

WHALE LEARNING GROUP



Parents handbook

Prepared on: February 2021

Parents handbook

Mission, Philosophy, Curriculum and policies



Welcome Parents/Guardians! The mission, philosophy, curriculum, and policies of The WIT Schools will be explained in this Parent Handbook. We believe it will provide you with a clear picture of what you and your child should expect during your child's care and education at our school.

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1. INTRODUCTION

About Us

The WIT Schools opened in June 2018, running as a private, after-school care and learning centre. In August 2019, the school officially became a full service educational provider licensed and certified as a private preschool and primary school by the Ghana Education Service under the Ministry of Education. The school was established by the Whale Learning Group, its parent company, to provide optimum education and care to children of ages 1-12 years (Preschool to Grade 6). Although its first centre is sited in East Legon, the school is multidimensional and seeks to serve community members with multiple centres across Ghana and beyond. This is in line with our company's vision to make quality education accessible, equitable and affordable to all children and families irrespective of their background and socioeconomic status.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In providing services to children and their families, Whale Learning Group and The WIT Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, disability, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin or sexual orientation.

Philosophy and Mission Statement

A key word in our program is respect and empathy. We encourage our staff and children to cultivate and sustain communal reverence and love for our neighbour and being your brothers keeper. We foster respect for self, respect for others, and respect for resources in appropriate ways. In a secure and nurturing environment, our curriculum provides for all areas of a child's development: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and cognitive needs. We believe that children learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and their environment. One of our key educational philosophies is the development of the Multiple Intelligences of each child as an individual — recognising that each child is unique and develops at his or her own pace and capacity.

Teachers encourage curiosity and experimentation, and have chosen materials that help expand children's thinking. Basic learning materials include sand, water, and tools to use with them, large and small blocks, puzzles, puppets, computers, books, musical instruments, playground equipment, art and drawing supplies. Strong, viable parent/teacher relationships promote effective communication and participation. The staff works closely with parents for the development of the child and includes families in the curriculum and special events. We also welcome and encourage parent participation in all aspects of our program. Positive social interaction is nurtured in children to develop their verbal and social skills and to express their feelings in appropriate ways. All families, including/especially those with special needs children, are encouraged to support their children's education both in school and at home by assisting in giving information, guidance, and support on how to improve their child's future social skills.

Staff Qualifications

The staff at the The WIT Schools (TWS) consists of a School Director, Assistant Director, Principal, Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Facilitators and School Support staff and Aides. All staff meets, and in most cases exceed, the GES Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and primary school requirements for formal education for their respective positions, have had experience working with young children and their families, and either fully fulfilled or in the process of acquiring the EEC approved certification in First Aid and CPR. The staff enjoys and understands how young children learn and grow and respond with sensitivity to each child's individual needs, desires, and interests. To ensure that employees or other persons regularly providing child care or support services with potential for unsupervised contact with children at TWS are appropriate for serving in their positions, a detailed Criminal Police and Background Record and a Health Record are performed on all candidates for positions before an offer of employment is confirmed. Further, these checks are performed bi-annually on all persons in such positions and/or any time the company deems fit for purpose.

Hours and Days of Operation

The Centre is open Monday through Friday, 7:00am to 5:30pm, forty-five (45) weeks per year, excluding the all statutory holidays, midterm breaks, vacation breaks (December, April and July) and two WIT professional development/in-service days (The first Friday in March and August). As well, the school hosts weekend clubs on Saturdays to serve both our students and external families in the community.

The Centre observes two early closure days at 1:00pm on:

- > All vacation break days
- > All midterm break days

The centre is fully closed on public and national holidays.

2. ENROLLMENT

Process

Parents interested in enrolling their child(ren) should call the Centre Site Director and or Principal and arrange for a visit. There is a \$100.00 non-refundable application fee to cover record keeping costs and to maintain the application if there is a waitlist. Checks for the application fee should be made payable to The WIT Schools.

A priority enrolment system is established as follows:

- (1) Siblings of currently enrolled employee children will have first priority.
- (2) Regular full and part-time, benefits eligible, The WIT Schools employees and benefits eligible Partner's affiliate employees will have second priority.
- (3) All others, including Community, will have third priority.

Capacity

The school may enrol up to a maximum of 50 children per day in accordance with our licensed intake per centre. As of January 2021, the school has Preschool Rooms, Kindergarten Rooms, and Primary Rooms as well as open learning spaces for all other activities. There are also indoor and outdoor play areas with a functional in-house kitchen and chef who serves freshly prepared meals each day for the teachers and students.

