



Panther Cubs
Childcare
Center
Parent
Handbook

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Mission Statement

Welcome to Panther Cubs Childcare Center! It is our mission to provide every child in our center with the highest level of care in a safe, nurturing environment staffed by caring professionals. Children will be supervised at all times and provided with the space and materials necessary to foster their social, emotional, physical, and developmental needs.

Philosophy

It is our philosophy that children are the most successful when in an environment that allows them to grow and develop as individuals with positive role models and hands-on learning experiences. We are committed to providing you and your child with excellent care that you can depend on.

Center Information

ADDRESS

Parkers Prairie Elementary
518 South McCornell Avenue
P.O. Box 46
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361

CAPACITY

We are licensed through the Department of Human Services to care for a total of 42 children ages 6 weeks through kindergarten. Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

We will be closed in observation of the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Memorial Day	Fourth of July
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	Good Friday

If an observed holiday lands on a Saturday, the center will be closed the Friday before the holiday. If an observed holiday lands on a Sunday, the center will be closed the Monday after the holiday.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is a very important part of your child's success in our child care center. We strive to keep you informed of your child's progress every step of the way, and encourage you to be as involved with their care as possible. You are welcome to stop by the center at any time to check on your child.

A copy of our childcare plan is available for review upon request in our office. It is reviewed annually by staff and updated as necessary.

DHS CONTACT

Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing can be reached via phone at (651)431-6500.

Program Options

Our center is separated into three classrooms based on the ages of the children enrolled.

Infant Room: (Ages 6 weeks-16 months) Our infant room maintains a ratio of at least one teacher to four infants at all times, with a total of no more than 8 infants at any time. In this room, children are given space to explore their surroundings and provided with developmentally appropriate toys and equipment as they learn to move independently and interact with the world around them. Parents will receive a note home daily with information on their child's day, including feedings, diaper changes, naps, and any other important information.

Toddler Room: (Ages 16 months-33 months) Our toddler room maintains a ratio of at least one teacher to seven toddlers at all times, with a total of no more than 14 toddlers at any time. In this room, children are provided with arts and crafts, dramatic play toys, creative tools, and sensory activities to help foster their curiosity. They are assisted in their problem solving skills as they learn to

communicate and navigate through social situations with their peers. Parents will receive a note home daily with information on their child's day, including meals, diapering/toilet training, naps, and any other important information.

Preschool Room: (Ages 33 months-kindergarten): Our preschool room maintains a ratio of at least one teacher to ten preschoolers at all times, with a total of no more than 20 preschoolers at any time. In this room, children are provided with games, craft materials, critical thinking activities, and dramatic play toys as they begin to prepare for their transition to kindergarten. We begin to focus more on socialization skills and fine motor development in our preschool room. Parents will no longer receive daily notes regarding information on their child's day, but communication with teachers will be open and parents are encouraged to ask any questions as they arise.

CONFERENCES

For all age groups, parent teacher conferences will be offered at least twice per year. During conferences, we will go over written assessments that address developmental milestones, goals, and any questions or concerns parents or teachers may have. If you would like to schedule a conference outside of our regular conference dates, we would be happy to arrange that as well.

Financial Policies

REGISTRATION FEE

There will be a one-time registration fee of \$25 per family. This is due when you sign up with us. You will not be considered as enrolled until this fee has been paid.

RATES

Child care rates are billed bi-weekly based on your child's age. Payments are due the first day of care for the week by 6:00 p.m. and will cover care for the following 2 weeks. Any payments made after 6:00 p.m. will assess a \$5/day late fee, and care may be refused until the payment, as well as any late fees, are paid in full. The rates are as follows:

AGE GROUP	WEEKLY RATE
INFANTS	\$175
TODDLERS	\$165
PRESCHOOLERS	\$155

A weekly discount will be given during the school year to preschoolers who attend the preschool program within our school district. The amount will depend on which program you sign up for. Please see the director to discuss this. At this time, we do not offer part time care or any other types of discounts.

SCHEDULES

Schedules must be submitted no later than Monday at 6:00 p.m. for the following week. Staffing is based on the schedules of children in care, therefore adequate time is needed to plan to ensure enough staff will be available for the number of children in care. If you need to change your schedule, you must submit a request to the office. Requests are subject to be denied if proper staffing cannot be accommodated. You will be billed according to the schedule you provide the center, regardless of attendance.

