

# **Solon Learning Academy, LLC.**



## **Staff Handbook**

2017-2018

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**GENERAL INFORMATION..... 5-12**

Our Mission

Hours of Operation

Administration

Weather Related Closings

Power Failure

Toxic or Hazardous Materials

Programs and Minimum Ratio Guidelines

Job Descriptions

**GENERAL STAFF EXPECTATIONS..... 12-16**

Professionalism

Dress Code

Use of Telephones/Cell Phones

Employee Status

Time Cards and Payroll

Overtime/Clock-in and Clock-out

Paychecks

Staff Scheduling

Time Off/Absenteeism

Paid Time Off

Benefits

Substitutes

Food/Meals

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT..... 16-21**

Orientation Guidelines

Training

Evaluations

Disciplinary Procedure

Employment Termination

Grievances

Outside Employment

Personnel Files

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES..... 21-33

Equal Employment Opportunity

Harassment

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention/Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Confidentiality

Accidents

Substance Abuse

Criminal History and Child Abuse Record Checks

Daily Written Reports

Access Policy

Emergency Drills

Parent Involvement and Visitors

Emergency Plan for Intoxicated or Substance-Impaired Parents

Dangerous Adult

Emergency Plan for Lost or Abducted Child

Emergency Plan for Intruder

Staff Visitors

Transportation and Field Trips

Nutrition

Food Brought from Home

Discipline/Positive Guidance Techniques

HEALTH POLICIES..... 33-41

Physicals and Tuberculosis Screening

Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) Vaccination

Policy for Admission and Exclusion from Child Care due to Illness

Distribution of Medication

Emergency Medical/Sick Child/Injured Child

Medical Emergency/Serious Injury

Incident Reporting

Dental Emergency Procedures

Hand Washing Polices/Procedure

Universal Precautions/Exposure to Blood or Other Body Fluids

Biting Policy

CURRICULUM PLANNING..... 41-42

Daily Curriculum

Licensing Standards..... 43

Final Statement..... 43

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook..... 44

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Our Mission:**

At Solon Learning Academy we prepare each child to be academically, emotionally, physically, and socially “kindergarten ready.” We provide a challenging learning environment that builds a strong foundation for each child’s academic success. Each classroom provides hands on, structured learning that will foster cognitive development.

### **Hours of Operation:**

Monday through Friday 6:00 am- 6:00pm

Solon Learning Academy will be closed on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

\* If Christmas falls on a Thursday, we will be closed on the following Friday, December 26<sup>th</sup>.

\* If a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed on the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday we will be closed on the following Monday.

### **Administration:**

**Center Director** – Is the onsite supervisor in the center. The Center Director is responsible for the overall functions of the Center, including supervising staff, designing curriculum and administering programs. The director shall ensure services are provided for the children within the framework of the licensing requirements and the center’s statement of purpose and objectives. The Center Director shall have overall responsibility for carrying out the program and ensuring the safety and protection of the children. The director must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- a. Is at least 21 years of age.
- b. Has obtained a high school diploma or passed a general education development test.

c. Has completed at least one course in business administration or 12 contact hours in administrative-related training related to personnel, supervision, record keeping, budgeting, or has one year of administrative-related experience.

d. Has certification in infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and Iowa's training for the mandatory reporting of child abuse.

e. Has achieved a total of 100 points obtained through a combination of education, experience, and child development-related training as outlined in the following chart marked Exhibit A. The following is based upon use of Exhibit A:

(1) In obtaining the total of 100 points, a minimum of two categories must be used, no more than 75 points may be achieved in any one category, and at least 20 points shall be obtained from the experience category.

(2) Points obtained in the child development-related training category shall have been taken within the past five years.

(3) For directors in centers predominantly serving children with special needs, the directors may substitute a disabilities-related or nursing degree for the bachelor's degree in early childhood, child development or elementary education in determining point totals. In addition, experience in working with children with special needs in an administrative or direct care capacity shall be equivalent to full-time experience in a child care center or preschool in determining point totals.

(4) For directors in centers serving predominantly school-age children, the directors may substitute a degree in secondary education, physical education, recreation or related fields for the bachelor's degree in early childhood, child development or elementary education in determining point totals. In addition, child-related experience working with school-age children shall be equivalent to full-time experience in a child care center or preschool in determining point totals.

Onsite Supervisor - The on-site supervisor is responsible for the daily supervision of the center and must be on site daily either during the hours of operation that children are present or a minimum of eight hours of the center's hours of operation. Information shall be submitted in writing to the child care consultant prior to the start of employment. Final determination shall be made by the department. Information shall be submitted sufficient to determine that the on-site supervisor meets the following minimum qualifications:

a. Is an adult.

b. Has obtained a high school diploma or passed a general education development test.

c. Has certification in infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and Iowa's mandatory reporting of child abuse.

d. Has achieved a total of 75 points obtained through a combination of education, experience, and child development-related training as outlined in the chart marked Exhibit B. The following is based upon use of Exhibit B:

(1) In obtaining the total of 75 points, a minimum of two categories must be used, no more than 50 points may be achieved in any one category, and at least 10 points shall be obtained from the experience category.

(2) Points obtained in the child development-related training category shall have been taken within the past five years.

(3) For on-site supervisors in centers predominantly serving children with special needs, the on-site supervisor may substitute a disabilities-related or nursing degree for the bachelor's degree in early childhood, child development or elementary education in determining point totals. In addition, experience in working with children with special needs in an administrative or direct care capacity shall be equivalent to full-time experience in a child care center or preschool in determining point totals.

(4) For on-site supervisors in centers serving predominantly school-age children, the on-site supervisor may substitute a degree in secondary education, physical education, recreation or related fields for the bachelor's degree in early childhood, child development or elementary education in determining point totals. In addition, child-related experience working with school-age children shall be equivalent to full-time experience in a child care center or preschool in determining point totals.

Volunteers and Substitutes- A volunteer shall be at least 16 years of age. All volunteers and substitutes shall:

a. Sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:

(1) A conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state.

(2) A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.

b. Sign a statement indicating the volunteer or substitute has been informed of the volunteer's or substitute's responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.

c. Undergo the record check process when the person is responsible for child care for a child other than the person's own child or has access to other children when they are alone.

**Weather Related Closings:**

We will only close due to weather if it is severe and we have determined that the roads are unsafe for travel. An email notification will be sent out by 5:30 a.m. to inform all families whether or not we have closed for the day. We will also post any weather related closings on our website found at:

[www.solonlearningacademy.com](http://www.solonlearningacademy.com)

**Power Failure:**

If there is a power failure in the entire center while the children are present, a supervisor will ensure staff are keeping children calm, occupied, and secure before going to the basement to check the fuse box. If removing and replacing the main fuse does not restore power, the supervisor shall proceed to call the electric company to report the power outage.

If the outage is in one room, the supervisor will change the fuse for that room to restore power. If the power is not restored, the electric company will be called to inspect and repair the problem.

If the supervisor determines it is safe for the children to remain at the center then the center shall remain open. If it is not safe the supervisor will follow procedures listed in the “Emergency Drills” for moving children to safety and notifying parents/guardians.

**Toxic or Hazardous Materials:**

In the event of a toxic spill, the Administrative Staff will assess the situation to attempt a secure, no risk environment, which may mean closing windows or evacuating children and notifying parents/guardians as specified under “Emergency Drills”. If it is a non-hazardous substance, then staff will block off the area and clean it up immediately.

**Programs and Minimum Ratio Guidelines:**

Infant Room (2 weeks- 12 months)	Ratio 1:4
One Year Old Room (12 months- 24 months)	Ratio 1:4
Two Year Old Room (age 2)	Ratio 1:6
Early Preschool Room (ages 3)	Ratio 1:8



Preschool Room (ages 4)	Ratio 1:12
Pre-Kindergarten Room (ages 5)	Ratio 1:15
Before and After School Program (ages 5-12)	Ratio 1:15

During naptime, at least one staff member shall be present in all rooms in which there are children sleeping and/or resting. This is the only time in which staff-to-child ratios can be reduced to one staff member per room. (Ratios must be maintained at all times, including when emergency procedures or recesses are in effect.)