Orientation

A parent or guardian is required to see their children in the classroom prior to the child's official start date. In most situations, one or two visits are sufficient; please discuss your child's pre-start date visit with the School Director or Principal (s). Prior to your child's first visit, a parent must fill out an enrolment form as well as a developmental history form. The child's health care practitioner will need to complete a physical form. Your child will be adapting to a new environment and many new faces for the first several weeks. We want to ensure that this transition is as smooth as possible for both children and families. The School Site Director and staff should explore options for easing your child into the programme.

Transitions

The Centers is organised and staffed to minimise the number of transitions children experience. Being mindful of the importance of the bonds that are established with Teachers and peers, every effort is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children. Every effort is made to keep Infants, Toddlers/Twos together with their Teachers for nine months or longer. Developmental needs or concerns are always considered when planning transitions for children and clear communication takes place between school and home and among teaching staff.

Please note: The school makes every attempt to plan for and enact transition plans that have been discussed with families; in the event of an unforeseen change to enrolment, staffing, or program operations, transition plans may need to be altered to ensure compliance with State regulation, as well as to ensure a best practice experience for children. When transition plans must be altered, the School Site Director will contact the families to discuss.

Group Sizes and Ratios

Our program adheres to the group size and ratios as set forth by the MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) at the Ghana Education Service as well as by the standards set forth by the Ministry of Education.

- ▶ Infant/Toddler: 12 months to 2 years, Group size maximum 9; adult to child ratio 2:9
- ▶ Twos and Fours: 24 months to 4 years: Group size maximum 9, adult to child ratio 2:9
- ▶ Preschoolers and Kindergarten: 4.5 to 5 years: Group size maximum 15, adult to child ratio 2:15
- ▶ Primary school: 6 years to 12 years: Group size maximum 20, adult to child ratio 2:20

Tuition Fee Structures

There are two fee structures at the School. There is a fee structure for employee families and a fee structure for community families. For tuition rates please see Attachment C of this handbook or visit our website www.thewitschool.com. Parents should always discuss with the School Director and Principal about the fee payment options available if needed.

Tuition Fee Charges

Tuition is charged based upon the group size and adult to child ratio in a given group; although generally “matched” to a child’s chronological age, transitions of children from one group to another, or the programs’ inability to transition children given the maximum licensed group sizes, may result in children transitioning to the next group beyond the chronological age as defined by the school.(outlined above under **(GROUP SIZES AND RATIOS)**). For example, if a child turns 2 years 9 months (or older) within a Toddler group of 9 children and the transition to the Preschool group of 15 children cannot be made until a later date, the Toddler tuition rate will remain in effect. In these instances, the program adjusts the environmental and curricular experiences for children to ensure that there continues to be a developmentally appropriate match for the child(ren).

No Child Left Behind

Although we hope that all children especially new entrants have reached a developmental and cognitive milestones per their ages, we do acknowledge the uniqueness of each child’s strengths and abilities and may either per the advise of the child’s teacher promote, demote or retain to a class higher or lower than the assigned class.This is to enable us to ensure that all pupils are reaching the desired level of academic and socio-emotional attainments. This policy is in accordance with our “No Child Left Behind policy - which ensures that all learners are giving equitable and quality education at all levels.”

Schedule Changes

Schedule changes may be possible provided that space is available. If you are reducing the number of days your child attends, a month’s notice is required so that we may fill the available opening. We discourage parents from making more than 2 schedule changes per year to provide consistency for the groups and for individual children. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances. When the maximum capacity for each group is reached, an internal waiting list will be established. The order in which children are enrolled is directly dictated by the requested schedule and the spaces available.

3. FINANCIAL POLICIES

Application Fee: GHS500.00 is required when submitting an application for the waiting list; this fee is non-refundable.

Tuition and Payment Policies

- **For employee families:** Tuition for Whale Learning Group, The WIT Schools and Partners affiliated institutions employees must be paid by payroll deduction. Deductions made weekly or monthly will apply to the following week’s or month’s tuition.
- **For Community families:** Tuition for Community families must be made paid either by personal check or bank transfer, deposit or Mobile Money Transfers in to the school’s account (to be provided by the Accounts office). No cash will be accepted. There will be a \$35.00 fee for all returned checks. Fees can be paid either in Ghana Cedi (preferably) or in the US Dollar equivalent as at the bank rate the payment is being made.

The amount of tuition is based on your child's predetermined schedule and has no bearing on your child's actual attendance, (i.e. sick days, vacation days, and holidays, etc.) When extra hours are requested, you must pay for the extra time that is not included in your child’s predetermined schedule. For example, if your child’s schedule is 9-5 and you request an extra hour in the morning (8-9), you will be charged for the extra hour regardless of whether you pick up at 4 or 5.

