

Family Handbook 2024-2025



CHELTEN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
1601 N. Limekiln Pike
Dresher, PA 19025
215-646-5596 (P) 215-646-4656 (F)
Church phone: 215-646-5557
www.CheltenChild.com | ccdc@cheltenchild.com

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MISSION STATEMENT

Supporting families by providing a quality early childhood education in a safe and loving Christ-centered environment, creating opportunities for the development of the whole child: socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and spiritually.

VISION STATEMENT

All children would leave CCDC as confident, caring, and curious on their way to becoming all God created them to be.



CHERISH

*Where children are
regarded as precious
because of who God
made them
to be*



EQUIP

*Where we equip
every child to
develop a passion
for learning*



EXCELLENCE

*Where our good
becomes better and
our better
becomes best*



INTEGRITY

*Where we are who
we say we are and
do what we
say we do*

WELCOME!

It is a pleasure to welcome you as a family to Chelten Child Development Center. We are a non-profit, early childhood learning center sponsored by Chelten, a Church of Hope. Our program serves children age nine months through five years, year round.

PHILOSOPHY

We are dedicated to providing a program for every child that meets his/her needs for physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual development. We believe that God has created each child in His image - special and unique. It is a privilege to provide this place where your child will feel loved and valued as he/she interacts with classmates and teachers. Our entire staff desires to model excellence and integrity. It is our hope that your child will leave our school equipped with a life-long long of learning.

OUR PROGRAM

Our daily schedule encourages children to play, learn, experience and grow at their own rate without undue pressure or competition. Our curriculum helps develop:

- **Cognitive Skills:** Through dramatic play, problem solving, language and literature experiences
- **Social Skills:** Through cooperation, expressing ideas and emotions, and developing self-concept
- **Large Motor Skills:** Through vigorous outdoor play, bike riding, climbing and games
- **Small Motor Skills:** Through puzzles, cutting, pasting, painting and finger plays
- **Self-Help Skills:** Through maintaining daily routines, hand washing, dressing and manners
- **Spiritual Sense:** Understanding who God is; learning to love Him, His creation and His Word.

We hope this year will be a rewarding and valuable learning experience for your precious preschool child. Please read through the following guidelines to help make our time together a success. Our staff is always available for your questions, comments or concerns.

2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR STAFF DIRECTORY

CCDC OFFICE STAFF:

Director:	Pam Post	ppost@cheltenchild.com
Curriculum Specialist:	Lauren Shaw	lshaw@cheltenchild.com
Special Needs Coordinator:	Camille Brittain	cbrittain@cheltenchild.com
Office Manager:	Beth Patitucci	ccdc@cheltenchild.com

OUR PROGRAM

Admissions

All families interested in enrolling their child will be given an equal opportunity for admission. A completed registration form and a check for the deposit/registration fee are required for admission. A waiting list may be maintained and children will be accepted from the list based on the date their registration form was submitted and the openings available in the class. From the time of registration, parents are encouraged to share information regarding concerns about a child's development and services/supports that a child is currently receiving.

Curriculum

Our curriculum supports the Early Learning Standards created by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (<https://www.pakeys.org/pa-early-learning-initiatives/early-learning-standards/>). Our toddler classrooms use "The Creative Curriculum" which focuses on communication, language development, social interactions and exploring their environment. Our preschool classrooms use a variety of state-approved kindergarten readiness curriculum, focusing on pre-reading skills, simple math concepts, science and social studies themes.

Our teaching staff document observations of children and use them in creating developmentally appropriate activities that address the unique needs of all the children. All materials and equipment are accessible to all the children. Staff make adaptations to the schedule, transition times and routines to meet the needs of the children. Staff implement picture schedules, practice simple rules, and employ positive behavior supports that help all children. Staff incorporate individual accommodations and strategies that are suggested by special educators or in IEP/IFSP documents.

We believe that children of all abilities benefit from meaningful social relationships with their peers. Opportunities are provided every day for children to develop these relationships during play and small group activities. Staff facilitate and model positive interactions with peers. If extra supports are necessary, they are provided within the natural classroom environment.

Our students exhibit a range of abilities and a variety of needs. The staff considers these and works to meet the individual needs of each child to help them reach their full potential. We seek to create a balance of activities in the classroom: large group/small group, child-initiated/teacher-directed, and active/quiet. A private space where a child can play alone or with one friend is available in each classroom. Sensory activities and toys are accessible for those children who need them. Large group times include activities with active participation, as well as quiet listening activities.