For the protection of each staff member, there will be no circumstance in which a staff member is alone with a single child. Another staff member should be within sight/sound at all times.

**Job Descriptions**

- JOB TITLE: Lead Teacher

DUTIES:

TEACHER

1. Each teacher will:
  - a) Supervise the play and structured activities of children ages 2-6 yrs.
  - b) Encourage the intellectual, creative, motor, and emotional development of the children by being a positive role model.
  - c) Care for the physical needs of the children. Preparing and serving meals, potting, changing diapers, and always maintaining the safety of the environment.
  - d) Dispense medication to children when needed. \*All medications are dispensed by authorized personnel only (i.e., on-site Director and Lead Teachers). When medications are given, the authorized personnel should list time given and signs their name. If no name or time is recorded, and it is past the time the medicine was to be given, then the authorized person(s) will not give medicine for that indicated time, and alert the parent to missed treatment of medication.
2. Each teacher will work any necessary hours to complete tasks delegated to her/him within the time frame agreed upon when tasks are assigned.
3. Each teacher will be responsible for their assigned groups as follows:
  - a) Develop and implement daily program that adheres to the center philosophy and covers all areas of curriculum as follows; pre-reading skills, pre-math skills, personal and social skills (including health and nutrition); development of group responsibility for cleanliness of environment and orderliness of materials; pre-science skills; creative experience in art, music, and dramatic play; access to community resources through visits and field trips; sensitivity and awareness of multi-cultural issues, avoidance of sex role

- stereotyping; both small group and individual work with children; flexibility with program scheduling that allows you to follow the interest areas your group exhibits; weekly record keeping of individual children's work and behavior of that day.
- b) Consult with other staff to insure continuity between programming for all groups.
  - c) Maintain daily records of group activities and themes and share pertinent information with other staff and parents as required.
  - d) Written evaluation of each child's strength and weaknesses.
  - e) Consultation with the director as needed to meet the needs of your group both as individuals and as a whole.
  - f) Set up and maintenance (including regular cleaning as needed) of your group's environment according to center standards, including regular rotation of materials and additions as determined by group's needs
  - g) Teacher will maintain and update, as needed, a posted daily schedule for their group.
  - h) Organizing and enrichment of daycare environment to display children's artwork.
  - i) Preparation for and attendance at meetings with parents and staff.
  - j) Teachers will communicate with parents on a regular basis in the following ways:
    - a) Daily written notes
    - b) Record keeping of activity and behavior of children to used to evaluate a child's progress.
    - c) Relating to parents concerning special needs, behaviors or accomplishments of their children.
  - k) Teaching, directing and supervising staff and delegating duties as necessary. Attending and participating in all staff meetings.
  - l) Attending conferences etc. for continuing education.
  - m) Occasional cleaning duties to maintain a healthy environment.
  - n) Teachers will follow all guidelines set forth by the State of Iowa licensing requirements, the Department of Health guidelines and the Board of Director's decisions.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Assist in evaluating programmatic philosophies and setting goals for the success and stability of the center in the future.
2. Assist in preparing a newsletter to parents bi-monthly and in any parent educational materials.
3. May attend all Solon Learning Academy Center's management and meetings as ex-officio members.
4. Representing the daycare in a professional manner when participating in various University or community sponsored events.

*QUALIFICATIONS:*

- BA in Early Childhood, Child Development or related field, or experience in a child care center, or an equivalent amount of either child development related employment or educational experience.

*RATE OF PAY:*

- Commensurate with experience.

*SUPERVISION:*

- Supervision given by the Center Director, and/or management.

*JOB TITLE: Closing Coordinator / Work Study Supervisor*

*DUTIES:*

- 1) To supervise the play and structured activities of children ages 2-6 yrs.
- 2) To follow and encourage all Solon Learning Academy philosophies of child care.
- 3) To encourage the intellectual, creative, motor and emotional development of the children by being a positive role model and by carrying out planned curriculum.
- 4) To care for the physical needs of the children: serving meals, pottyng, occasionally changing diapers and always maintaining the safety of the environment.
- 5) To complete occasional cleaning duties that arise.
- 6) To take part in supervisor training and familiarize yourself with the training packet given by the Director.
- 7) To supervise fellow co-workers and be responsible for the completion of all tasks assigned by the Director and Administrative Staff.
- 8) To adhere to all Department of Human Services licensing regulations and State Department of Health regulations as well as the Department of Education Food Program requirements.

*QUALIFICATIONS:*

- Patience, lots of energy, resourcefulness, creativity, a sense of humor, level-headedness, personal initiative, experience with children in structural situations are all essential in this position.

*RATE OF PAY:*

- Minimum wage or better, commensurate with experience.

*SUPERVISION:*

- Supervision given by the Director and/or other Administrative Staff

*JOB TITLE: Work Study/Part-time Childcare Aide*

*DUTIES:*

- 1) To supervise the play and structured activities of children ages 2-6 yrs.

- 2) To follow and encourage all Solon Learning Academy philosophies of child care.
- 3) To encourage the intellectual, creative, motor and emotional development of the children by being a positive role model and by carrying out planned curriculum.
- 4) To care for the physical needs of the children: serving meals, pottyng, occasionally changing diapers and always maintaining the safety of the environment.
- 5) To complete occasional cleaning duties or other tasks assigned by the Director, and administrative staff that arise.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Patience, lots of energy, resourcefulness, creativity, a sense of humor, level-headedness, personal initiative, experience with children in structural situations are all essential in this position.

**RATE OF PAY:**

- Minimum wage or better, commensurate with experience.

**SUPERVISION:**

- Supervision given by Director, and/or Administrative Staff.

**GENERAL STAFF EXPECTATIONS**

**Professionalism:**

Each employee is going to be a childcare professional and should act as one. These professionalism guidelines should be consistently maintained:

- Arrive on time for shifts and stay for the entire scheduled time, unless directed otherwise.
- Not be absent from work on a regular basis and when absent finding a substitute as necessary.
- Appropriate dress code attire for interacting with children.
- Respecting and adhering to confidentiality policy regarding the children, families, and co-workers.
- Display a positive attitude toward everything involved in the center (programs, children, families, and co-workers).
- Complete the Department of Human Services required training courses in a timely way.

**Dress Code:**

Personal appearance in regards to dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness affect the image of Solon Learning Academy, as well as the general morale of all employees in interactions. We want our staff to present themselves in a neat, business-like

appearance. We expect you to be fully responsible for dressing appropriately for your position. The following dress code will be enforced at all times:

- All employees should wear appropriate tops, jeans, and comfortable shoes.
  - Clothing should be clean and comfortable. You will be on the children's level frequently, and to do this you must be in comfortable clothes that allow for you to engage in any and all activities. Jeans, shorts, or capris are allowed. However, there should be no holes, stains, rips/tears or lavish accessories.
  - Shoes must be neat and practical. Tennis shoes or flats are best. Open toe/heel shoes are not recommended for safety reasons.
  - There should be no vulgar sayings or references on any clothing.
  - Halter-tops, strapless tops, short shorts/skirts, sweatpants, excessively torn pants, and any jeans/shorts that are low-rise and expose undergarments are never appropriate.

### **Use of Telephones/Cell Phones:**

It is imperative that each staff member's attention remains on the children at all times. From this, cell phones are not to be used during work hours except on breaks. This includes text messaging.

Staff is requested to keep personal calls to a minimum. If it is necessary to use the phone keep the call to 5 minutes or less.

Answering the telephone is the responsibility of the staff when possible. When other staff are required to answer the phone, they are to be courteous and polite. The employee who answers the phone asks for the name and number of the caller so the corresponding staff member can call them back.

### **Employee Status:**

*Full-time* = Having a basic schedule between thirty-five (35) and forty (40) hours per week.

*Part-time* = Having a basic schedule between ten (10) and thirty-four (34) hours per week.

### **Time Cards and Payroll:**

Each full-time and part-time staff member is personally responsible for clocking in and out each day they are scheduled to work. Employees are not allowed to clock in more than 15 minutes before their scheduled shift, and are expected to clock out immediately after the ending of their shift. If an employee forgets to clock in or out, the center Director should be notified promptly and they must enter the time. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a delay of processing for the staff member's payroll check until the following pay period date.

