Special Notes About Orientation

Our school has conducted orientation in a variety of ways based on the needs of families as well as the school calendar. Your child’s teachers will be contacting you prior to your child’s attendance. They will individualize an orientation plan specifically for our family.

When your child’s teacher makes contact, she may refer you to the “Children’s Center Orientation Schedule.” The teacher will make arrangements with you for the following: Initial Visit, Second Visit, First Day, First Nap and First Full Day. You may use this form to note the dates.

Orientation is an important first step for children in our care. We make every effort to ensure that all children quickly adapt to their new surroundings and schedules. Parents can help their children through this time by stabilizing family routines as much as possible, making sure children are well rested and that they have had a good breakfast before coming to school. Preventing hectic departures and frenzied pick-ups will further help your child ease into their new school and begin to make new friends. With the support of all the adults in your child’s life, they will successfully maneuver through many transitions in their young lives.
THE ORIENTATION PROCESS

Starting a new school is an exciting and somewhat scary process for both children and their parents. Orientation is designed to help your child make a gradual transition from home or a previous care setting to the Children’s Center.

Before You Come to School for the First Time
Almost all children experience some anxiety in getting ready for school. You can help your child look forward to starting school in a number of ways:

- Walk or drive past the playground of the Children’s Center. Talk about the things that you see to play with at school.
- Visit the center as much as you would to ease your transition.
- Go shopping with your child for school items or look through your home for the blanket, pillow, and clothes that will be used at school.
- Talk about the first day of school. Your child will get a chance to meet teachers and children, play with toys, play outside on the playground, hears a story, sing some songs and eat a snack.
- Tell your child that you will stay at the school on the first day to participate in children’s activities, go away or a little while and then come back. Explain that your job or classes are nearby.

Before regular attendance, parents and children often have an orientation to the program. Parent orientation may take the form of a brief group meeting or an individual appointment with your child’s teacher(s) and/or a program administrator. Child orientation usually takes about 5 days but may be tailored to meet the needs of the child and family. Often younger children usually need more time for orientation. Families on a partial week schedule should expect orientation to take longer. We’re flexible in meeting individual needs, please let us know what you and your child needs. The following is an example of how orientation might proceed.

Day 1 and 2) Initial Visits: Your child attends the program for half a day or less with you or a familiar adult. You may leave your child for a brief time (less than an hour).

Day 3) First Day: Your child attends the program for half a day. Please stay with your child for about half an hour before you leave. Pick up your child before naptime.

Day 4) First Nap: your child attends the program for ¾ of a day. Please stay at arrival for half an hour before leaving.

Day 5) First Full Day: Your child attends the program for a regular day. Stay at the arrival time with your child if needed. Your child may stay until your regular pick-up time.
Children’s Center Orientation Schedule

Child’s Name: ___________________________ Classroom: ________________

Teachers: ____________________________________________

_________ Initial Visit
Your Child attends from ________________ to _________________.
You or another familiar adult should plan on being with your child for the entire time. If your child is comfortable you may leave the classroom for less than an hour but remain in the vicinity of the school.

_________ Second Visit
Your Child attends from ________________ to _________________.
You or another familiar adult should plan on being with your child for an hour, or so, while your child gets settled. If your child is comfortable you may leave the school until it is time for your child to be picked up.

_________ First Day
Your Child attends from ________________ to _________________.
You or another familiar adult should plan on being with your child for half an hour, or so, while your child gets settled. If your child is comfortable you may leave the school until it is time for your child to be picked up. Children may do better if they do not stay for nap.

_________ Transition Days
Your Child attends from ________________ to _________________.
You or another familiar adult should plan on being with your child for about half an hour while your child gets settled. We decide together how long your child will stay.

_________ First Full Day
Your Child attends from ________________ to _________________.
You or another familiar adult should plan on being with your child while your child gets settled. If your child is comfortable you may leave the school until it is time for your child to be picked up.