, and cognitive milestones.

Upon your child starting at the center, we begin using individualized curriculum lessons. Starting in Infant I, we begin to teach and use several signs from the American Sign Language set; this helps the children communicate their needs before they can use verbal speech. Each child has a folder, and we practice with them both age and developmentally appropriate activities in the gross motor, fine motor, and cognitive areas (for example, stacking blocks or pointing to various body parts). Each child's folder accompanies him/her to the next classroom throughout the child's term at OOAK. In addition to your child’s folder activities, each classroom has a weekly lesson plan to encourage creativity and discussion.

Every child is different and therefore each child masters particular skills at different times. Our folders assist teachers in identifying what skills children have mastered and what activities we can offer during the day so that the child’s experiences enable them to grow. Folder activities are done throughout the day at various times. In addition to your child's folder activities, each classroom has a weekly lesson plan that is created by your child's Lead Teacher. The weekly lesson plan is created with age appropriate activities that encourage creativity and discussion. The lesson plan's will typically have an educational theme that is designed to teach your child using fun yet useful techniques to help them learn the basic academic skills.

Communication

Communication is very important to us. We strive to maintain an atmosphere where parents and staff feel comfortable communicating with each other. Forums for this include your child/ren's Daily Report Form(s), daily in-person contact with your child/ren's teachers and the Director, Associate Director, and Board members, monthly Board meetings, phone and email.

Daily Report forms are used in each classroom and staff should communicate to you where your child's report form can be found at the end of each day.

What to Anticipate

Emergency Contact - One of the forms we ask you to complete when you first arrive is an Emergency Contact form, which includes emergency contact information for you and names of people whom you approve to pick up your child. We will prompt you to update this form on a yearly basis, but ask that you keep this form updated if any information changes in the meantime. This form must be notarized and, for your convenience, our Director is a Notary.

Family Events - Several times a year, children, parents, and staff and their families gather to have fun together. These events include barbeques, a visit to the local pumpkin patch, and/or socials at the Center.

Fundraisers - We have periodic fundraisers, the proceeds from which help us purchase toys, playground equipment, maintenance supplies, services, etc.

Year-round fundraisers include collection of can labels and box tops from Box Tops for Education and Campbell's products, Scholastic book sales bonuses, GoodShop.com, Target Rewards, Office Depot Rewards.

Periodic fundraisers include restaurant events, food sales, and other programs.

Holidays - We involve the kids in a celebration of each holiday by decorating the classrooms, having small parties, and other activities. For example, for Halloween, we encourage the children to dress up in their costumes and have a parade inside the Center. If there are holidays that you would prefer your child not participate in, please let the Director know.

Immunization Records - Don't forget to bring us a copy of your child's newest immunizations after each doctor's visit (we're required by the Kansas Department of Health to have current records).

Monthly Newsletter - At the beginning of each month, we will email you a newsletter which will include general news from the Center, more specific news from each classroom, the month's menu, and a calendar of upcoming events.

Neighborhood Walks and Field Trips - We will take the children in the Infant, Toddler, and Preschool classrooms on regular walks. We keep a signed copy of a Walk permission form on file for these purposes. First aid kits and cell phones, as well as each child's emergency contact information, are taken on each of these walks.

Photos - Periodically, a professional photographer will come in to take the children's photos and will offer them for you to purchase. Also, we like to put pictures of Center activities on Facebook and on our website regularly. You have the option of signing a form that asks us not to post pictures of your child online. Please ask the Director if you have any questions.

Transitioning Children to the Next Classroom - We carefully transition your child/ren to the next classroom at an age and developmentally appropriate time. Transitioning and the timing of transition is assessed on an individual basis for each child. Please ask the Director if you have any questions regarding the transition process.

Services

Hours of Operation

One of a Kind is open year round, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., with the exception of scheduled closings for holidays and staff work days. For a list of scheduled closings, please ask the office staff.

Severe Weather Closure Policy

One of a Kind will follow the Lawrence Public School's (USD 497) decision to be closed due to Severe Winter Weather. Therefore, if USD 497 School District cancels school, One of a Kind will also be closed. One of a Kind will not follow USD 497 Late Start Mornings due to Frigid Temperatures. If the School District decides to start Public School 2 hours later, One of a Kind will open at the normal time (7:00 a.m.).

The Parent Board of Directors and Administrative Staff have the right to deviate from this policy if they feel it is necessary. If the Board/Administrators decide that One of a Kind will be open despite the School District being closed the information will be posted on Facebook and a group email will be sent out.

Teacher/Child Ratios

We meet or exceed the State teacher/child ratios.