### **Overtime/Clock-in and Clock-out:**

Overtime is paid to non-exempt employees for all hours worked in excess of *40 hours* per Monday through Friday workweek. Overtime pay is one and one half (1.5) times your regular hourly rate of pay and must be authorized by the Director. It is the employee's responsibility to clock in and out properly. Any failure to clock in may result in a delay of processing for the staff member's payroll check until the following pay period date.

### **Paychecks:**

Employee pay will be received either in check form or by direct deposit. Please provide a voided check to administration if you wish to set up direct deposit. Checks will be distributed two times each month on the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> of that month.

### **Staff Scheduling:**

All schedules will be distributed in employee mailboxes the Thursday prior to the scheduled week. Scheduled hours of work are to meet the needs of Solon Learning Academy and our families. Hours of work are subject to change by the Director to meet the needs of our families and center. Any requests for days off must be given in writing *one week* in advance to be approved. Any requests for special days off at the last minute will be honored whenever possible and when coverage is available.

### **Time Off/Absenteeism:**

Solon Learning Academy cannot operate efficiently and effectively without its employees being dependable to show up on a timely and consistent basis. When one employee has to be absent, a replacement must be hired for that day. Any employee who takes excessive time off, or abuses personal, vacation, or sick leave are subject to discipline, this could include termination.

If there is any leave requested for medical conditions involving the employee directly or family members, a physician's statement verifying the reasoning and estimated length of time for employee to return to work, will be necessary.

*Consistent attendance is crucial to creating and maintaining a successful program.*

- If a staff member is ill and unable to work, the Director/Assistant Director should be notified as soon as possible, by phone. The staff member must assist in finding a substitute.
- All other requests for leave of absence should be made at least 7 days in advance. Requests must be made in writing on an Employee Time-Off Request form. Each request will be evaluated on anticipated workload requirements, staffing considerations, and effect on Solon Learning Academy's operations. All requests are simply that, a request, and until approved, may be denied. Completing a request does not guarantee time off.
- Car trouble is not considered an emergency. Please arrange for a ride from a friend/family member if the problem arises.
- Employees are required to call the Director, at 319-325-7773. If the Director is not available, the designated Assistant Director must be contacted, at 319-325-2145. Please try both numbers until the phone is answered.
- The following are not acceptable forms of calling in, and could result in termination:
  - Leaving a message on the answering machine.
  - Calling or texting a co-worker, without approval.
  - Texting or leaving a message for the Director/Assistant Director without talking with them directly on the phone.
- It is your full responsibility to notify your Director personally *BEFORE* your starting time. State the reason for your tardiness and when you expect to arrive. Failure to call in personally to report absence or tardiness is a violation of Solon Learning Academy rules, and the absence or tardiness will be considered unauthorized. Calls from friends or relatives on your behalf will not be accepted as an authorized notice of absence or tardiness; you may be required to submit evidence verifying the reason for your absence or tardiness. Failure to provide the requested substantiation will result in discharge.
- All absences will be noted and put into employee's personnel file.

**Paid Time Off:** Full-time employees may choose five paid holidays to use within one calendar year. In addition to the five holidays, each employee will be granted five additional vacation days to be used as they please. After three full years of employment (full time during that time period), each employee will be given five extra vacation days to use during the calendar year beginning in August. Vacation will always run from the 1<sup>st</sup> of August to the 31<sup>st</sup> of July each year. This means, to

earn that extra week, you must have been here three years prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> of that year.

**Benefits:**

Full time Staff have the option to choose a health plan while employed at the Solon Learning Academy. To qualify for health insurance, you must work at SLA for three months and work at least 35 hours per week. Whatever plan you choose will be paid by the Solon Learning Academy and then deducted from your check. SLA will cover a portion of the cost and you will be responsible for the remainder. This will be discussed once you choose a plan that fits your needs.

**Food/Meals:**

Meals are to be eaten in the lounge or in areas where no children are present. All food brought in should be clearly labeled with the staff member's name. When the center is serving family style meals, staff is expected to participate to help model appropriate behavior and manners. Always avoid drinking hot beverages around children to prevent any possibility of burns. Any and all other beverages other than ones offered to children must be in a closed container and consumed away from children.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Orientation Guidelines:**

All new employees will be required to read both the Solon Learning Academy's parent and staff handbooks. Prior to working in the classroom, the Director will schedule a meeting to complete required paperwork, and review center policies/procedures.

Upon arrival all employees will be given an orientation of procedures by either the center Director. After putting your personal belongings away please remember to do the following:

1. Always check the staff board in the reception area for any important information or news.
2. Time sheets – Upon arrival to the center and before beginning your scheduled shift, one must sign-in on the computer using a designated code.
3. Please wash hands then check in with a supervisor who will assign you a specific place to start your work shift. – *Also*, please wash hands: immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity, after using the restroom or diapering/potting a child and after handling animals.



4. Learn the whereabouts of the following:
  - a. Children's files—remember any information obtained from these files is to be kept strictly confidential. All allergy info. is posted on the refrigerator, on front of staff policy booklet and on staff sign sheet.
  - b. First aid materials.
  - c. List of emergency numbers.
  - d. List of children's emergency numbers
  - e. Familiarize yourself with the written emergency plans as outlined in the safety/bad weather procedures section of this booklet. The staff will receive training on these emergency plans from the Director or Lead Teachers upon orientation and annually.
  - f. Familiarize yourself with all the exits at the center.
  - g. All fire extinguishers.
  - h. Menu's, where food, dishes etc. are kept.
  - i. Resource books for activity planning and reference books.
  - j. Cubbies/coat hooks of children --- all of the children enrolled at Solon Learning Academy are divided into 1 of the 3 curriculum groups during curriculum time. Pink group (2-3 yrs.), Green group (3-5 yrs.), and Red group (4-6 yrs.).
  - k. Staff chore chart. – Please be aware of your assigned duties and what each task entails procedurally.
  - l. Professional growth information board.
  - m. Accident Report forms. – Two accident report forms are to be filled out whenever a child experiences an injury at the center. One form goes to parent and one remains at the center. Information to complete these forms is found in the children's files. These forms must be signed by a staff person and parent the same day the accident occurred.

**Training:**

*Required within the first six months of employment for all staff:*

- Two hours of mandatory reporting for child abuse – Mandatory to be updated every 5 years.
- At least one hour of training in regards to universal precautions and infectious disease control – Mandatory to be updated annually.

*Required within the first year of employment for employees working more than 20 hours/week:*

- American Red Cross or American Heart Association Certification in infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). A valid certification including the date of the training and the expiration date must be turned into the Director/Assistant Director. These are valid for two years.
- First Aid from American Red Cross or American Heart Association Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid. A valid certification including

the date of the training and the expiration date must be turned into the Director/Assistant Director. These are valid for two years.

- 10 contact hours of training in one or more of the following areas: 1) planning a safe and healthy learning environment (includes nutrition); 2) steps to advance children's physical and intellectual development; 3) positive ways to develop children's social and emotional development (includes guidance and discipline); 4) strategies to establish productive relationships with families (includes communication skills and cross cultural competence); 5) strategies to manage an effective program operation (includes business practices); 6) maintaining a commitment to professionalism; 7) observing and recording children's behavior; 8) principles of child growth and development.
- The Essentials course through the ISU extension office must be completed within 3 months of employment. This course is updated every 5 years.
- After the first year of employment, employees working 20 hours or more per week must receive 10 hours of training, relevant to the age group for whom the employee primarily provides care. Must occur annually.

*Required within the first year of employment for employees working less than 20 hours/week:*

- 10 contact hours of training in one or more of the following areas: child development, guidance and discipline, developmentally appropriate practices, nutrition, health and safety, communication skills, professionalism, business practices, and cross-cultural competence, at least 2 hours must be in a sponsored group setting.
- After the first year of employment, employees working less than 20 hours per week must receive 10 hours of training, relevant to the age group for whom the employee primarily provides care. Must occur annually.

