



Parent Handbook

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Director

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Mountainside Community Church
Mountainside Learning Center

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Philosophy

Mountainside Community Church Children's Learning Center (MLC) provides a caring, warm and nurturing environment where all children feel accepted, valued and safe. MLC believes that children are gifts from God and will strive to teach, encourage, and love children as Jesus taught.

MLC will provide a safe and healthy environment in a fun, caring Christian atmosphere. We are committed to providing the best possible care for your family and believe caring for children is a special privilege. It is our desire to guide and nurture each child by providing social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual learning experiences. We want to encourage your child to reach their God-given potential. It is our prayer that your child will be surrounded by Christian love.

We are an all day childcare facility reaching out to children from 6 weeks to 12 years with a maximum of twelve children in care depending on ages.

Inclusive Childcare

MLC does not discriminate based on race, sex, religion, or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies, the admission of children or the hiring of staff members.

Admission and Enrollment

After registering your child, you must provide the following forms:

- Child's Record
- Copy of Child's Immunization Records
- Signed Childcare Agreement

All forms must be turned in before your child will be allowed to attend MLC.

If there is currently an open "slot" but you wish to delay starting your child, you must reserve your child's "slot" before your child begins attending MLC.

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Admission and Enrollment (cont)

This requires a weekly payment of one-half the regular rate. Regardless of any verbal and/or signed agreement with MLC, the slot is not reserved until receipt of the first slot payment. Non-payment of any required slot payments, automatically cancels your slot reservation, opening the slot for another child to fill. This requirement applies to all children. If you chose to cancel your slot reservation, all slot payments are non-refundable.

If there is waiting list for admission, we do require a \$40 nonrefundable registration fee to be added to this wait list.

Hours of Operation, Holidays and Vacations

MLC operates Monday – Friday 7am – 5:30pm.

MLC will run on the Falmouth School Schedule, i.e. holidays, snow days. **MLC is open on all school vacations and summer break for your childcare needs.**

MLC will also be closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day (occur during December's vacation)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Patriot's Day (may occur during April's vacation)
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day/July 4th (closed on Monday or Friday if holiday falls on a weekend)
- Labor Day
- Indigenous People's Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving and the following day
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (occur during December's vacation)

All holidays are considered part of your child's regular weekly attendance; therefore, the regular weekly payment is required.

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Snow Days, Sick Days and Personal Days

In the event that staff is sick or requires a personal day and suitable replacement cannot be found, MLC will close. You will not be charged for this day.

MLC will close in inclement weather when Falmouth Public Schools close. There will be no change in your weekly payments.

Rates and Payment Schedule

A 2-week deposit is required in addition to the first weekly payment. This deposit is due at the time of the first weekly payment. This deposit will be applied to the final 2 weeks your child attends MLC. A minimum of 2 weeks notice is required for withdrawing from MLC. If less than 2 weeks notice is given, the 2-week deposit is non-refundable.

Payments are due regardless of your child's attendance, including days your child is absent due to illness and vacations.

All payments are due the first day of the week that your child attends MLC (usually Monday). A \$10 fee is applied for each day the payment is late.

All returned checks are subject to a \$25 charge, paid in cash. MLC reserves the right to request payments in cash or by cashier check at any point that returned checks pose an issue.

**See page 13 for tuition rates

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Early/Late Drop-Off and Pick-Up

If your child is picked up later than 5:30pm, a late charge will be imposed in the amount of \$5 for each 5-minute increment. This charge is due upon the late pick-up.

If your child is dropped off earlier than 7:00am, an early charge will be imposed in the amount of \$5 for each 5-minute increment. This charge is due upon the early drop-off. It may be possible to arrange earlier drop-offs and later pick-ups, given at least 24 hours notice.

Withdrawal and Discharge

A minimum of two week notice is required to withdraw your child from MLC. If less than two week's notice is given, the two week deposit is non-refundable.

MLC reserves the right to discharge any child from care. Two weeks notice will be given. However, in severe cases, MLC may be forced to discharge a child without 2 weeks notice. If less than 2 weeks notice is given, the two-week deposit is still non-refundable. Reasons for discharge include, but are not limited to:

- Child is consistently physically or verbally aggressive towards other children or staff.
- Child is consistently unhappy, unable to transition and become comfortable with staff.
- Parent continuously abuses pick-up and drop-off times.
- Parent continuously abuses payment schedule.
- Parent fails to communicate consistently with staff.
- Parent does not work with MLC staff as a team to provide consistent guidance and discipline.
- Parent poses a threat to the safety and wellbeing of their child, other children and staff.

Any person suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at MLC will be asked to leave. MLC cannot legally keep a child from their legal guardian. MLC will work with the parent to arrange alternative transportation for the child. However, if the parent refuses an offer for alternative transportation, MLC will contact the local authorities to intervene. MLC seeks to protect children, not offer judgment of lifestyle choices.