Infant I:	1 teacher for every 3 children (1:3)
Infant II:	1 teacher for every 4 children (1:4)
Toddler I:	1 teacher for every 5 children (1:5)
Toddler II:	1 teacher for every 7 children (1:7)
Preschooler:	1 teacher for every 10 children (1:10)
Kindergarten:	1 teacher for every 12 children (1:12)

Nutrition and Food Policy

OOAK participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program through the Kansas State Department of Education. We provide balanced nutritious meals for the children in our care. Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided.

Parents are welcome to bring special treats for all the children in a classroom on birthdays or special occasions. OOAK is a nut-free center. Please keep this in mind when sending food for special occasions.

Approximate meal times at the Center are as follows:

Breakfast: 8:15 a.m. -8:45 a.m.

Lunch: 11:15 a.m. -11:45 a.m.

Snack: 3:15 p.m. -3:45 p.m.

Our Classrooms - A Quick Summary

Infant I - Infants from 2 weeks to crawling (usually around 8-9 months old). This classroom has individualized scheduling for sleeping and eating. We welcome breastfeeding moms and provide refrigerated storage for breast milk. We also welcome the use of pacifiers.

We provide a crib and sheet (washed weekly) for each child along with a basket in which we will keep extra clothing, bottles, diapers, wipes, etc organized for your child. We have several different bottle options here at the facility but parents are welcomed to bring their own bottles also.

We provide the baby formula, baby food, and whole milk. When your child starts to eat baby food, we'll work with you to feed the baby foods that you've introduced at home.

Infant II - Infants/toddlers from crawling to walking (usually around 8-9 months to around 16 months old). This classroom has more formal scheduling, with specific meal and nap times. We begin limiting pacifier use to nap times in Infant II.

We provide a crib and sheet (washed weekly) for each child, with a basket in which you will keep extra clothing, bottles, diapers, wipes, etc. We also ask that each child have a blanket for nap time, and that you take the blanket home to wash each Friday.

We provide baby formula, baby food, and whole milk. We welcome breastfeeding moms and provide refrigerated storage for breast milk. We begin feeding from the center's menu as your infant starts eating solid foods at home.

We begin the use of sign language in this class and will inform parents of what the sign is that we will be working on in this classroom.

Toddler I - Toddlers up to 2 years old. In Toddler 1 we continue using sign language and will start to emphasize using verbal language. We also start teeth brushing after meals and begin to introduce toilet training. We spend at least 1 hour outside every day, if the weather permits.

The children take their daily nap from 12:30 p.m. -3:00 p.m. They all nap on their own cots and sheets that we provide. Each child has a cubby, in which you will keep labeled extra clothing, extra shoes, blankets etc. We will wash your child's cot sheet each week. Please take your child's blanket home each Friday to wash.

We feed children from the center's menu and use sippy cups instead of bottles.

Toddler II - Toddlers ages 2 to 3 years old. In this classroom we emphasize toilet training. We will work with families on the transition from diapers to underwear. We begin circle time and working with the children on handwriting, counting, ABC's, color identification and shapes.

We'll spend at least 1 hour outside every day, if the weather permits.

The children take their daily nap from 12:30 p.m. -3:00 p.m. They nap on cots and sheets that we provide. Each child has a cubby, in which you will keep labeled extra clothing, extra shoes, blankets, etc. We will wash your child's cot sheet weekly. Please take your child's blanket home each Friday to wash.

We feed children from the center's menu. Children will start using open cups and silverware when eating, and encourage use of good table manners. Children continue to brush their teeth after breakfast and lunch.

Preschool - Children from approximately 2 ½ to 3 years old, who are potty-trained (or well on their way). In preschool we introduce the concept of Centers (rotation of activities thru out the classroom). We continue to encourage circle time. Circle time in Preschool will focus on that week's theme and will be posted on the classroom lesson plans. Children will begin handwriting and letter identification in the preschool classroom.

Children will spend at least 30 minutes two times a day outside if the weather permits.

The children take their daily nap from 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Children will nap on mats and sheets that we provide. Each child has a cubby, in which you will keep 2 pairs of labeled extra clothing, extra shoes, blanket, etc. We will wash your child's nap sheet weekly. Please take your child's blanket home each Friday to wash.

We feed children from the center's menu and encourage use of good table manners. Children will begin to learn how to serve themselves at meal time to promote independence.

Pre-Kindergarten - Children from 4 to 6 years old. In Pre-Kindergarten we continue to encourage a more structured circle time with more emphasis on the days of the week, the weather and the overall classroom theme. Pre-K will go outside every day, with weather permitting. The classroom lesson plans and overall theme will be more advanced and there will be more structured projects daily including work on community behaviors.

The children take their daily nap (or quiet time) from 12:30pm-2:30pm on mats and sheets that we provide. Each child has a cubby, in which you will keep 2 pairs of labeled extra clothing, extra shoes, blankets, etc. We will wash your child's nap sheet weekly. Please take your child's blanket home each Friday to wash.