Note: It is the responsibility of each employee, full-time or part-time, to pay for any costs that may result from these trainings.

### **Evaluations:**

Staff will be informally evaluated in an ongoing manner determining continued employment and/or salary increases. In cases of inadequate job performance as defined in job description, employees' rules and regulations, or any concerns as stated above, the employee will receive an oral reprimand. If other job performance issues or concerns arise again, then a formal evaluation outlining areas to be improved and a time frame for improvements will occur. Should your performance during this "agreed upon time period" fail to change then a written reprimand will be given followed by dismissal if an occurrence happens a third time. All dismissals/termination's are final.

### **Disciplinary Procedure:**

Solon Learning Academy always expects the best work performance from all employees. Under the rare circumstance that an employee has unacceptable job performance, Solon Learning Academy will take the following measures:

#### *Verbal Warning:*

- If there is any part of an employee's job performance, or if an employee has violated any policy stated in this handbook, the employee will be verbally informed of the problem and any possible penalties that could arise if the performance does not improve.
- Verbal warnings will be recorded, discussed, and signed by both the employee and Director/Assistant Director. After one verbal warning has been issued, the next disciplinary action will take place.

#### *Termination:*

- If one (1) verbal warning has been issued, and job performance has not improved, the employee is subject to termination from Solon Learning Academy.
- Termination can be immediate without using any disciplinary procedures.
- Disciplinary action up to and including termination may be taken immediately at the discretion of the Director/Assistant Director.

### **Employment Termination:**

Termination of employment is a part of personnel activity within any organization. Many of the reasons for termination are routine. Most common reasons for termination of employment:

- Absence without authorization by the Director/Assistant Director of Solon Learning Academy
- Failure to report to work or to return from lunch breaks
- Failure to return from an authorized leave without notifying the Director/Assistant Director will be considered resignation without notice
  - Such resignation will result in immediate termination in any case, and will label employee ineligible for rehire

Some conduct is serious enough that they can result in termination without any previous warning:

- Inappropriate behavior towards parents. If a parent is rude to you please inform the Director/Assistant Director, all staff should be professional and courteous at all times

- Neglect or physical abuse of a child
- Withholding of food, nap, or other comfort from a child
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Conviction of a felony for any offense committed while employed by Solon Learning Academy
- Leaving a child unattended, inside or outside
- Fighting, threatening violence or disruptive activity in the work place
- Falsification of Solon Learning Academy records
- Allowing a child to leave the center with an unauthorized person
- Sleeping while supervising children
- Sexual or other unlawful/unwelcome harassment
- Insubordination that shows disrespect such as threatening, profanity, or yelling at the Directors
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the work place, while on duty, or while operating Solon Learning Academy vehicles or equipment
- Sharing confidential information about Solon Learning Academy or any of its employees

**Grievances:**

In the event an employee has a grievance, the employee must submit a written report to the Director, unless the employee is the Director, in which case he/she would submit their report directly to the Solon Learning Academy management. If attempts by the Director to resolve the grievance prove futile, the matter will be referred to the Solon Learning Academy management. The grievance decision made by the Director may be appealed in which case a final determination concerning the grievance will be made by the management within 10 working days.

**Outside Employment:**

An employee may hold a job with another organization as long as he or she satisfactorily performs his or her job responsibilities with Solon Learning Academy. *ALL* employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If Solon Learning Academy determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the center, as they are modified from time to time; the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain employed with Solon Learning Academy.

Note: Furthermore, you cannot be employed by a competitor, as this will cause a conflict of interest in your employment with Solon Learning Academy.

### **Personnel Files:**

Solon Learning Academy will keep a permanent personnel file for each employee. Employees should notify the Director/Assistant Director of any change in address, phone number, emergency contact, e-mail address, marital status, etcetera. Each employee's file is property of the Solon Learning Academy and will not be released to any future employers. The only case that a file would be released, would be if the employee and employer both agree to release it to a future employer. This would only be done if the employee meets the requirements of filing a "two week notice," and completing their time at the Solon Learning Academy. Any final release of the employee file is up to the discretion of the employer.

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity:**

Employment decisions will be based on merit, qualifications, and ability. Solon Learning Academy does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, physical disability or any other characteristics protected by the law.

Solon Learning Academy strives for each employee to be treated with respect and in a just and fair manner. We strive to maintain a work environment in which all staff is free from harassment, and distinctively prohibits any sort of harassment of employees and co-workers on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities. However, all employees must be physically able to safely supervise young children.

The education program shall be free of such discrimination and provide equal opportunity for the participants. The education program shall foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for the historical, contemporary and contributions to society of diverse cultural groups. It shall provide equal education opportunity to both sexes.

Inquiries regarding compliance with equal education opportunity shall be directed to the Solon Learning Academy Center Director.

### **Harassment:**

Solon Learning Academy will not tolerate any harassment of any employee relating to that employee's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age or handicap. The term "harassment" refers to but is not necessarily limited to slurs, jokes, other

verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, or gender; or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, or handicap.

Retaliation against an employee who makes a charge of harassment also will not be tolerated. Those guilty of harassment or retaliation will meet with appropriate sanctions, which may include termination.

Those employees who feel they have been a victim of any type of harassment or discrimination should talk immediately with administration staff.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention/Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse:**

Section 232.69 of the Iowa Code required that every employee of a licensed child care or preschool facility who, in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, mental injury, child prostitution, denial of critical care, bestiality in the presence of a child, the presence of an illegal drug in the child or the person responsible for the care of a child and in the presence of the child, manufactures a dangerous substance or is in possession of a dangerous substance shall immediately report the suspected abuse directly to the Department of Human Services.

Section 232.70 of the Iowa Code requires that each report made, be a mandatory reporter, as defined in section 232.69, shall be made both orally and in writing. The oral report must be made by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human services. If the person making the report has reason to believe that the immediate protection of the child is advisable, that person shall also make an oral report to appropriate law enforcement within 48 hours after the oral report.

By law, the oral and written reports shall contain the following information, or as much thereof as the person making the report is able to furnish:

- a. The names and home address of the child and his parents or other persons believe to be responsible for his care;
- b. The child's present whereabouts if not the same as the parent's or other person's home address;
- c. The child's age;
- d. The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries;
- e. The name, age and condition of other children in the same home;
- f. Any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury to the child, the identity of the person or persons responsible for the injury, or in providing assistance to the child; and
- g. The name and address of the person making the report.

**Legal sanctions for failure to report are as follows:**

1. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.
2. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly fails to report is civilly liable for damages proximately caused by such failure (Iowa Code Section 232.75).

Any mandatory reporter who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of a child abuse has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal. Records and/or information pertaining to the abuse may be released to the child abuse investigator without release in other situation (Iowa Code Section 232.73).

**To Report Child Abuse Anytime, CALL: Your Local DHS Office - (319) 339-6171 or (319) 668-5753 (State Licensing Agent) or, if necessary. TOLL FREE STATEWIDE (1-800-362-2178). However you are encouraged to use your local number first. You may call collect.**

**Confidentiality:**

Due to the sensitive nature of information that you will know as a teacher of young children, it is imperative that you keep any and all sensitive information confidential. Any and all information about children or their families must only be shared on a strict "Need to Know" basis.

**Accidents:**

All accidents must be reported immediately to the Director/Assistant Director. Accident reports must be written, signed by an administrator, given to the child's parent(s)/guardian(s), and a copy made for the child's personal file. Use risk management to maintain a safe and hazard free environment. Safety is a team effort of all staff and employees requiring everyone to become risk managers.

**Substance Abuse:**

As stated in "Employment Termination" any employee reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will be asked to leave immediately. This could result in suspension or immediate termination of said employee.

**Criminal History and Child Abuse Record Checks:**

All employees and volunteers will be required to complete a CDI Waiver Statement and Criminal History Check Form-B at a minimum of once every two years. A search will be completed and includes checks of Iowa Criminal History, Child Abuse, and Sex Offender Registries.

National criminal history checks based on fingerprints are required for all persons subject to record checks under this Iowa Administrative Code 441-109.6(3)(d). The national criminal history check shall be repeated for each person every four years and when the department or center becomes aware of any new transgressions committed by that person in another state.