For families not paying by payroll deduction: Tuition is due on the 15th of each month (or the Friday before the 15th if the 15th of the month falls on a weekend or holiday) to be applied to the following month. You will not receive a bill as we expect all our parents and families to take full responsibilities of their duties towards the education of their child(ren). Receipts of tuition payments will be provided upon request.

Payments not received by the 15th of the month will be considered delinquent. There will be a charge of GHS100.00 per day for each day the tuition remains unpaid. In the event you do submit your tuition late, please include your late fee with your tuition payment. Extraordinary circumstances should be discussed with the School Site Director promptly. Several late payments may lead to the termination of your child’s enrolment.

Sibling Discount

A discount of 10% is given on the 2nd or 3rd child’s tuition for eligible families enrolling two or more children. All enrolled students have an automatic 15% discount on all WIT related events, programs and activities including after-school, camps, weekend clubs and other special events.

Extra Hours/Days Policy

Families may request extra hours/days in addition to their scheduled hours/days. Please note, extra hours/days may not always be available due to enrolment, staffing, or program operations and the School must ensure compliance with State regulation, as well as to ensure a best practice experience for all children. Families must request the specific hours/days at least 24 hours in advance of the time requested. There is a flat rate of GHS50 an hour or any portion of the hour for extra hours. The sibling discount is not available for extra hours/days. Please keep in mind that when extra hours are requested, you must pay for the extra time that is not included in your child's predetermined schedule.

For example, if your child's schedule is 9-3 and you request an extra hour in the morning (4-6), you will be charged for the extra hour regardless of whether you pick up at 4 or 5. If a family is in regular need of requesting extra hours/days, please speak the School Site Director about the possibility/availability of a formal schedule change or enrol the child in any of our after-school program.

Drop Off Policy

In order to uphold the integrity of the children's daily schedule, we request that children be dropped off at the school no later than 9:00 am with the exception of doctor's appointments, occasional needs and emergencies. The School should be notified as soon as possible in advance of changes to drop off time. We ask that drop off not occur during nap (~11:30pm -12:30pm) as this may be disruptive to the group as well as possibly difficult for your child.

LATE FEE PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE THROUGH THE ACCOUNTANT via any of the specified mode of payments
Chronic late pick up may result in the termination of your child's enrolment

Schedules, Designated Guardians and Late Policy

We ask that you set a realistic schedule for your child's attendance, allowing for commuting delays, last minute work assignments, etc. We expect that your child will be dropped off no earlier than, and picked up no later than, the times confirmed for your enrolment. It is imperative that children are picked up by their scheduled pickup time and **more importantly by their designated parents, guardians or custodians as listed and signed off on the admission forms.** Kindly note that one outside those enlisted will be allowed to pickup any child unless through a written and signed statement by the parent under signature. We suggest planning to arrive just prior to your scheduled pick up time so that you will have ample time to speak with your child's Teachers, gather your child's belongings and depart from the school in a timely manner.

Parents arriving after their scheduled pickup up time will be charged a late fee of GHS5.00 per minute, per child.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

Arrivals and Departures

Please accompany your child into the classroom and let a teacher know that you have arrived by signing in into the daily log book or the electronic log-in machine. This is the time to discuss with the teacher any relevant information that would help your child during the day (e.g. sleeping irregularities, medication needs, moods, changes in daily routine). When picking up your child, notify a teacher that you are leaving and sign out in the daily log book again stipulating the time of pick up. It is imperative that a parent makes the teacher aware they are picking up their child. Unless the teacher is engaged with a group of children, please inquire about the day your child has had.

The Communication Board in each classroom should provide you with the general activities of your child's day. Only those people authorised in writing by the parent or guardian may pick up a child from the School. The School must be notified in advance if someone other than a parent will be picking up the child, and this person will be asked to present identification. Under no circumstances will a child be released to anyone without prior written permission.

Absences and Late Arrivals

Please call the School as early as possible on a day your child will be absent or if your arrival will be delayed so we may better plan for the day. If your child is absent due to health reasons, please let the school principal know by calling 020- 963-3192 or emailing thewitschools@gmail.com . If the prolonged absence of a child is due to a serious illness and/or extended hospitalisation, the director will make every effort to work with families regarding holding an enrolment slot and making tuition payments. If a child does not attend the school for an extended period due to a non-medical reason, a parent is expected to pay the regular tuition in order to hold the child's scheduled hours and days. A parent can give one month's notice of the child's termination date and go on the waiting list if re-enrolment is desired. There will be no guarantee that a slot will be available at the time of their return.

Program Evaluation

The School conducts a semi-annual program surveys in order to get feedback from enrolled families. The survey is anonymous and is a way for families to provide the School their comments, compliments, ideas, and suggestions. All parents are encouraged to complete the survey as this helps to ensure that the school is working in the best interest of your children at all times.