We feed children from the center's menu, emphasize good nutrition, and encourage use of good table manners. We will continue working with children on their independence by allowing them to serve themselves, brush their teeth, dress themselves if necessary, etc.

Tuition and Enrollment

Tuition, due on the first day of each month, is based on a four-week month so that tuition stays the same each month. We cannot make tuition allowances for days that your child is sick, vacation days, or days the Center is closed for any reason (including inclement weather and breaks).

Families with more than one child enrolled will receive a **10% discount** for each full month that multiple children are enrolled. *This does not apply to the tuition of a child who attends part time.*

Late Tuition Fees and Consequences

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month and considered late after the 5th day of the month. Tuition payments must be received on time in order for the center to operate. Payments received after the 5th will incur a \$20 a fee, plus an additional \$5 fee each additional day tuition is late. If families have not paid in full by the 15th of the month, OoAK is unable to hold a child's spot and special approval will need to be granted in order for a child to continue attending OoAK.

Additional Fees

Late Pick-Up Fee: Anytime a child is picked up after 6:00 p.m., we will charge a fee of \$5.00 for the first minute and \$1.00 for each subsequent minute. This fee is due the next morning.

Returned Check Fee: \$35.00 will be added to all returned checks.

Enrollment

We invite families to enroll children at One of a Kind at any time during the year.

A non-refundable \$25.00 application fee is due at the time of application for each child. This fee covers administrative costs and is not applied toward tuition, nor does it guarantee your child a spot.

If there is not a current vacancy when you apply for enrollment, your child/ren will be placed on a waiting list upon receipt of the application fee(s). When a vacancy can be projected, you will receive notification from the Director. A non-refundable deposit (applicable to the last month's tuition) of \$100 must be paid within 72 hours of the Director's notification in order to secure the vacancy for a child/ren. After we receive the deposit, we will provide several forms (including the Enrollment and Tuition Agreement, Emergency Contact Card, Field Trip/Walk Permission Slip) that must be completed and returned before the child/ren's first day. We will also need a copy of the child/ren's immunization records and a current health assessment.

Withdrawal

Families must give 30 days notice of intent to withdrawal their child(ren) from One of a Kind. Families who do not provide adequate notification will be charged tuition and fees as appropriate, consistent with the late fee policy.

Referral Credit

If you refer a family to One of a Kind, we will apply a referral credit to your account after that family has been enrolled for 30 days.

Admission and Discharge Policy

One of a Kind does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services, activities, or in employment.

The Board and the Directors may choose to discharge a child involuntarily for the welfare of the child or others, or for non-payment of tuition or other charges.

Weapons of any kind will constitute an *immediate* discharge and forfeiture of all paid funds.

Health

Proof of Current Health and Immunizations

We are required by state law to ensure that we have a record of a current physical and all immunizations for your child/ren. We must have documentation in your child/ren's file before they can attend our Center. Immunization records must be kept up to date in order for your child to remain enrolled. Please bring us a copy of your child's newest immunizations after each doctor's visit. We will send home a reminder when it's time to update if you haven't brought in a copy.

Sending Children Home/Emergency Contact Policy

For the health of all of the children and staff at OOAK and according to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) requirements, we must send a child home if s/he has symptoms of illness (as specified below) within 2 hours of onset. The child will be removed from the classroom and will remain with a staff member until the parent, or a designated representative, arrives to pick up the child. If we can't reach a parent within 30 minutes, we will call the emergency

contacts indicated by the parents on the Emergency Contact form. *Please remember to keep your Emergency Contact information current.*

If a child is ill, parents or a designated representative must make arrangements for the child to be picked up within **2 hours**, or at a time that both Center staff and a parent agrees upon during the conversation. Because we don't have the staff to leave the other children and continue to take care of a child who has been removed from the classroom for more than two hours, failure to pick your child up in a within 2 hours may result in termination of childcare services at OOAK. When a child has a communicable disease, all parents in that classroom are informed in writing within 24 hours that a child (no names are used) has been diagnosed with a particular illness.

The following is a list of Kansas Health Department symptoms for which we must send your child home:

- A fever of 101 degrees or above, auxiliary (under arm)
- A fever of 100 degrees, auxiliary, if combined with another sign of illness
- A skin rash that has not been identified by a phone call or in writing from a physician who has seen the rash
- Diarrhea two or more times in a day
- Vomiting twice
- Severe coughing
- Rapid or difficult breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis or eye infection (pink eye)
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Infected skin patches
- Pain of which the child complains and that interferes with normal activity

After a Sickness:

A child is welcome back:

1. When s/he is visibly free from communicable disease; is fever-free **without** benefit of fever reducing medication for 24 hours from the time sent home; is free of vomiting/diarrhea, while on a normal diet, for 24 hours from the time sent home; and is able to **participate in all daily activities, or**
2. When s/he has a physician's statement that s/he is free from communicable disease, and that returning poses no risk to the child or others and, s/he is able to **participate in all daily activities**. *OOAK retains the right to continue to exclude a child despite a physician's statement if that statement contradicts our policies.*

Medicine Administration Policy

Staff members will administer only those medications that can be taken orally, applied topically, dropped in, or inhaled. Other medications (including suppositories and injections) must be administered by a parent or parental designee.