### **Daily Written Reports:**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of infants/toddlers will receive daily written reports that will provide information about the day's activities and the child's behavior. Solon Learning Academy encourages parents/guardians to speak with their child's teachers directly if they have any questions or want to know how any additional information on how their child is doing. We encourage parents to talk with their child's teacher at the beginning and end of each day.

### **Access Policy:**

***Centers are responsible for ensuring the safety of children at the center and preventing harm by being proactive and diligent in supervising not only the children, but also other people present at the facility.***

1. Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care **shall not** have **"unrestricted access"** to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.

**\*"Unrestricted access" means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.**

**\*It is imperative that centers not allow people who have not had a record check assume childcare responsibilities or be alone with children. This directly relates both to child safety and liability to the center.**

2. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct **"supervision"** and **"monitoring"** of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to a conflict of interest with the person.

**"Supervision"** means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly.

**"Monitoring"** means to be in charge of ensuring proper conduct of others.

3. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason they will contact their Center Director or another management staff to get



approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation staff will follow the “intruder in the center” procedures. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc. will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on premise.

4. A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code Section 692A):
  - a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the childcare center.
  - b. Shall not be on the property of the childcare center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender’s own minor child or ward to and from the center.
    - i. The center director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant first.
    - ii. If written permission is granted it shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present, including:
      1. The precise location in the center where the sex offender may be present.
      2. The reason for the sex offender’s presence at the facility.
      3. The duration of the sex offender’s presence.
      4. Description of how the center staff will supervise the sex offender to ensure that the sex offender is not left alone with a child.
      5. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the director and sex offender and kept on file for review by the center-licensing consultant.

This policy will be included in the parent handbook that is distributed to the parents at the start of school.

**Emergency Drills:**

- **Emergency Plan for Fire:**
  - Fire escape routes are clearly marked and posted in each room of the center. Staff and children are trained through monthly drills to react quickly and efficiently to the building’s fire alarm system. Drills are conducted once a month at different times of the day to ensure that all children and Staff are familiar with all the exit points. The first person to the door will hold the door open as the children and remaining staff exit the building. The children and staff located in the rooms at the back of the building will meet by the fence at the back of the playground area. The children and Staff at the front of the building will meet at a designated spot in the parking lot. Staff will ensure that all children are

accounted for. The Director or other designated staff will shut all windows, turn out the lights, close all doors, check all bathrooms for children and then proceed to the meeting place. No one will re-enter the daycare until the "All-Clear" signal has been given.

- In the event of a real fire, 911 will be called and the children and Staff will exit the building as stated above. Infant Staff will use infant carriers and/or rolling baby beds when transporting infants out of the building. Designated Staff will be responsible for taking the attendance books and emergency phone list for his or her class outside. The Director or other designated staff members will be responsible for the emergency bag containing a list of children and phone numbers; first aid kit, cell phone, and flashlights. The children and Staff will remain in their designated area until emergency vehicles arrive. Parents will be notified and children will remain on the premises at the designated area until parents arrive. If evacuation of the premises is necessary, the children and Staff will either walk to a safe place or will be transported in Staff vehicles equipped with car seats. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the alternate pick up site. Children and Staff will return to the daycare when fire officials have determined it is safe to do so.

- **Emergency Plan for Tornado:**

- Emergency Tornado routes are clearly marked and posted in every room of the center. Tornado drills will be conducted once a month at different times of the day to ensure that all children and Staff are familiar with the emergency procedure. The signal for the tornado drill is a blown whistle. The whistle is only used for this purpose. Designated Staff from each room will be responsible for taking the attendance books and emergency phone lists with them. The Infant Staff will take the children into the bathroom located across from the infant room. The Staff for the remaining rooms will lead the children into their designated bathrooms. The BASP children will go into their closet and one of the hallway bathrooms.
- In the event of a real tornado, the above procedures will be followed. In addition, the Director or Daycare Member will carry a battery-operated radio to listen to the latest news and weather alerts. The Staff and children will remain in the designated area until the "All Clear" has been sounded. If there is structural damage to the building, 911 will be called and determination will be made if it is safe to exit the building. If it is necessary to leave SLA, Staff will follow the evacuation guidelines as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire.

- **Emergency Plan for Power Failure:**

- If there is a power failure in the entire center while the children are present, a supervisor will ensure staff are keeping children calm,

occupied, and secure before going to check the fuse box. If removing and replacing the main fuse does not restore power, the supervisor shall proceed to call the electric company to report the power outage.

- If the outage is in one room, the supervisor will change the fuse for that room to restore power. If the power is not restored, the electric company will be called to inspect and repair the problem.
  - If the supervisor determines it is safe for the children to remain at the center then the center shall remain open. If it is not safe the supervisor will follow procedures listed in the “Emergency Drills” for moving children to safety and notifying parents/guardians.
- **Emergency Plan for Structural Damage:**
    - If structural damage occurs for any reason, Staff will direct inside children to take cover under tables and away from windows. For children outside the building, Staff will instruct the children to move away from the building and sit down together with Staff. Director/Staff will call 911. Structural damage will be assessed by official personnel and the Director before children are allowed to remain in or re-entering the building. If it is necessary to evacuate the premises, the evacuation procedure as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire will be followed.
  - **Emergency Plan for Bomb Threat:**
    - The “emergency drills” will be followed. The Director or Assistant Director will call 911 and inform the emergency personnel that a bomb threat has been received. Any instructions given by the emergency personnel will be followed. Staff and children will return to the building once the search has stopped and the building has been declared safe.

### **Parent Involvement and Visitors:**

We have an open door policy that allows parent(s)/guardian(s) to have an active role in their child’s day, unless parental contact is prohibited by a court order. If such a circumstance exists the parent or guardian will notify Solon Learning Academy in writing at the time of registration or upon such order becoming effective. It is important to us that a strong family atmosphere exists at Solon Learning Academy and that everyone is very involved and informed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to come and observe, participate in parties/events, and/or to attend field trips with their child. All visitors must check-in at the front desk with a member of the Administration Team prior to participating in any of the classrooms. However, if another child is brought in from outside of our Academy, they will not be able to participate in the day’s events for liability reasons. It is imperative that all employees be professional and courteous to our guests.

Conflict of Interest - If a visitor to a class room has a personal relationship (close friend, relative, etc.) with any staff member(s) in said classroom, staff must make

sure that one staff member without a relationship to the visitor is in the visitors presence at all times while on the premises.

**Emergency Plan for Intoxicated or Substance-Impaired Parents:**

Staff will immediately alert the Director or Assistant Director of the situation. The parent will be talked with about the danger of taking a child and/or operating a vehicle while intoxicated and asked if there is another adult who can be contacted to pick up the child. The Solon Learning Academy Staff are focusing on the welfare of the child. If the parent demands to take the child while in such a condition, the Solon Learning Academy Staff must release the child to the parent. If and when the parent does leave with the child, the Solon Learning Academy must act in their role as mandatory reporters and file a child abuse report to the police or DHS. The Director/Assistant Director shall escort the parent and child to their car to get the tag number, detailed description of the vehicle and the direction of travel at which time 911 will be called.

**Dangerous Adult:**

In the event of the presence of an adult who is deemed by the Director and/or Administrative Staff to present a danger to the children, or a specific child, 911 will be called immediately. Other staff will take the children to a centralized location, safe away from the situation at hand. The Director and/or Administrative Staff will calmly request that the person leave the premises and advise them that officials are on their way. In the event that the person leaves the center before the officials arrive, staff will write down the license plate of their vehicle and a full description of the individual. Staff will not place themselves or the children in danger by attempting to detain the individual.

A DANGEROUS ADULT would include any adult exhibiting inappropriate behavior, bearing arms, and or showing signs of intoxication by either drugs or alcohol. This also includes any person who is prohibited by court order or parental request to see or transport the child.