Inclusion

Chelten Child Development Center welcomes children of all abilities and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate learning experiences that support the full access and participation of every child. We believe that each child is uniquely created by God and value each one's abilities from that perspective. We partner with parents and other professionals to provide the support every child needs to be all that God has created them to be.

We believe that all children benefit from an inclusive environment, surrounded by their peers. As a result, we support all children within the classroom environment. We seek to deal proactively with behaviors that interfere with learning in the classroom by adjusting schedules and routines, making behavioral expectations clear and consistent, implementing simple behavior interventions, and making use of available resources. Most behaviors can be handled within the classroom environment.

Chelten Child Development Center relies on honest information from families regarding their child's needs to determine if the school is able to meet those needs. If a family doesn't disclose those needs, including behavioral concerns, Chelten Child Development reserves the right to terminate enrollment.

If there are concerns about a child's development, families will be referred to the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit or Early Intervention services for evaluation. If the child is eligible for services, we will partner with the service provider to support the child as indicated in the IEP/IFSP or behavior plan.

If a child's behavior poses a safety threat to either the child himself, the other children in the classroom, or the staff, Chelten Child Development Center will notify the parent that an alternative placement must be found. The school will document all the interventions and supports which have been implemented and share them with the parent. The school will also provide the family with information and resources that might be helpful.

Collaboration with Other Professionals

We serve many children with special needs who are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists and behavior support. Chelten Child Development Center welcomes these professionals and partners with them to ensure the child's success. We work to accommodate the therapists' schedules whenever possible. We encourage everyone who works with the child to do so within the context of the early childhood classroom. We provide time for the service provider and the child's teacher to collaborate and share information. We host IEP/IFSP meetings and provide time away from the classroom so that the classroom teacher can attend these meetings.

In addition, we provide information and support for parents learning to navigate the early intervention system. Our special needs coordinator is available to review evaluation reports, IEP/IFSP documents, and attend meetings if families desire.

Arrivals and Departures

Please bring your child into the Center using the south entrance of the educational wing, beside the playground. Children must be brought into the classroom by a parent or other responsible adult. Please be sure to help your child wash their hands before starting to play. Please greet the teacher to be sure that your child has been checked into school.

Your child will be sent home only with people listed in the child's file as authorized to pick up the child. Please pick up your child promptly at the proper dismissal time to avoid a late charge. (Please refer to the financial policies on page of this handbook for specific information.) If for some emergency a parent should be delayed, please call the Center to inform the teacher in charge that you will be late.

Regular Attendance

Children can most benefit from a preschool program if they attend regularly. Please arrive on time so that your child begins his/her morning with the other children. One of the important developmental benefits to your child is the experience of relationships with other children. Please email or call the office if your child will be absent from school. Frequent absences or late arrivals may deprive your child of important group experiences.

SNOW DAYS AND WEATHER EMERGENCIES

CCDC normally follows the Upper Dublin School District closings for bad weather. In the event of ice or snow, you can do any of the following:

- Visit our website: www.CheltenhamChild.com for delay or closure announcements
- Check local news for UD School District (#311)
- Log on to Upper Dublin's website at www.udsd.org
- Tune in to Upper Dublin's cable channel
- Notification via Procure sent to your email and via cell phone push-notification

If Upper Dublin School District is closed, ALL of our classes will close.

For a **1-hour delay** we will open our doors at **8:15AM** for FULL day classes.

(Half day classes begin at **9:00AM** as normal)

For a **2-hour delay** we will open our doors at **9:15AM** for **ALL** classes.

If heavy snow or other threatening weather conditions occur during the day, we will notify you of an early closing.

PREPARATION FOR EMERGENCIES

We conduct monthly emergency drills so that both the staff and the children will be prepared should any of the following events occur:

- Fire
- Intruder
- Tornadoes or other extreme weather emergencies

Our staff are trained regularly in first aid, CPR, and fire safety.

MANDATED REPORTING

Pennsylvania state law requires anyone working with children to report any suspected physical or sexual abuse or the neglect of a child. Our staff are trained in how recognize and report suspected child abuse.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Clothing

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable play clothing. Outdoor play is considered an integral part of our program during all seasons. Please dress your child accordingly: light jacket or sweater in spring and fall; heavy winter jacket in winter. Slip-on shoes or light sandals are not appropriate foot wear for pre-school activities; **we require sneakers for all students, each day.**

Winter Kit

To ensure that our students are able to go outside year-round, we ask parents to purchase and bring in a "Winter Kit" to be kept here at school. If purchasing these items is a financial burden for your family, please contact us as we have some resources available to help defray the costs.