Babysitting or Nannies

Negotiations regarding babysitting between staff and parents do not involve The WIT School. Hours, fees and transportation are an agreement between the parent and the individual babysitting. This person must be on the child(ren)'s authorised pick up list if they will be bringing the child home from school.

Birthdays and Other Special Days

We would love to celebrate your child's birthday or another special event at school. Parents may bring in a special snack for the day, and we invite you to join us for the party. A low-key approach is best in group care, so please leave party favours, balloons, etc... at home. If you would like to invite children from the School to your home, we ask that you do so by email or written and signed invitation letter, unless you are inviting the entire class.

Behaviour Management Policy

Our policy concerning behaviour management ~ sometimes referred to as discipline ~ is based on the individual need of the child, the ability of each child to understand what he/she is doing and the consequences of their actions. A child is never made to feel that the outcome of an act will result in physical or verbal abuse. Children are not told to "sit out" and "time out" is **not used**. reinforcement is always encouraged and children are told what they are doing well.

It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge to ascertain what has taken place as clearly as possible. If an altercation between children has occurred, each child is spoken to with reason and with respect. Each child is then given the responsibility of approaching the other child in a friendly manner, with adult supervision, in order for the children to participate in the resolution to the misunderstanding. This is done in direct relation to the verbal ability of the child but can be accomplished even when the child is not yet talking. When inappropriate behaviour occurs with the adult being the recipient, the child will be approached either with a reasonable verbal response or with the technique of redirection. Removal from an activity for a short period of time is used only if it has been ascertained that other responses have failed or if a child is at risk.

Positive reinforcement is always encouraged and children are told what they are doing well or what they can improve upon in a gentle and firm way. It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge to ascertain what has taken place as clearly as possible. If an altercation between children has occurred, each child is spoken to with reason and with respect. Each child is then given the responsibility of approaching the other child in a friendly manner, with adult supervision, in order for the children to participate in the resolution to the misunderstanding. This is done in direct relation to the verbal ability of the child but can be accomplished even when the child is not yet talking.

When inappropriate behaviour occurs with the adult being the recipient, the child will be approached either with a reasonable verbal response or with the technique of redirection. Removal from an activity for a short period of time is used only if it has been ascertained that other responses have failed or if a child is at risk. Our mission to teach and nurture children with Wisdom, Intelligence Training allows each child to think for themselves and do what is expected of them at all times. This ensures that all our learners are responsible, empathetic and good citizens both in and outside school. We also teach children to memorise and practice our Good Behaviour Pledge and The WIT Rule Book and encourage them to adhere and hold themselves and others accountable to it. When any staff member feels that he/she is unable to manage a situation with a child in an effective manner, he or she will direct the child to another staff member and take a break. Staff members assist one another in creating a positive, relaxed atmosphere.

THE FOLLOWING ARE PROHIBITED:

- Corporal punishment, including spanking;
- Verbal or physical abuse, humiliation, neglect, or abusive treatment;
- Speaking to a child in a manner or tone that is disrespectful, sarcastic, demeaning or threatening;
- Withholding food, drink or sleep;
- Force feeding children;
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; forcing a child to remain in soiled

Clothing

The play and learn activities at the school can be messy. Please put an additional clothes in your children's bag in for change of clothes. Although we do use smocks and roll up sleeves, we cannot guarantee that children's clothing and uniforms will not get stained or soiled. We assume that you will send your child in clothes that allow your child to participate fully in our play-based program and that you understand that clothes may get stained or soiled. Clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name, thank you. Part of each day is spent outdoors, weather permitting. Please dress your child accordingly.

Appropriate and safe footwear is required for outdoor play. If your child wants to wear other shoes to school, please make sure that he/she has a pair of sneakers to change into for outdoor play. Flip flops are not safe for outdoor play and are therefore not permitted; children must wear sneakers for outdoor play. During the cold weather please make sure your child has warm clothes. Each child should have a complete set of extra clothing to be kept at the school including underwear and socks. All clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name (socks too, please). We cannot be responsible for lost articles.

Accessories and Jewellery: Children's accessories and jewellery are extremely attractive to young children's eyes, fingers, and mouths. We ask parents cooperation to be safety conscious when choosing accessories that children wear to the school. Small objects like barrettes and earrings can be choking hazards and necklaces can pose strangulation hazards. Therefore, we **do not permit the following type of jewellery:** Dangly earrings (small, snug-fitting pierced studs are permitted); Necklaces of any kind; Bracelets with beads or charms (rubber, cloth or thread bracelets are permitted as long as they do not contain attachments or charms).

Comfort Items: If it will help your child feel more at home during the day, we welcome comfort items such as his/her favourite pacifier, doll, stuffed animal, books or items that contribute to our activities are always welcome. These items need to be small enough to fit within each child's individual cubby space. If you have any questions about what to bring please speak to your child's teacher.