**Emergency Plan for Lost or Abducted Child:**

No children shall be outside or inside without the prescribed ratio of Staff supervision. In the event the program is unable to locate a child, all children will be brought into the multi-purpose room. Non-ratio Staff will immediately and completely search the grounds and the building while the other children are being supervised. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, parents will be called and 911 will be notified. A detailed description of the child, including what they are wearing and places they might have gone will be given to emergency officials. If the child is observed being abducted, 911 will be called immediately and a complete description of the child and the abductor will be given, if possible. If advanced warning is received that someone is coming to take a child, the child will be taken in the office where a Staff member will stay with the child and the door locked. When

the person arrives to attempt to take the child, they will be encouraged to leave the premises. If the person refuses, 911 will be called. No staff or children will leave the daycare until authorities have arrived.

### **Emergency Plan for Intruder:**

Staff will alert the Director or Assistant Director should an intruder enter the building at which time they will approach the intruder and inquire as to why they are on the premises. During this time, staff will ensure that all the children are accounted for. If it is determined the intruder should not be on the premises, they will be asked to leave. If the intruder refuses to exit the building or uses force or threat of force, 911 will be called. If it is determined the intruder's intent is to leave with a child or staff unlawfully, staff will take the child or other staff member into the office, lock the door, and call 911.

### **Staff Visitors:**

All personal visits should be conducted during the employee's break time and restricted to the lobby area until the employee is available. Once on break, visitors may accompany staff to the break room. All visitors will sign the guest log and present valid identification upon arrival. If there is a child of an employee (enrolled in another classroom) whom wishes to see the parent, the parent's classroom takes precedent over their child's visit.

### **Transportation and Field Trips:**

Special Activities and field trips will occur on a frequent basis. Information regarding these activities will be distributed well in advanced to each family and will be posted on the parent boards outside classrooms. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must return field trip/authorization forms back to their child's teacher in order to participate in the event. The child will be transported by an academy van, but occasionally staff or parent vehicles may be used. Drivers are required to have a valid drivers license and be fully insured in order to transport children. Children ages birth-6 years old will be transported in the back of the vehicle and a safety seat must be left for use. Children over six years of age are required to wear a seatbelt and will be transported while seated in the back of the vehicle only. The adult to child ratio is one over the regular ratio for all off site activities. Parents can be counted into the ratio.

### **Nutrition:**

Our facility will ensure you that each child will receive nutritious meals and snacks each day. Our menus will meet or exceed government standards and Administration will promote healthy eating habits weekly. Every Friday, will be "Fresh Friday," where all foods are served fresh, nothing processed. Our monthly menus will be posted on our parent information board and copies will be available for parents to take home.

**Meals and Snacks Served:**

- Breakfast: 7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.
- Morning Snack: 9:15 a.m.
- Lunch:
  - Infants/Ones: 11:00
  - Twos and Early Preschool: 11:30 a.m.
  - Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten: 12:00 p.m.
  - BASP: 12:30 (if actable)
- Afternoon Snack: 3:00 p.m.

Breakfast and Lunch will always be served with milk. Snacks will be served with either milk or juice (all of our juices are 100% juice). Children with heavily restricted diets may want to bring in their own foods, properly labeled with the child's name and date. Food from home cannot be stored in the child's cubby. If a child brings a snack for a party or a birthday, it must be approved by a staff member in advance in case of allergies.

**Food brought from home.**

a. Food brought from home must be provided directly to a staff member. Food brought from home for children less than five years of age who are not enrolled in school shall be monitored and supplemented if necessary to ensure CACFP guidelines are maintained.

b. Perishable foods brought from home shall be maintained to avoid contamination or spoilage.

c. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring snacks for special occasions such as birthdays or holidays. Make sure parent(s)/guardian(s) are aware of any allergies of students in your classroom and accommodate accordingly.

**Discipline/Positive Guidance Techniques:**

Positive guidance techniques are used so that a child can develop trusting and available relationships. Using these techniques takes more energy because it requires the social environment to be trustworthy, to develop social skills by demonstrating, explaining and modeling, to understand cultural differences, to have routines, and to have a physical space that is comforting.

Develop a social environment in which positive guidance techniques can be utilized by observing the center's environment for practice and social patterns that lead to problem behaviors. Model sharing, politeness and positive behaviors. The center shall be predictable and calm, so that children feel safe and secure.

Intervene to change the problem practice or social patterns to prevent problem behaviors. For example, biting by infants and toddlers is a message or communication. The communication being expressed could range from "my gums hurt", to a way to get access to a toy, or an expression of anger. Your answer to what is going on with the child in context to the center's environment governs your response. Seek to understand how the social and physical environment of the center leads to problem behaviors and change the environment.

A good thing to always remember: Trust is necessary for children to develop healthy relationship skills.

Physical or humiliating punishment is used to hurt and can result in relationships where distrust of others is learned. The message to children is that it is okay to hurt people, okay for people who care for you to hurt you, and is okay for you to hurt people you care for, and lastly, it is okay for bigger people to use force on smaller people.

Techniques to use when disciplining:

- *Distraction/Redirection*
  - This is a way of life with the under three crowd. It can be very useful with preschool aged through teens
- *Humor*
  - Never underestimate the power of a little bit of levity. This is a great way to diffuse a tense situation so that it can be dealt with more effectively. It can be very useful with school age children.
- *Positive Reinforcement*
  - Find someone doing something good and be really interested in what they are doing. Look for things the child does that you like, and then tell the child. Praise the child for doing the appropriate thing(s).
- *Ignoring*
  - The fastest and most effective way to gain control is to ignore persons not following the rules. Pick your battles. If it is not hurting anyone or any property, is it worth the confrontation?
- *Active Listening*
  - Sometimes it is enough for a child to hear that you understand and accept their feelings. "You feel real mad that it is time to come inside now."
  - A way of dealing with tattling: "Joey hit me." – Ask, "Did you tell him how that made you feel and what you wanted him to do?", "Do you feel that he listened to you?" – Go with the child to the other and say, "John has something to tell you and wants you to listen to him." –

Listen, then ask, "Do you want to say anything John?...Good job boys. Next time I bet you can do this all by yourself."

- *Consistency*
  - Incredibly important. Say what you mean and follow through every time.
- *Understand the Importance of Routines*
  - All children need consistency and stability in caregivers and day-to-day programming. This consistency helps them to know what to expect and helps to make them feel psychologically safe and secure. Some children tolerate changes to the routine better than others. All children need to be prepared for routine changes because it helps to alleviate the shock of the change and maintain an environment that is secure and trustworthy. For children who have a difficult time with transitions more preparation and patience is required to help them cope successfully with such changes.
- *Choices*
  - Choice does not mean allowing a child to choose not to follow a directive. It does mean for allowing the child to have some control over the situation. However, only offer choices you intend to honor:
    - "Do you want to go outside?" – Instead give a five-minute warning so they are able to finish what they are doing.
    - "Do you need to go to the bathroom?" – Instead say, "It's time to go to the bathroom, are you going to do it all by yourself or would you like me to help you?" (If applicable.)
    - "You need to select an activity." Instead say, "Would you like to select an activity or would you like me to help you?"
- *Behavior Specific Directives*
  - Lets a child know exactly what it is that you want from them. "Be good." vs. "I want you to pick up your toys and come sit at the table."
  - Also, this tells the child what you want them to do, not what to stop. "Please use inside voices." vs. "Stop screaming."
- *Setting Limits/Expectations*
  - Sometimes called rules for social order. These are rules about inside voices, taking turns, saying please and thank you, helping others, etcetera.
  - Limits are necessary and help kids feel safe and secure if the rules are simple and positive.
- *Unconditional Positive Regard*
  - Children do not have to earn this by behaving in a certain way. This is our right as human beings.
- *Natural/Logical Consequences*
  - Natural consequences happen without adult intervention. – "If you don't come to snack time now all the apples will be gone and you won't get any."



- Logical consequences do require adult intervention. – “If you choose to throw sand again you will need to stay out of the sand for the rest of the day.”

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

### **Physicals and Tuberculosis Screening:**

All staff members are required to receive a pre-employment physical and tuberculosis (TB) skin test. This must be performed within six (6) months before beginning employment, and updated every two (2) years.