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Parent Communication

MLC has an “open door” policy. Parents are welcome at any time during the day, without an appointment.

Staff is always available by phone during regular business hours. Email is checked every business day. Full contact information is at the end of this document.

Illness Policy

To ensure a healthy environment and the best possible care for all children at MLC, a strict illness policy will be enforced. Children who display any of the following symptoms should be kept at home and will be sent home until they meet the required recovery periods.

- A temperature of more than 100 degrees
Child must be fever free for at least 24 hours without medication to return.
- Diarrhea
Child must be free of diarrhea for at least 24 hours without medication to return.
- Vomiting
Child must be free of vomiting for at least 24 hours without medication to return.
- Contagious illness that requires medication, such as pink eye
Child must no longer be contagious, as determined by a doctor, and taking the prescribed medication for at least 24 hours to return.
- Contagious illness that requires reporting to CDC, such as pertussis
Child must no longer be contagious, as determined by a doctor, and in accordance with the exclusion periods within the healthcare manual, “Managing Infectious Diseases in Childcare and Schools” (provided by DHHS). A doctor’s note may be required for returning to care, depending upon the illness.
- Any illness or symptom(s) that prevent your child from actively engaging in childcare activities, such as a severe cold, that leaves your child with little energy or requires significantly more staff time and energy to help the child follow the childcare routine.

MLC reserves the right to require doctor’s orders in writing stating the child is no longer contagious should a parent abuse the illness policy.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be notified and expected to pick up your child as soon as possible. If your child will not be attending MLC due to illness, please notify staff or leave a message before business hours.

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Injuries

**MLC will notify DHHS within 24 hours in the event of All child deaths and serious injuries that require medical care by a licensed medical provider, following notification of emergency medical personnel and the Child's parents/guardians.

Prescription Medication

All prescription medication must be accompanied by written permission from the parent for dispensing medication, including time and dose of medication. All prescription medication must be kept in the original container labeled with child's full name.

Over the Counter Medication

Parents must provide written authorization to administer any over the counter medications. Written orders must include the name of the medication, dose, time/frequency, and reasons for administering medication.

Parents are expected to provide all over the counter medications. All medications must be in their original containers labeled with the child's full name.

Nutrition

MLC will provide nutritious morning and afternoon snacks. Snacks will include the following:

- Fruit or veggie
- Grain
- Water/Juice
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**Parents/guardians are expected to supply lunches daily when their child will be at the facility during lunch time which is 11:30am

Please communicate any food allergies, special eating habits or concerns to MLC staff.

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Clothing

Your child should be dressed in comfortable clothing that allows him/her to move and play freely. Outdoor play is an important part of the day, so children need to be dressed in appropriate outdoor clothing for all seasons, as follows:

- Spring and Fall: light weight jacket or raincoat
sneakers or rain boots, light weight hats and gloves
- Summer: light weight clothing, sneakers or closed toed shoes
bathing suits (for sprinklers)
- Winter: heavy winter jacket and snow pants, lined winter boots
thick hats, gloves, scarves, and warm socks (if desired)

Due to the wide range of activities that MLC offers, children's clothing may easily become dirty or stained. Soiled and wet clothing will be sent home at the end of the day. Parents are expected to provide clean clothing the next day. For parents' convenience, there is space to leave extra clothing and seasonally appropriate outerwear in your child's classroom.

Rights of Children

Children receiving Childcare from MLC have the following rights:

1. Children must be free from emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
2. Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the Child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.
3. Each Child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.

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4. Each Child must be provided care services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex, or family composition.
5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration, and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by MLC.
6. Each Child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that Child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the Childcare Facility.
7. Each Child has the right to Developmentally Appropriate activities. Materials and equipment.
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to Childcare Facility policies and practices.

If you know a family who may need support, please refer with their permission to Help Me Grow by dialing (207) 624-7969 for services about child development and community resources.

Mandatory Reporting and Incident Reporting

All children attending MLC will be protected from abuse and neglect while in MLC's care and custody. The term "Child Abuse and Neglect" means: a threat to a child's health or welfare by physical; mental or emotional injury or impairment; sexual abuse or exploitation; deprivation of essential needs; and/or the lack of protection from the actions stated above, by a person responsible for the child.

All MLC staff are mandated reporters and will report suspected incidences of child abuse and neglect by other staff members to civil and criminal authorities, as required by state and federal laws. Failure to report is punishable by law. MLC will cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect, including providing DHHS access to all child and

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personnel records, past and present, as well as providing consent to disclose all information necessary to any person and/or agency that DHHS requires as necessary to complete a prompt and thorough investigation of the allegations.