Confidentiality of Children's Records

In order to ensure the confidentiality of your child and family, staff members receive a confidentiality policy in their Employee Handbook that is reviewed upon hire. It states: "Records of the children are confidential, may not leave the school whether in print, digital format or word of mouth, and should not be discussed with other parents or in front of other children. Confidential information includes but is not limited to: children, their families, employment, payroll, fiscal, and management information.

Access to confidential data, including children's records, is permitted only when authorised and only in order to perform assigned tasks. Information contained in a child's record is confidential. This includes all written and verbal communication, which pertains to the child and/or his/her family. It includes but is not limited to addresses, telephone numbers, progress reports, learning disabilities, testing, financial information, behaviour issues, attendance, etc.

Employees recognise that sharing information that may be considered to violate the privacy of children and their families with others who do not have a need to know will be considered a violation of confidentiality that may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. Parents or others authorised in writing by the parents can request their child's record at any time." Staff members sign an agreement that they have read and agree to adhere to all the policies in their handbook including the preceding policy. The WIT School is in compliance with the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care regulations regarding the confidentiality and distribution of children's records.

The information contained in a child's records is confidential and will not be released to anyone without the written consent of the parents. Parents may have access to the records of their child. A copy will be made at no charge. A permanent written log will be maintained in each child's record indicating any persons to whom information has been released. The child's parents may add information or comments to the child's record, and may also request the deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's record.

Food

All children, including toddlers once they start eating solid foods, bring their lunch and two snacks each day (if you are not signed on to the lunch package that the school provides). As we do not refrigerate food, please send snacks and lunches in an insulated lunch box/bag with ice packs. We however have a microwave oven to heat food, but we advise parents send food in an unbreakable thermos is recommended for hot/warm foods and liquids. **Please do not send food or drinks in glass containers.**

As we wish to encourage sound nutrition, we ask that parents send lunches and snacks that are well balanced. This includes grains/breads, protein and/or dairy, and fruits and/or vegetables and absolutely **NO SODA**. Some popular and nutritious ideas for snacks include crackers and fruit, whole grain bread, yogurt, eggs, raisins, or applesauce and more water in a water bottle.

To promote healthy eating habits, teachers encourage children to eat what has been sent for their snacks and lunch; with this in mind, we ask that parents send a variety of healthy options as described above. Per Early Education and Care best practice, staff will allow children to eat the foods that have in the order they choose; we cannot withhold food or not permit children to eat some foods until they have eaten others; with this in mind, please send foods that you wish your child to eat and staff will encourage the enjoyment of all foods they have been provided for snacks and lunch. Please feel free to ask us for ideas and suggestions and your fellow families may have some fun ideas for variety, too.

***Grapes and other swallowable fruits = must be cut lengthwise and in very small pieces. Teachers and lunch supervisors will not serve popcorn, raw peas or meat larger than can be swallowed whole to reduce the chance of choking. **

Nap Needs

As much as possible we encourage (not force) all children under 7 years to take a nap in the late mornings and after lunch to rest from the day's activities and to feel rejuvenated. Preschoolers and kindergarteners should/can bring a nap blanket and a crib sheet to cover their rest mat. Please make sure each is labeled. They should be brought home to launder weekly or as needed. A comfort toy, doll, or stuffed animal is always welcomed for nap. All child care providers will be informed of any sleep requirements and will ensure that they have a restful nap under our sleep policy while playing classic music (white noise).

Observations and Research

Periodically, child care professionals, health care professionals and graduate students request (for research purposes) opportunities to observe young children; they are interested in typical behaviour, developmental skills, and/or how children interact with peers/adults. All requests are with the consent of the School Director and are scheduled in advance. A consent form will be given to the parents explaining the reason for the observation, the name and background of the person requesting the observation and the date/time of the observation. Parents reserve the right to deny permission. Unless written on a consent form, an observation will mean that there is no interaction between the child and the observer and no identification of the individual child.

Parent Information Area

There is a parent information area located next to the front entrance to the School or via email where we post information regarding parent workshops, classes for children, and other events happening throughout the community. Please feel free to post information that you think other families might find useful!

Photographs

No outside agency will be allowed to photograph the children without parental consent. The staff reserves the right to photograph the children for curriculum purposes without specific parental consent. Often parents will take pictures or videotaping of the children during a special event, (i.e. birthdays, graduation, etc.). Please inform the Principal Director if you do not want your child to be photographed in these instances. The school has annual / termly photo days at the school for the school yearbook and for marketing materials like billboards, brochures, the school websites, etc. A memo will be sent out to all parents before all these photographs and videos are taken.