### **Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) Vaccination:**

OSHA guidelines for Hepatitis B vaccinations indicate that all staff members determined to have potential workplace exposure to human blood and other potentially infectious materials must be offered the Hepatitis B vaccination series at no cost to the staff member and within 10 days of hire. If arranged by Solon Learning Academy this series of vaccinations will be at no cost to the employee. If a staff member has already received the HBV vaccination, or wishes to waive his/her right to receive the vaccinations, a HBV Consent/Waiver form must be completed and turned into the Director/Assistant Director.

### **Policy for Admission and Exclusion from Child Care due to Illness:**

A diagnosis of disease can only be made by the child’s health care provider. The parent, legal guardian, or other person the parent authorizes shall be notified immediately when a child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the early childhood education or care program. The program shall ask the parents to consult with the child’s health care provider. The early childhood education or care provider shall ask the parents to keep the provider informed of the advice received from the health care provider. The early childhood education or care provider reserves the right to admit or exclude a child regardless of the health care provider’s recommendations.

The child’s health care provider shall determine if antibiotics or other medication are required for treatment of an illness. The use of antibiotics for illness is not required or encouraged as a condition for attendance at the early childhood education or care program unless noted below.

### ***Part I: Admission and Permitted Attendance***

- Children with the following conditions **may be permitted** to attend early childhood education and care programs if they can:
  1. Participate in the usual daily activities with other children and the early childhood education;
  2. Or the care provider is not leaving the other children unattended to care for the ill child.
  
- Children with the following conditions may be permitted to attend:
  1. Infants and young children may have as many as six respiratory illnesses each year. These diseases include - the common cold, croup, bronchitis, pneumonia, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and otitis media (ear infection). Exclusion of children with these illnesses from early childhood education and care has not helped in preventing these infections.
  2. Children who are carriers of an infectious disease in their stool or urine that can cause illness, but who have **no** symptoms. Exceptions include *E. coli* 0157:H7, *Shigella* or *Salmonella typhi*;
  3. Children with conjunctivitis (pink eye) who have a clear, watery eye discharge and **do not** have any fever, eye pain, or eyelid redness;
  4. Children with a rash, but **no** fever or change in behavior;
  5. Children with cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection, parvovirus B19, HIV or carriers of Hepatitis B;
  6. Shingles (herpes zoster), children shall keep sores covered by clothing or a dressing until sores have crusted;
  7. Pediculosis (head lice), there is no need for the child to be sent home before the end of the day and can return after first treatment. Parents should be notified.
  8. Children with influenza may return to early childhood education and care when the child feels well enough;
  9. Children with Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) **do not** need to stay home as long as the wound is covered and drainage is contained;
  10. Children with norovirus infection who have **no** diarrhea and are not otherwise ill, may remain in the program if special attention is paid to handwashing, proper diaper disposal, and maintaining a clean environment. See part II for children who have had diarrhea and/or vomiting;
  11. Children who have ringworm. Children with ringworm should **not** go to the gym, swimming pools or play contact sports. Treatment may take at least four weeks;
  12. Children with viral meningitis may return to childcare when the child feels well enough.

### ***Part II: Illness while in Childcare***

- If a child becomes ill while in child care and it is determined that the child should be excluded:

- Contact immediately the parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent;
- Care for the child apart from other children;
- Give appropriate attention and supervision until the parent picks the child up; and
- Give extra attention to hand washing, diaper changing, disinfecting surfaces .
- Use Universal Precautions

In order to minimize the spread of infectious disease, all team members will practice hand-washing guidelines as determined by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health. Parents/guardians are required upon admission to submit a physical examination form and a current Certificate of Immunization for their child(ren), both signed by a physician or health official. Physicals and immunizations must be updated as determined by The Department of Health. Original forms are not allowed to leave the facility for the duration of enrollment.

**Distribution of Medication:**

Whenever a child requires prescription or over the counter medication while in the center’s care, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a completed Medication Authorization Form. The parent(s)/guardian(s) must supply all medications. The center is unable to administer any medication without this form. Medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child’s first and last name. Medications will be stored in an area and in a container out of reach of the children. If medication is to be kept at the center for treatment of a chronic condition, no more than one month’s supply should remain at the center at any one time. We will complete the Medication Authorization Form with date, time, amount, type/name of medication, and initialed by the staff member that administered the medication to the child. If the medication was not given, the reason will be recorded on the Medication Authorization Form.

**Emergency Medical/Sick Child/Injured Child:**

In the event that a child exhibits bacterial/viral or other unusual symptoms of illness or requires emergency medical care due to injury the Director and/or Administrative Staff will administer first aide appropriate for the situation and within the scope of their training from one of the first aide boxes which contain all necessary supplies as required by the Department of Human Services. These first aide boxes are located in each bathroom, outside in the fireproof box, in the tornado room or for field trips. If an ice pack is needed, frozen sponges in the ice box are used (which are cleaned and sterilized after each use). An accident report will be filled out in duplicate, so a copy will be available for the parent to read and sign, and a copy will be retained at the center. If the child needs to go to the hospital

parents/guardians will be notified immediately as well as emergency medical personnel. A supervisor will go with the child in the emergency vehicle taking the child's file, and more specifically the emergency medical consent form, and leaving the other staff at the center to be responsible for the safety of the remaining children.

### **Medical Emergency/Serious Injury:**

#### **Child Related Injury:**

Incident involving serious injury or significant change in health status will be reported to the parent immediately, and then 911 will be called.

After the emergency call has been made, the Staff will then retrieve the child's Parental Medical Emergency Consent Form from the file. This form must accompany the child to the hospital.

One Staff will remain with the child in need of emergency care at all times and remaining Staff will remain with the other children in another area.

#### **Staff Related Injury:**

Incidents involving serious injury or significant change in health will need to be reported to the Directors immediately. If you feel you have injured yourself on the job, a written report must be filled out immediately by the employee and given to the Director to file in the staff members file. Part of the job of working with children is remaining active and nurturing towards children, this means picking children up when they are crying or when they may need extra attention in certain instances. If you feel you are unable to fulfill your duties as an employee working with children, (i.e. if you are unable to pull or lift weight over 40-50 lbs.) then you may be sent home for the day.

#### **Incident Reporting:**

Incidents involving minor injuries, minor changes in health status will be reported to the parent the day of the incident.

The Staff member who observed the incident will prepare a written Incident/Accident Report. A copy of the report will be provided to the parent or authorized person to pick up child at the end of the day. The parent or authorized person will be asked to sign the report. A copy of the report should be made and given to parent or authorized person and original should be placed in child's file.

#### **Dental Emergency Procedures:**

- Toothache – Rinse the mouth vigorously with warm water to clean our debris. Use dental floss to remove any food that might be trapped between

the teeth. If swelling is present, place cold compresses on the outside of the cheek. (Do not use heat or place aspirin on the aching tooth or gum tissues) Consult child's dentist as soon as possible.

- Orthodontic Problems (Braces and Retainers) – If a wire is causing irritation, cover end of the wire with small cotton ball, beeswax, or a piece of gauze, until child can get to the dentist. If a wire is embedded in the cheek, tongue, or gum tissue, do not attempt to remove it. Contact child's dentist immediately. If appliance becomes loose or a piece of it breaks off, take the appliance and the piece and give to child's parent/guardian to take to their dentist.
- Knocked-out tooth – If the tooth is dirty, rinse it gently in running water. DO NOT scrub. Gently insert and hold the tooth in its socket. If this is not possible, place the tooth in a container of milk or cool water. Immediately call child's dentist, parent/guardian, try to have child taken to dentist (within 30 minutes, if possible). Don't forget to bring the tooth.
- Broken Tooth – Gently clean dirt or debris from the injured area with warm water. Place cold compress on the face, in the area of the injured tooth, to minimize swelling. Contact child's dentist immediately.
- Bitten Tongue or Lip – Apply direct pressure to the bleeding area with a clean cloth. If swelling is present, apply cold compresses. If bleeding does not stop, take child to a hospital emergency room.
- Objects Wedged Between Teeth – Try to remove the object with dental floss. Guide the floss carefully to avoid cutting the gums. If not successful in removing the object, contact the child's dentist. Do not try to remove the object with a sharp or pointed instrument.
- Possible Fractured Jaw – Immobilize the jaw by any means (handkerchief, necktie, towel). If swelling is present, apply cold compresses. Call child's dentist and/or go immediately to a hospital emergency room.