Winter Kit Components: Please clearly label each item with your child's name and send each item in by October 15th or prior to your child's first day of school if s/he starts after November 1st.

- A [Muddy Buddy](#) or other one-piece rain suit that zips up.
- A [Balacava](#)
- [Mittens](#)
- [Rain Mittens](#)
- Waterproof [boots](#) (that warm socks will fit into)
- Warm [Socks](#)

Change of Clothing

Your child will need a complete change of clothing for the season (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) in a zip-lock bag **labeled with your child's name** to be kept in the classroom.

Food

Parents of full day preschoolers should pack a healthy lunch and a drink in a clearly labeled lunch box.. Snacks are provided daily in the morning and afternoon for all preschoolers. Families will be notified if a classroom is nut-free due to an allergy in the class. Please be sure your child has eaten his breakfast before arriving.

Parents of toddlers should pack all snacks and lunch for their child. All of our toddler classrooms are nut-free. Each item must be labeled with your toddler's name.

Refrigerators and microwave ovens are available. We discourage foods with high sugar content: please, no candy, gum or soda.

Toys

Children should NOT bring toys from home, because it is too easy for them to become lost or mixed up with school toys. Since we believe in promoting peaceful play and activities, we do not allow weapons, war toys or "super heroes" at preschool. Please do not allow your child to bring these items for "Show & Tell."

Resting Blanket

All full-day students (except Puppies) use a nap mat and sheet provided by CCDC for afternoon rest time. A fitted crib sheet is provided for the Puppy students' cribs. A cinch-sack will be given to each student (a one-time \$10 charge will be added to your Procure account) to keep a rest-time blanket and

small stuffed animal in. All items must fit in the cinch-sack. These items will be sent home each Friday to be washed at home and returned to school on Monday. Mats and sheets will be washed weekly at school.

FIELD TRIPS

Our four-year-old classes visit local sites, such as farms and nature centers, that support our curriculum. Children are transported on our little buses which have three-point seatbelts for all. Drivers must be at least 25 years old and must go through an approval process. Parents/guardians must give permission in order for a child to go on a school trip. If a field trip falls on a day that your child does not normally attend school, you and your child (no siblings) may arrange with your teacher to join the group, but you must supervise, transport and pay for your child and yourself.

We encourage parents to volunteer as chaperones on our field trips. You can contact your child's teacher directly about specific opportunities.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

For children ages 2 and up, we provide a bi-monthly music and movement class, as well as a weekly Spanish class. During our music and movement class that uses an interactive curriculum, children will explore musical concepts, such as tempo, rhythm, and pitch. Our Spanish teacher, Miss Jessi Lloyd, grew up in Mexico and speaks Spanish fluently. She will teach the children simple vocabulary and conversation through games, songs and finger plays.

Our four year olds visit the Upper Dublin Library once a month for story hour with the children's librarian, who also visits us once a month to read to our two and three year old classes.

OUR PLAYGROUND

Our preschool playground is certified for children ages 3-10 years. We have a separate toddler playground with equipment that is appropriate for our younger children. Your family is welcome to play on the big playground after school, as long as none of our CCDC classes are still outside. Please follow the rules below to keep all of our kids safe.

Climbing Equipment

- No climbing on outside of equip. or on top of handrails
- No climbing on the tunnel or the bike garage.
- No headfirst sliding – children must come down the slide on their bottoms, one at a time.
- No standing on the slide or walking up the wrong way.
- No leaning over the side of the curly slide.

Sandbox

- Children should not walk on the blue sandbox cover.

Safety Surfacing and Walkways

- Running is allowed on the safety surfacing, but keep away from the area around the swings.
- Children should stay on walkways. Garden areas with plantings are off limits.
- No grabbing jackets, tackling or roughhousing.

Swings

- No jumping off swings.
- Children should exit from swings by walking straight out – do not cross in front of other swingers.
- Swing equipment is NOT for climbing

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES

Communication:

- **Procare** (our communication app) – Families will receive a daily report which gives information about your child's day, as well as photo showing activities your child participated in. The messaging feature allows families and teachers to communicate in "real time". (Please use this for communication with your child's teacher only; any communication for the office should be sent via email to ccdc@cheltenchild.com.)
- **Newsletters** - You will receive a newsletter each month with general school news, announcements and specific information about the month's activities in your child's classroom. Please read them and post important dates on your home calendar!
- **Welcome boards** – The welcome boards outside each classroom have important information for families. Newsletters, lesson plans, teacher contact information and a daily schedule will be posted.
- **Teacher e-mail** – Each teacher has a school email address which you will find in our September newsletter as well as the welcome board outside your child's classroom. They check this once a day and will respond in a timely manner.
- **Back-to-School Night** - Plan to attend "Back to School Night" in September to get acquainted with your child's teachers and get an overview of the school year ahead.
- **Formal and Informal Parent-Teacher Conferences** – Formal parent-teacher conferences are held in November and May and are a chance to talk about the progress a child has made, goals for the coming months, and any concerns about the child. Families may also contact their child's teacher to set up an appointment if you have a concern to discuss.
- **Family Handbook** – Family handbooks are sent out in September and June via email. Parents/guardians must read it and sign an acknowledgement form. Any updates will be sent via email.

Assisting in the classroom:

- **Sharing Talents:** If you have a hobby, profession or skill which you would be willing to share with the children, please contact your child's teacher. We love to have parents visit our classrooms, even just to read a story or lead a song. Do you play an instrument? Do you have a pet to share? Our children love to learn new things and will welcome you enthusiastically into their classroom!
- **Assisting with Special Occasions:** We welcome parental assistance with classroom holiday parties (providing snacks, planning and leading a game, making decorations or posters). We also need parent chaperones for many of our field trips.
- **Donating:** Our school can always use educational toys or books in good condition. Some parents have donated a new book for our classroom collections in honor of their child's birthday. (You can also help by collecting General Mills "Box Tops" to help us obtain free equipment).
- **Observing in the classroom:** You are always welcome to visit, but we do ask that you arrange your visit with the teacher in advance. Please do not bring younger children when you come to observe.

Feedback:

Any suggestions for our preschool program are helpful and appreciated. Feel free to contact the director at any time. The center may send out surveys from time to time asking for specific feedback. We appreciate your responses. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the program, please contact the director as soon as possible so the matter can be resolved.

HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

Your child's health and safety are of great importance to us. You will be immediately notified in case of illness or an accident during school. If a child has a minor injury, you will receive an accident report from your child's teacher (we call it a "Boo Boo Note") via Procure.

All students entering our classes must have up-to-date immunizations and a health form filled out by your family physician. The Department of Public Welfare requires toddlers to have health form updates at 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, and 36 months. Preschool age students are required to have updated health forms every 12 months. We **do not** accept children without up-to-date immunizations. Students may not continue without a current health form on file. Please notify us if there is a change in this information or in the emergency phone numbers that we keep on file.

Our staff is depending on you to help us maintain a good health policy. **For the protection of all children, your child may not be at school if they have any of the following:**

- A fever of 100.4° or higher*
- Diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours*
- Discharging eyes (pink eye)
- Undiagnosed rash
- Contagious diseases (strep throat, etc.)

**Your child can return to school once s/he has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication (Tylenol/Motrin).*

The teacher in charge has the right to refuse to accept any child who shows any of these symptoms upon arrival. All parents should have alternative arrangements for their child in case of illness, emergencies, school closing, etc.

Please call or email the school office if your child will be absent due to sickness. If your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease, please report this condition to the Center so that we can notify other parents.

If your child needs to take any medication (prescription or non-prescription) while at school, please bring the medication in its **original container** labeled with the child's name and dosage. Parents must fill out an authorization form (called a medication log) for each medication that is to be given with your consent and signature, along with directions for administering.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

CCDC operates as a non-profit organization under the direction of Chelten Church. Our goal is to provide the best possible program while keeping our tuition costs as reasonable as possible. We rely on our families' prompt and faithful payment of monthly tuition to help us run our program efficiently.

Tuition

Tuition is based on a yearly cost, broken down into nine or twelve equal payments. You may pay tuition via Procure or paper check.

If paying by check, please make your check or money order payable to CHELTEN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER (or CCDC), and deposit it in the tuition box outside the school office. **Tuition is due by the 1st of each month.** Special arrangements for bi-weekly payment can be made upon request.

If paying via the Procure App, please note that any families choosing to pay with Debit or ACH **MUST PRE-REGISTER** with us to do so. You must select your payment on the front of the agreement. **Please note that Procure adds a surcharge to process payments via these methods.** If you choose to use **Debit**, a **3% surcharge** will be added to your tuition invoice. If you choose to use **ACH**, a **1% surcharge** will be added to your invoice. These surcharges are subject to change if Procure makes changes to their charges. **To avoid any surcharges, you are always welcome to pay by check.** If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office.