Referral Plan and Procedures

The WIT School is committed to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of each child. Teachers observe children's behaviour on a daily basis and in a more formal way with progress reports at least twice a year. If a child appears to have difficulty with any area of development, an initial assessment will be made by all the teachers who have contact with the child. The staff will begin to record written observations of the child's behaviour by addressing how, when, and where the behaviour takes place and the efforts the staff has made to assist or accommodate the child's needs.

If a particular behaviour is of immediate attention or a child continues to have difficulty, the teachers will bring their concerns and written observations to the attention of the Director. A conference with the parents will be arranged in order to share the observations of the teachers and discuss behaviours the parents have witnessed at home. Together the parents, teachers and School Director / Principal will formulate a plan of action.

A follow-up meeting will be arranged. Teachers will continue to record observations of the child. At the follow-up meeting, if the behaviour or concern has not improved, it will be determined if a specialist should be consulted for additional insight on the issue. A current list of referral resources in the community for social, mental health, educational and medical services will be given to the parents. The School will maintain a written record of any referral, including the parent conference and results.

Caring for Children with Special Needs

The WIT School accepts applications for children with special needs. We realise the benefits of supporting children with special needs and attempt to accommodate these children if appropriate and helpful for them; however, the school can only provide such services as are reasonable and beneficial to the class as a whole and do not cause undue burden to the program, staff and other children.

It may be necessary to turn down an application for enrolment or to terminate continued enrolment of a child with special needs when to do otherwise would jeopardise the safety and wellbeing of the child, the other children in the classroom and/or the staff. Communication is the key aspect to successfully support a child with special needs. The parents, teachers and specialists who work with the child with a disability are all equally involved in sharing information, communicating their needs and listening to each other.

A child with special needs should be assessed by an Early Intervention Team (special needs teacher) if the child is under 2.9 years, by the child's school system if he/she is older than 2.9 years, or other service provider. The evaluation will determine services which will benefit the child and the method by which the services will be provided. The Director will assist the parents with a referral if necessary although the school engages the services of a special needs teacher (which will be further invoiced to the parents of the child)

At the initial meeting, the School Site Director will meet with the parents/guardians to discuss the child's disability/special needs. The child's health or other information will be discussed. With parental permission, specialists may be requested to attend. The Director, with parental consent, will identify in writing the accommodations the centre would have to make to meet the needs of the child, including:

- 1) change or modification in regular centre activities
- 2) size of group and appropriate staff/child ratio
- 3) special equipment, materials, ramps or aids.

If the accommodations cause undue burden, the Director must notify the parents in writing within 30 days. A copy of this notification will be kept on file. If it is determined that school can accommodate the child, the parents, child and classroom teacher will meet to determine how and when the child will transition into the program if the child is new to the program. If the child has been enrolled, the staff and parents will discuss the new information. All records, screening/assessment information, ADHD/ASD, and observations will be placed in the child's folder and remain confidential. Parents may access their child's file at any time.

A staff person will act as the liaison for a child with special needs and will meet with the parents and child preferably before enrolment to begin developing a supportive relationship. As the centre's liaison, this teacher will also be responsible for preparing progress reports every three months and setting up conferences when needed. He/she will be active at TWS to insure the effective integration of the child into the classroom and to monitor progress thereafter. With parental consent, the Principal or Director will also inform the administrator of Special Education in writing that the school is serving a child with a special need / disability. Routines and classroom arrangements will be reviewed. Whenever necessary, additional staffing shall be recruited to assist in making the child's enrolment as successful an experience as possible (at the parents' cost).

Supervision of Children

The school Director, Assistant Directors/Education Coordinators and classroom Teachers are responsible for the supervision and whereabouts of the children assigned to their care at all times, which entails conducting regular and accurate *name to face* head counts, including room and area sweeps, any time a child or group moves from one location to another, such as but not limited to: when a group is at an onsite or offsite playground, when a group is on a field trip or on a walk, to ensure children are not hiding or left behind. For the safety and wellbeing of children and staff, The WIT School adheres to strict practices for the supervision of children which include the following *Headcount Procedures*, *Staff Responsibilities* and, carry with them significant *Incident Consequences*.

Caring for Children with Special Needs

The WIT School accepts applications for children with special needs. We realise the benefits of supporting children with special needs and attempt to accommodate these children if appropriate and helpful for them; however, the school can only provide such services as are reasonable and beneficial to the class as a whole and do not cause undue burden to the program, staff and other children. It may be necessary to turn down an application for enrolment or to terminate continued enrolment of a child with special needs when to do otherwise would jeopardise the safety and wellbeing of the child, the other children in the classroom and/or the staff.