All dental emergencies require that the parents and the child's dentist be contacted. Staff is required to wear disposable gloves and to wash hands after attending to injuries. All items exposed to blood will be placed in a double layer plastic bag, sealed and discarded immediately.

### **Hand Washing Policies/Procedure:**

All employees, volunteers, and children will wash hands at the times listed below, and at any additional times as needed:

1. Upon arrival for the day.
2. Before and after:

- a. Handling food
  - b. Feeding a child
  - c. Giving medications
  - d. Playing in water that is used by more than one person
3. After the following:
- a. Diaper changes
  - b. Using the restroom, or assisting a children in the restroom
  - c. Contact with bodily fluids (e.g. mucus, blood, vomit, sneezing, open wounds/sores)
  - d. Handling uncooked food – especially raw meat/poultry
  - e. Handling animals
  - f. Playing in sandboxes
  - g. Cleaning or handling garbage
  - h. Playing outdoors

Children and staff will use the following method when washing their hands:

1. Turn on water to a comfortable temperature.
2. Wet hands with water and apply liquid soap to hands.
3. Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather forms, and continue to rub hands together for at least 10 seconds. Rub areas between fingers, around all nail bed, under fingernails, jewelry, and the back of hands. Rinse hands under running water until there is no soap and dirt left, and then turn off the water.
4. Dry hands.

Teachers and caregivers will provide necessary assistance with hand washing for infants who can be safely cradled in one arm, as well as, for children who can stand but not was their hands independently. After assisting the child with hand washing, the employee will wash his or her own hands. If a child is unable to stand and/or is too heavy to hold safely to wash his or her own hands at the sink, the employee will:

1. Wipe the child’s hands with a damp paper towel, with a drop of liquid soap.
2. Wipe the child’s hands with a clean, wet paper towel until the hands are free of soap.
3. Dry the child’s hands.

**Universal Precautions/Exposure to Blood or Other Body Fluids**

Gloves will be worn by Staff when diapering, when contact with blood or other body fluids are present, and when cleaning contaminated surfaces. Spills or any blood or body fluid will be cleaned with soap and water, and then disinfected with a fresh solution of bleach and water. Any contaminated material or soiled diapers shall be disposed of in a double layer plastic bag with a secure tie.

## **Biting Policy**

Even in the best child care center, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants, toddlers and sometimes preschoolers and occasionally older children. This is an unavoidable consequence of grouping young children together. When it happens, it can be scary and very frustrating for children, parents and teachers. Understanding the reason for biting is the first step to changing a child's behavior. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, simple sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Childcare group situations are difficult: dealing with others constantly around, sharing attention and toys, and too much or too little stimulation are all very difficult for children. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. When biting breaks out, a high quality childcare program immediately takes action, not to blame the biters but to change the environment and help children change their behavior.

It is important that the caregivers remain calm and in control of their emotions when biting occurs. Staff should not show anger or frustration towards the child. The caregiver should calmly respond to the child, letting them know that biting is not ok. In addition the following steps will be taken:

1. The teacher will remove the child from the situation and focus caring attention on the child who was bitten.
2. Encourage the biter to help take care of the child that was bitten (hold ice pack, comfort the child).
3. The caregiver should talk to the child who bit (if able to communicate) and talk about different strategies that the child can use next time (give them appropriate words-if able) instead of biting. This should be done in a short simple way.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Staff needs to work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of some triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are some examples of how the teacher will begin this assessment.

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The teacher will use the Center Action Plan for documentation and ask the following questions:
  - Was the space too crowded
  - Were there too few toys
  - Was there too little to do or too much waiting
  - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times, other than when he/she was biting

2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate manners, including using words, if they are capable of them.
4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent and administration will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and to measure the outcome of these changes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

First Aid in response to biting (both child and adult):

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over wound for 5 minutes.
2. Apply ice or cool compress to help reduce the pain or swelling.
3. Bandage the wound as necessary.
4. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.

First Aid if bite breaks the skin (both child and adult):

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over the wound for 5 minutes.
  2. Control the bleeding.
  3. Cover the wound with sterile dressing and bandage.
  4. Contact parent of BOTH children involved and encourage them to contact their healthcare provider to determine if they need to be seen.
  5. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.
- \*If a staff member is bitten we will use the Iowa City Community School District Exposure Control Plan.

When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day. All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on our standard incident form that is completed and signed by teacher, parents and an administrator is notified. One copy is give to the parent and one copy is kept a locked file cabinet in the office.

When biting occurs, here's what you can expect from us:

- We will put the child's safety first and provide first aid as well as comfort, support and advice to any child who is bitten.
- We will provide appropriate programming for children to help prevent biting.



- We will make current information and resources on biting available to you.
- We will provide teachers with adequate knowledge and training to deal properly and effectively with biting.
- We will take your concerns seriously and treat them with understanding and respect.
- We will tell you what specific steps we are taking to address biting and explain the reasoning behind those steps.
- We will respond to your questions, concerns and suggestions—even when our response to some suggestions is no.
- We will work to schedule conferences about biting with you, at a time you can attend.
- We will keep your child’s identity confidential if he or she bites. This helps avoid labeling or confrontations that may prolong the behavior.

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen in our program, but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so it will end as quickly as possible. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have questions or concerns, please let us know. We are here to help you and your child on their journey to independence.

## **CURRICULUM PLANNING**

### **Daily Curriculum**

Each preschool day includes the following:

- **NEWS SHARING**– a time at the start of our day to tell about any exciting experiences.
- **LEARNING CENTERS** – each relating to our weekly theme:

*Science – investigation, forming hypothesis, experimentation, and comparison.*

Math Concepts - sorting, pattern building, puzzles, measurement, quantitative value, addition, 1 to 1 correspondence, counting, number recognition, etc.

Manipulatives – Legos, beads, pattern blocks, and other various fine motor activities.

Language Activities - pre-reading skills, letter recognition activities, plus handwriting practice.

*Library– books are rotated weekly to relate to current weekly theme.*

*Art– including both teacher-directed projects plus free choice activities.*

*Sensory – play with water, sand, play dough, shaving cream, etc.*

Drama - roll-play, puppets, dollhouse, dress-up, etc.

Housekeeping – kitchen and dolls.

Building – blocks, cars, etc.

Large-Motor Games

Listening Center – listening to books on CD or tape with headphones.

- **CALENDAR TIME** – Learning the days of the week, months of the year, seasons, counting to 31, number recognition, graphing, and weather observation.
- **SNACK** – Students serve themselves and take turns serving one another.
- **STORY TIME** – At least one story related to our weekly theme is read daily.
- **SHARING** – Students are invited to bring from home one item the first Thursday and Friday of each month.
- **MUSIC** – We experience music through singing, dancing, movement, listening, and playing instruments. Music experiences coordinate with our weekly theme.
- **OUTSIDE (OR LARGE-MOTOR) PLAY** – Weather permitting, we go outside to play every day. If it is too cold or wet to go out, we play indoor games such as bowling, parachute, hopscotch, tumbling, musical chairs, Simon Says, Follow the Leader, etc.

A copy of the licensing standards is available on the Department of Human Services website (Chapter 109 of Administrative Rules), as well as in our main office.

**Final Statement:**

Please contact the director of the Solon Learning Academy if you have any questions regarding this handbook. When starting employment with Solon Learning Academy, you are agreeing to the terms contained in this handbook.

**Sign and return the attached form stating you have read this handbook and agree to all of the terms within it.**

Thank You,

Solon Learning Academy, LLC

**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook:**

The content of this staff handbook may be modified, revoked, suspended, terminated or changed at any time by Solon Learning Academy.

**Employee's Acknowledgement:** I have received my copy of the handbook and understand it is my responsibility to have read it. I understand it is my responsibility to comply with the policies and guidelines herein and any revisions of it.

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Received this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_.