LATE PICK UPS

Late pick up fees will be charged at \$1/minute after 6:00 p.m., payable before drop off your next scheduled day. If you are going to be late, please let our staff know as a courtesy.

Arrival/Departure

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

You will be required to sign your child in upon arrival and to sign your child out before leaving at the end of the day. Staff cannot accept children without an adult present, so please be sure to make contact with a staff member when you arrive.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children cannot be released to anyone other than a parent or guardian without permission. If you wish to have someone else pick up your child, they must be on

your emergency contact list and/or your registration form. If you do have someone else pick up your child, staff will require a photo ID before releasing your child to them.

Health and Safety

FORMS

Upon enrollment, you will be required to fill out an immunization record before your child can attend, as well as a health care summary within 30 days of your child's first day of attendance.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be notified immediately to pick them up, and they will be separated from the other children as best as possible until you arrive. If we are unable to reach you, we will begin contacting your emergency contacts. Once contact is made, you will have 60 minutes to pick up your child to ensure the health and safety of everyone served by our program. Please keep your child home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (3 or more episodes in one day)
- Unexplained Rash
- Fever of 100.4 or greater

Your child will be able to return once they are symptom free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication (i.e. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, etc.). If your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease, you must notify us within 24 hours of the diagnosis. If your child has been exposed to any infectious disease, you will be notified within 24 hours of the center being notified.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication during child care hours, you will need to fill out a permission to administer medication form. All prescription medications must be

provided in their original container and include the child's name, date of birth, and directions for administering.

FIRST AID

First aid supplies will be located in each classroom, and staff have received training on proper administration of first aid. In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called, and parents/guardians will be notified as soon as it is safely possible.

If your child receives a minor injury during child care hours, staff will fill out an accident report, and you will be asked to review and sign the report when you pick up your child. A copy of this report will be available to you upon request.

Meals

Panther Cubs Childcare Center will provide breakfast, lunch and snack with funding through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Breakfast and lunch will be prepared by the kitchen staff in the elementary school kitchen, and snack will be ready to eat foods stored and prepared in the childcare center break room.

Meals will be served at the following times:

Breakfast: 8:00 a.m.

Lunch: 11:15 a.m.

Afternoon Snack: 2:30 p.m.

If your child arrives after a scheduled meal time, you will be required to feed them that meal prior to dropping them off for the day.

Panther Cubs Childcare Center offers generic infant formula. If you prefer for your infant to have a specific brand of formula, you are responsible for providing that yourself. The center will provide pureed infant food to infants who are developmentally ready. All infant meals will be provided year round.

Behavior Guidance

Our program schedule and environment are designed to promote positive experiences for every child in our care. We strive to set the children up for success, and make it a point to focus on positive reinforcement to encourage acceptable behavior. However, as a very important part of their development, children are going to test their boundaries and will not always follow the classroom rules. When positive reinforcement and/or redirection isn't sufficient, we will attempt to modify unwanted behaviors by following these steps:

1. Ensuring that our expectations are age appropriate and that we are modeling desired behavior
2. Reminding children of the rules and ensuring that they understand our expectations
3. Providing immediate consequences that are directly related to the unwanted behavior
4. Giving the child a break away from the other children if needed, always making sure that they are being properly supervised and in a safe space
5. Documenting any breaks given
6. Teaching the child more acceptable/appropriate ways to express themselves in the future

Whenever possible, behavior issues will be dealt with immediately by the teacher in the classroom. In extreme cases, you may be called to pick up your child if we believe that the safety of your child, the other children, or the staff members are in jeopardy. Repeated instances of extreme behavior may result in temporary or permanent termination of care.