If your child needs medication throughout his/her day at OOAK you will need to fill out a KDHE medication form for each medication before it can be administered. There are two different medication forms, short term and long term. The Short Term forms are typically used for short-term prescription drugs, while Long Term forms last for a year and are typically used for Tylenol, PediaCare, Orajel, natural medicines, etc. These medication forms are required by the Health Department. If the medication is a prescription drug, we will need a copy of the prescription, and the medicine must be in the original container. *If you don't wish to transport a prescription medicine back and forth from the Center, you might ask your pharmacist to split the prescription into two containers.*

Breathing Treatments/Nebulizers:

OOAK agrees to administer breathing treatments once a day. We will need a copy of the prescription from your doctor. You, or your designee, are welcome to come in and give additional doses as needed.

OOAK reserves the right to refuse to administer any medication as needed (especially if administration of the medicine presents a health or safety issue for a staff member, the child receiving the medication, or other children).

Biting and Aggressive Behaviors Policy

Biting and Aggression are behaviors that are not uncommon among young children. It is normal for children around the age of 1 to bite objects and people. While the reasons for biting differ from child to child, most often in this age group children bite because they are teething and need to reduce the pressure on their sensitive gums.

However, true biting (not due to teething) and aggression can become a problem in children between 18 and 30 months of age. Usually children at this age are unaware of the pain that biting and aggression causes and do not yet have the language skills needed to appropriately express their needs and wants. Although it is not uncommon for children to bite and play roughly with others during group activities, these types of behavior need immediate action. It is important not to overreact and to strongly praise a child when s/he behaves appropriately.

If biting or aggression becomes a serious concern, a meeting between the parents, Director, and Board member(s) may be required to develop a plan to address the biting or aggression. At the Director's discretion, possible actions may include One of a Kind requiring a parent to pick up the child for the day within 1 hour of notification of the incident, requiring a documented meeting with the child's physician regarding biting and/or aggressive behaviors, and may require a specific plan of action.

We hope to communicate to parents that it is a typical response for toddler-aged children in a childcare setting to express themselves, at times, in an aggressive way, but that it also must be addressed so that it does not pose an ongoing threat to other children or staff members.

Safety

Parent Supervision at the Center

Please always carefully supervise your child/ren while in the parking lot, as well as in the atrium ("the big room") area of the Center. When dropping off and picking up your OOAK student(s), if you have a child/ren with you who is not an OOAK student, please keep him or her with you and carefully supervised and controlled at **all** times.

Somebody Else Picking Up

We will release children only to those individuals whom you have listed on the Emergency Contact Card or an otherwise authorized by parent or guardian. Any individual who picks up a child and is unknown to the teacher in charge will be asked to show picture identification and will be checked against the Emergency Contact Card before they are allowed to leave with the child.

Staff Safety/Health Training

Each of our staff members are required to be trained in CPR & First Aid, Signs of Illness, Safe Sleep, Child Development, and Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect (we are mandated to report such symptoms to the proper agencies). Additionally, staff receive at least ten hours per year of continuing education and training.

Safety Hazards

We ask that if you leave a diaper bags with items for your child(ren), please ensure that the bag does not contain items that may pose a safety hazard, including substances that have the *Keep out of reach of children* warning on the container. You are welcome to leave medicines in the office with a completed Medicine Authorization form.

Photography Policy

OOAK staff will ask for consent before using any photograph for advertising or publicity purposes.

Fire

We conduct fire drills monthly so that we are prepared to remain calm, reassure the children, and keep everyone safe should a real situation occur. If an actual fire occurs during the course of the day, we will send a notice home to explain what happened.

Tornado and Severe Storm

We conduct drills routinely to ensure that we are prepared for severe weather. If an actual severe storm situation occurs during the course of the day, we will send a notice home to explain what happened. In the event of a tornado or severe storm, we are prepared to remain calm and reassure the children.

When the emergency is over, the Director on duty will give the “all clear” to return to the classroom.

Serious Injury

In case of emergency with your child, it is our policy to attend to the needs of the child first and then contact a parent or guardian. If we cannot reach a parent or guardian, we will begin trying to contact those individuals listed on the Emergency Contact Card.

In a serious emergency, we will call 911 immediately and staff will accompany the child to the hospital.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency: 911

Poison Control: 1-800-322-6633