Any staff member under investigation for abuse and neglect, will not be allowed to work with children until the investigation is complete and reinstatement is approved by DHHS.

All MLC staff are mandated reporters and will report suspected incidences of child abuse and neglect that occur to a child while outside of MLC's care and custody to civil and criminal authorities, as required by state and federal laws. Failure to report is punishable by law.

All MLC staff are mandated to report: any serious injury to a child or staff; missing child; communicable illness in a child or staff; and/or the death of any child or staff to civil and criminal authorities, as required by state and federal laws. Failure to report is punishable by law.

Minor injuries or illnesses requiring First-Aid treatment on site and/or additional medical treatment will be documented, added to the child/staff file, and presented to DHHS inspectors upon request.

Behavioral Guidance and Discipline

MLC believes in positive behavior reinforcement balanced with consistent, clear limits and expectations. MLC creates an environment of respect, kindness, and fairness. Children will learn to be respectful, kind, and fair to themselves, other children, staff, parents and property. Children will also learn to be responsible for their actions.

To help children achieve these goals, MLC will model appropriate social behaviors throughout the child's day. Children love to engage in creative play. With guidance from MLC staff, dramatic/creative play is a valuable learning opportunity for children to act out the right and wrong ways to behave. MLC staff will also intervene in situations where two or more children are engaged in a verbal conflict to teach children how to appropriately solve conflicts.

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MLC staff values early interventions in situations as this offers children the best opportunities for continual growth and development of character. Clear directions and redirections will be used first, along with explanations of why the behavior is not acceptable. Should a behavior continue, children may be asked to leave an activity and/or move to a more calming activity, such as a puzzle or a book.

Young children are learning self-control, which is a crucial part of their development. Directing a child to move from an intense/high stress activity to a calming/low stress, quieter activity models for the child an acceptable method for developing self-control.

Safety is a priority at MLC. If a child becomes physically aggressive towards him/herself, other children, staff, or property, MLC staff will intervene immediately. A clear direction will be given for the child to stop the behavior as well as why the behavior is not acceptable. If the child continues the behavior, staff will speak to the child privately. Staff may ask the child to take a break to calm down until the child can regain control of his/her body. Afterwards, MLC staff and the child will discuss the behavior and alternatives to aggressive behavior. MLC believes behavioral intervention is an important learning opportunity, and all situations will be treated as opportunities for growth. MLC staff will never engage in abusive, neglectful, frightening, or humiliating punishment. Corporal punishments and physical restraints will never be used.

If a child requires more support than MLC staff can accommodate, parents will be provided with resources for agencies that provide developmental screenings as well as therapies and other supports for the child during their time at MLC.

Fire Drills, Emergency Evacuation Drills and Emergency Plans

MLC practices fire drills monthly and emergency evacuation drills twice annually, following all State Fire Marshall and DHHS licensing requirements. The fire drill meeting location is the playground. During emergency evacuation drills, staff and students practice loading into staff vehicles, and the emergency evacuation route and location is discussed with staff members. No children are transported off site during this time. The emergency evacuation route and location will only be shared with parents in the event of an emergency evacuation, as it is a private residence close to MLC. Emergency plans for all other scenarios are included within the YIKES plan (provided by DHHS) and will be supplied to parents upon request.

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Sample Schedule:

7:00 – 9:00 Arrival and supervised play time

8:15 - Bus pickup

9:00 – 9:30 Snack time

9:30 – 10:30 Supervised Outdoor fun/weather permitting

10:30 – 11:30 Learning time/group time activities

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch time

12:30 – 2:30 Naptime, quiet activities

2:30 – 3:00 Snack time

3:30 – Bus drop off

3:00 – 4:00 Supervised Outdoor fun/weather permitting/snack for school children

4:00 – 5:30 Supervised activities/child pickups

Contact Information:

Kim Walker, MLC Director

Ph: 207-317-2778

Email: mccdaycare@mountainsidechurch.me

Ruth Jones, Lead Teacher:

Ph: 207-383-6182

Email: ruth.jones@mountainsidechurch.me

Mountainside Learning Center Website: mcckids.me

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Mountainside Learning Center Tuition Rates

Infants Age 6 weeks – 2 years	\$280.00/weekly
Toddlers – Age 2 years – 3 years.....	\$230.00/weekly
Preschool – Age 3 years – 5 years..... (not attending Falmouth School Program)	\$180.00/weekly
School Age – Age 5 years – 12 years..... (including Pre-K Falmouth School Program)	\$130.00/weekly

Staff Ratios

6 weeks – 2 years.....	1:4
2 years – 5 years.....	1:8
Over 5 years.....	1:12
Mixed Ages.....	1 staff: 3 children under 2 years + 3 children 2 – 5 years + 2 children over 5 years Or 8 children 2 – 5 years + 2 children over 5 years