If your child is involved in an incident with another child in which either or both of the children are injured, staff will fill out an incident report. You will be asked to review and sign the report when picking up your child for the day. A copy of this report will be made available to you upon request.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited at Panther Cubs Club and will not be tolerated at any time. Examples of corporal punishment include but are not limited to:

- Rough handling
- Shoving
- Hair pulling
- Ear pulling
- Shaking
- Slapping
- Kicking
- Biting
- Pinching
- Hitting
- Spanking

Language that can cause emotional stress is also strictly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to:

- Name calling
- Ostracism
- Shaming
- Making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family
- Using language that threatens, frightens, or humiliates the child

Other types of discipline that are strictly prohibited include:

- Separation of a child from the group, except within rule requirements as outlined above
- Punishment for lapses in toilet training
- Withholding of light, food, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a form of punishment for unacceptable behavior
- Use of mechanical restraints, such as tying
- Physically restraining a child, except to physically hold a child in order to contain them when necessary to protect them or others from harm

These types of punishment are ineffective and harmful to children, and will not be tolerated at any level during child care hours.

Daily Schedule and Activities

Children thrive on consistency. It is important that they know what to expect during the day as far as when meal times are, when they will have rest time, and when they get to run like crazy outside. Each room will try to maintain a schedule as much as possible, with flexibility built in for changes that may come up throughout the day.

Each room's schedule will have a balance of active play, quiet activities, indoor play, outdoor play, structured play, free play, and individual play as well as group activities. With the exception of infants who will be fed on demand, all children will eat meals and snacks at 8:00, 11:15, and 2:30.

NAPS

Nap/rest time is an important part of the daily schedule. It gives children a quiet time to recharge for the afternoon, and it gives the staff a little bit of time to clean up from the morning and to prepare activities for the remainder of the day. Children in the preschool and toddler rooms will be required to lay down and rest on a cot with clean, separate bedding for 30 minutes daily. If, after 30 minutes of rest, they are not sleeping, children will be moved to a separate area and given quiet activities to do while the rest of the children remain asleep. Their bedding will be washed at least once a week, or more frequently if needed.

A crib must be provided for each infant for which we are licensed to care for. The equipment must be of safe and sturdy construction that conforms to federal crib standards under Federal Regulations, title 16, part 1219 for full-size baby cribs, or part 1220 for non-full-size baby cribs. Infants will be allowed to nap on demand. In an effort to reduce the risk of SUIDS (sudden unexpected infant death syndrome), infants will always be placed to sleep on their back in a crib on a firm mattress with nothing but a tight fitting sheet that cannot be dislodged by pulling on the corner with reasonable effort and a pacifier if they take one. Once an infant reaches 6 months of age, they may sleep on their stomach if they roll into that position independently. If they roll into that position before 6 months of age, you will be required to sign a permission slip approved by the commissioner and filed onsite in order for staff to be able to leave your child in that position for sleep. If an infant falls asleep anywhere other than a crib, they will be moved into

a crib as soon as it is safely possible. If an infant falls asleep while being held, staff will consider the supervision needs of other children in care when determining how long to hold the infant before placing them in a crib to sleep. Infants must not be in a position where their airway may be blocked or with anything covering their face. Each infant will be provided clean, separate bedding, and crib sheets will be washed once per week, or more frequently if needed. Cribs will be inspected monthly to ensure they remain in good repair.

Swaddling is not recommended in infants of any age. However, infants may be swaddled if they meet the following criteria:

- The infant is using a sleep sack with an attached fastening system that fastens across the torso and does not constrict the hips or legs
- The infant has not yet begun to roll over
- The parents have signed a swaddling consent form approved by the commissioner filed onsite

As soon as an infant begins to roll over, swaddling must be discontinued.

Personal Items

Please label all personal belongings with your child's name

Each child will have a personal cubby to store their belongings. We ask that children please do not bring any toys from home to the center. Toys brought from home run the risk of becoming lost, stolen, or broken, which we will not be held liable for.

Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each day. Outdoor play is an important part of your child's development, and we go outside daily (weather permitting), so it is crucial that they have appropriate gear every day. In the summer, tennis shoes are best (open toe shoes, sandals, etc. are more difficult to run around in). In the winter, please bring hats, gloves, snow pants, boots, etc. If you have spares you wish to leave in your child's cubby so you don't have to bring them back and forth every day, you are welcome to do so. You are responsible for taking them home and washing them as needed.