Communication is the key aspect to successfully support a child with special needs. The parents, teachers and specialists who work with the child with a disability are all equally involved in sharing information, communicating their needs and listening to each other. A child with special needs should be assessed by an Early Intervention Team (special needs teacher) if the child is under 2.9 years, by the child's school system if he/she is older than 2.9 years, or other service provider.

The evaluation will determine services which will benefit the child and the method by which the services will be provided. The Director will assist the parents with a referral if necessary although the school engages the services of a special needs teacher (which will be further invoiced to the parents of the child). At the initial meeting, the School Site Director will meet with the parents/guardians to discuss the child's disability/special needs. The child's health or other information will be discussed. With parental permission, specialists may be requested to attend. The Director, with parental consent, will identify in writing the accommodations the centre would have to make to meet the needs of the child, including:

- 1) **change or modification in regular centre activities**
- 2) **size of group and appropriate staff/child ratio**
- 3) **special equipment, materials, ramps or aids.**

If the accommodations cause undue burden, the Director must notify the parents in writing within 30 days. A copy of this notification will be kept on file. If it is determined that school can accommodate the child, the parents, child and classroom teacher will meet to determine how and when the child will transition into the program if the child is new to the program. If the child has been enrolled, the staff and parents will discuss the new information. All records, screening/assessment information, ADHD/ASD, and observations will be placed in the child's folder and remain confidential. Parents may access their child's file at any time.

A staff person will act as the liaison for a child with special needs and will meet with the parents and child preferably before enrolment to begin developing a supportive relationship. As the centre's liaison, this teacher will also be responsible for preparing progress reports every three months and setting up conferences when needed. He/she will be active at TWS to insure the effective integration of the child into the classroom and to monitor progress thereafter. With parental consent, the Principal or Director will also inform the administrator of Special Education in writing that the school is serving a child with a special need / disability. Routines and classroom arrangements will be reviewed. Whenever necessary, additional staffing shall be recruited to assist in making the child's enrolment as successful an experience as possible (at the parents' cost).

Supervision of Children

The school Director, Assistant Directors/Education Coordinators and classroom Teachers are responsible for the supervision and whereabouts of the children assigned to their care at all times, which entails conducting regular and accurate *name to face* head counts, including room and area sweeps, any time a child or group moves from one location to another, such as but not limited to: when a group is at an onsite or offsite playground, when a group is on a field trip or on a walk, to ensure children are not hiding or left behind. For the safety and wellbeing of children and staff, The WIT School adheres to strict practices for the supervision of children which include the following *Headcount Procedures*, *Staff Responsibilities* and, carry with them significant *Incident Consequences*.

➤ **Headcount Procedures:** Regular and accurate name to face head counts

- Utilising a printed attendance sheet of children's names that accurately reflects those in attendance;
- Includes room and area sweeps;
- Occurs any time a child or group moves from one location to another – whether inside or outside.
- Accurate attendance sheets of children's names are maintained at all times; children visiting another classroom (most typically for transition visits but for any reason), must always be signed in and out of the group they are in or visiting.
- Name to face head counts occur before the group leaves a location and immediately following the group arriving at the new location.

➤ **Staff Responsibilities**

- Accurate knowledge, at all times, of the number of children in a group at anytime and, if utilising the support of a white board/dry erase sheet to track and update the total number of children throughout the day, these supports must ensure the printed attendance sheet also accurately reflects – at all times - those in attendance.
- Classroom teaching staff must be aware of where children are at all times and must be in sufficient proximity at all times in order to intervene quickly if/when necessary. They must not engage in any other activities or tasks that could unnecessarily divert their attention from the supervision of children.

- Classroom teaching staff supervise **Preschoolers (2years 9months to entry to Kindergarten)** by sight and, for brief intervals, by sound (e.g. when a child walks from one adjoining room to another or can use the toilet independently), as long as the child is back in sight and sound within one minute.
- Classroom teaching staff supervise **School Age children (Kindergarten through 12years old)** by sight and sound and dependent upon age, development level, behavioural characteristics and activities being offered, by sound only.

Toileting and Diapering

At The WIT School, children are required to be toilet trained or must have started at home by age 24 months or by a specific age according to the child's developmental rate. We will continue the toileting process here once it has begun at home. Children must be ready to participate willingly if the process of toilet learning is to be a positive one and, to this end, the school cannot and will not force a child to use the toilet. Children in diapers are changed every other hour and on an as needed basis.

Toys From Home

We ask that children's toys stay at home, unless they are brought in for a pre-arranged sharing at group time. Toys from home are difficult to share at other times, and we cannot be responsible if they become lost or broken. We realise that this is sometimes very hard --leaving a toy in the car during the day is a tactic that sometimes works if you can't leave the house without that special something. Comfort toys for nap are the only exception, and should be kept in the child's bag, unless needed at "difficult" times.