- **Due by the 1st of each month.**
- **A late fee of 10% of the overdue balance will be charged for any payments received after the 10th of the month.**
- **After the 15th of the month, students may not attend until the account is brought current, including any accrued fees.**

Discounts

Two children from the same family will receive a 10% discount for the child with the lesser tuition, and a third child will receive a 15% discount. Chelten Church members receive a 10% discount. Only one discount can be applied per family.

Fees

The fees listed below may also be assessed to your Procure account.

- **Key Fobs:** One of the components of our door and security system is a key fob that will release the lock for you to enter the building during the times the school is open. Two fobs will be automatically issued to your family during your child's first week of enrollment. You can pick up your fobs the first week of school by stopping at the main office. A \$20 deposit will be added to your Procure account, which can be paid through the app along with your tuition payment. At the end of your time/years at CCDC, return the two fobs and receive your \$20 deposit back. Should you need an additional fob for a grandparent/babysitter, please ask for one at the office. We'd be happy to give you one and will assess a \$10 deposit per additional fob to your account.

In the event that a fob is lost, please inform the CCDC office immediately. We will deactivate the fob to ensure it cannot be used and your Procure account will be charged \$10 for replacement fob.

- **Cinch sacks:** Full day students will be charged \$10 for a cinch sack in which to keep their rest time blanket & lovey. If the bag tears at any time, the Center will replace it free of charge.
- **Late Fees:** If your child is picked up after our scheduled closing time, a flat late fee of \$50 will be charged. These fees are paid directly to the staff person who stays overtime with your child.

Security Deposits

A deposit of \$250 (per child) for full-day students and \$125 for half-day students is required upon enrollment. Security deposits will only be refunded if the following criteria are met:

- A child is leaving to attend kindergarten
- An attending family gives 30 days' notice of termination
- A new student attends the first month of school and then gives 30 days' notice of termination

Termination of Agreement

A child may be dismissed if fees have not been paid. CCDC also reserves the right to dismiss any child who cannot participate in group experiences safely.

Request for Records

If your child has a formal IEP/IFSP (Individualized Education Plan), we require that you provide us with a copy so that we can work together with you toward your child's learning goals. Therapists may not work with a child here without a current IFSP/IEP on record. We have a good working relationship with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and other agencies who may provide special services for your child during school hours.

Private Therapy

CCDC offers families the opportunity to enroll their children in private Speech and/or Occupational Therapy. These therapies are provided on-site by licensed therapists and are offered at a discounted rate to families. For more information on these services, please contact the office.

Employer Reimbursement Programs

We are happy to provide the information you need to use your employer reimbursement program. Please allow 2 days for us to complete the forms and return them to you.

Tax Information

Our tax ID is 75-332106. You are able to access and print your receipts for child care directly from the Procure. If you need any help, please contact our office.

FINANCIAL POLICIES FOR MORNING PRESCHOOL STUDENTS:**Tuition**

Based on a yearly cost, tuition has been broken down into nine monthly payments, September-May, and contracted by the "Agreement Form." Monthly tuition is due by the first of each month.

Sick Time

There are no refunds for absences up to two weeks' duration. After two weeks of a child's continuous, prolonged illness, fees will be reduced to one-half until the child returns to school, provided that the parents have notified the Center prior to the third week of illness. Paying the reduced rate insures the child's position until he/she returns. This does not apply for any reason other than illness.

Late Fees

If your child is picked up late, a fee will be applied. Repeated late pick-ups may result in expulsion from the school. Please respect our staff by picking your child up on time.

POLICY STATEMENT

Chelton Child Development Center, in accordance with applicable provisions of federal and state laws, provides services without regard to race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, or sex.

Chelten Child Development Center

2024-25 Fall School Calendar

August 28-September 3	Teacher In-service (No Students)
September 3	CLOSED for Labor Day
September 4	FIRST DAY for STUDENTS
September 17	Back to School Night
November 5	Teacher in-service (No Students)
November 15-20	Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 28 & 29	CLOSED for Thanksgiving
December 23-January 1	CLOSED for Christmas Break
January 20	MLK Day we are OPEN
February 17	CLOSED for Presidents Day
April 18 & 21	CLOSED for Good Friday/Easter Monday
May 5-12	Parent/Teacher Conferences
May 26	CLOSED for Memorial Day
May 28	LAST DAY for STUDENTS
May 29-30	Teacher In-service (No Students)



2024-2025 Family Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Chelten Child Development Center's Family Handbook and have read, understand and agree to abide by the policies and conditions in it.

Name of Child

Class

Printed Name of Parent

Signature of Parent

Date Signed