Please also bring the following items to remain at the center on your child's first day:

- 2 spare sets of clothes
- Diapers (if applicable)
- Wipes (if applicable)
- Sunscreen
- Bottles (if applicable)
- All forms completely filled out
- Blanket for nap (optional, not allowed for infants under 12 months)

Grievance Procedure

Here at Panther Cubs Childcare Center, we are fully committed to making sure that every family who walks through our door is completely satisfied with the service they receive. We are passionate about childcare, and are dedicated to the community we serve. We take each and every piece of feedback very seriously, whether it is good, bad, or indifferent. We are constantly working to make improvements to our program, and parent feedback is a necessary part of that, so we encourage open communication between our staff and the families we serve at all times.

At times, you may find yourself in disagreement with something a staff member has done or said. Most often, this is due to a misunderstanding that can be cleared up with a simple face to face conversation, so we encourage you to first try to resolve the issue with the staff member. If, after speaking with the staff member, you still feel the issue is not resolved, you should bring your concern to the director/childcare coordinator.

If your issue is with the director/childcare coordinator, or you feel as if the director/childcare coordinator did not properly address your issue with the original staff member, you should contact the Parkers Prairie Elementary school principal, Steve Radtke, and/or the Parkers Prairie School District superintendent, Peter Haapala. We take complaints very seriously, and all grievances will be dealt with in a timely manner.

Maltreatment of Minors

Any person who works with minors is legally considered a mandated reporter, and therefore must report any suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment to the authorities. Any suspected abuse or neglect occurring within the center should be reported to the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing Maltreatment Intake line at (651)431-6600. Suspected abuse within a child's family or within the community should be reported to Ottertail County at (218)998-8150. Any suspected licensing violations should be reported to the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing at (651)431-6500. Failure to report suspected maltreatment by a mandated reporter is a misdemeanor. Any reports made in good faith cannot be retaliated against.

If a report is made against a staff member, an internal review will be conducted within 30 days to determine whether or not the policies and procedures were followed, the policies and procedures were adequate, the report is similar to past events, additional staff training should be required, and if corrective action should be taken in order to protect the health and safety of children served by the program. Following the internal review, if necessary, a corrective action plan will be developed, which will include the primary and secondary person who will ensure that internal reviews are conducted, and documentation that the review was completed and available to the commissioner upon the commissioner's request.

Attached, you will find a form with more detailed information on how to make a report of any suspected maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult from the State of Minnesota. Please keep this for your information. Additional copies can be made available to you upon request.

Permission Slips

FIELD TRIPS

On occasion, we may take field trips away from the center. These field trips may include, but are not limited to, walks around town, trips to local businesses, trips to local playgrounds. Permission slips will be obtained prior to any field trips

taken. If you do not wish for your child to participate in any field trips we may take, it will be your responsibility to make other arrangements for care during the time the field trip will be taking place. Children will be under direct supervision at all times, and proper staff to child ratios will be maintained.

PETS

Due to health and safety concerns, children will not be allowed to bring pets into the center at any time. Should we choose to incorporate animals into an activity at any point, parents will be notified beforehand to give consent.

RESEARCH

Permission slips will be required in order to conduct any experimental procedure, research, or public relations activity that involves your child.

PHOTOS

Panthers Cubs Childcare Center will take photos of the children periodically to share with parents and for advertising purposes. You will be required to sign a permission slip upon enrollment allowing us to take and use photos of your child while in our care for these purposes.

Emergency Procedures

DRILLS

We perform monthly storm and fire drills with the children, and our plans are posted near the exits in each room. You may also request a copy of our emergency preparedness plan from the office at any time.

SEVERE WEATHER

In the event of bad weather, our center will remain open in most cases. If, however, we deem that the weather is severe enough that it puts our staff and children at risk, we may choose to close the center. In the event of any weather related closures, all parents would be notified via phone as soon as possible.

WEAPONS

Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited on school property.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/RISK REDUCTION PLANS

A complete copy of our emergency preparedness and risk reduction plans are will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. A copy of these policies are available upon request from the office.

Please make sure you have read and understand these policies fully. If you have any questions, reach out to a member of our staff at any time. Please sign, date, and return the last page of this handbook prior to your child's first day of childcare.

I certify that I have received a copy of the center policies and procedures. I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies laid out in this handbook

Parent/guardian signature

Date

Director signature

Date