Transportation

It is the policy of the school that staff does not transport children. If a medical emergency arises, children will be transported by ambulance unless in the reasonable judgment of the School, providing transportation is medically necessary. The only person(s) allowed to transport children will be those noted on the child(ren)'s authorised pick up list.

V. PARENT COMMUNICATION / PARTICIPATION / RIGHTS

Parent Participation: Parents are welcome to spend time in the classroom, visit for lunch, or share any talents they have with the children. Parents are always welcome with no notice required, but may want to notify the teachers when they plan to visit, so that the child and the group can be prepared for the visit. If your child is having difficulty with separation, please discuss with the teachers ways that would make parting easier. You may decide that extra visits during your child's first few weeks could make it more difficult for him/her to settle and adjust. Please discuss any concerns you may have with the Teachers.

Conferences: Parent-teacher conferences are held on a regular basis to discuss your child's progress, adjustment to the school and other issues of concern to both parents and teachers. All teachers for the various classes complete developmental progress reports for each child and conferences are scheduled twice a year. If they wish, parents are welcome to schedule additional meetings with their child's teachers at any time. The purpose of progress reports and conferences is to identify the children's interests and needs, to improve curriculum, to adapt teaching practices and the environment, as well as to plan for program improvement.

Newsletter and Yearbook: To keep you informed about centre activities, upcoming events, reminders and general announcements, we publish a newsletters monthly and an annual yearbook. We urge you to read it carefully. You'll also find that the newsletter can serve as a good discussion starter when talking to your child about the latest happenings at school.

Withdrawal: Parents must provide a *minimum* 30 days written notice for the withdrawal of a child for any reason. Parents will be responsible for tuition payment for these 30 days.

Termination: The school may terminate the enrolment of a child if the child's needs cannot be met, the safety/care of other children is in jeopardy, and/or accommodations for the child cause undue burden to the School. Parents will be notified of the reasons for termination and conditions for re-enrolment (if any), in writing, a minimum of one month prior to the termination date. However, if the reason for termination is serious, termination can be immediate.

Before the implementation of the termination of a child due to challenging behaviour, the staff will take the following steps:

1. Meet with parents to discuss other options;
2. Provide referrals for evaluation and services;
3. Pursue consultation and training for the program;
4. Develop behavioural intervention plan at home and in program.

The WIT School reserves the right to terminate services to children and families for the following reasons:

- Extraordinary circumstances, which make it impossible to keep payment current, should be discussed with the Director promptly.
- If a child's individual developmental needs including conditions or behaviours which cannot be managed effectively by the staff or which pose a potential threat to the safety and wellbeing of his/her self, the other children or staff.
- If a parent or family member displays inappropriate behaviour, either physically, verbally or sexually, toward any staff member, child or parent, then, termination/referral procedures can be initiated.
- If a parent's child rearing (nurturing) philosophy or beliefs are in conflict with that of the School, the Principal, Director and Board will review the conflict and determine if the School can reasonably accommodate the parent's request. If the parent's request is contrary to the School's published philosophy and educational and care giving goals, then the parent will be notified and termination procedures may be initiated.

Parents will be notified in writing at a face-to-face meeting when possible, including the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter will be kept in the child's record. When a child's enrolment is terminated from the school, whether initiated by the school or the parents, the child's teacher will prepare the child and family for their departure in a manner that is professional, respectful and developmentally appropriate with regards to the child's level of understanding.

Suspension:

In extreme cases of child delinquencies and any behavioural traits that may pose a threat to the child or others, the child will be suspended and allowed to stay at home for two weeks for the first time, 4 weeks for the second time and total termination and expulsion if it cannot be resolved.

What you can expect from The WIT School:

- An open door policy which welcomes you to visit your child any time during the day at reasonable times;
- A caring, loving, warm atmosphere;
- Well-informed, knowledgeable staff who have been trained to work with the age group to which they have been assigned;
- A carefully designed, responsive and developmentally appropriate curriculum;
- Daily communication regarding your child and opportunities for parent participation;
- Collaborative relationships between parents and staff members which foster children's development both at home and in the school.

VI. HEALTH CARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Physical Examinations

A yearly physical examination, including a test for lead poisoning, is required for each child at the centre. In addition, immunisation records must be kept current and submitted to the school upon receiving updates.

Medical Policy

The Directors and Principal work closely with a paediatric Health Care Consultant to determine medical policies and resolve medical issues affecting the children and staff at the centres. A copy of the Health Care Policy may be obtained by parents through written request to the Director. Mildly ill children will be permitted to attend the centre on their regularly scheduled days. For the protection of *ALL* children and staff, parents will be notified when their child presents with an undiagnosed condition, or is too ill to remain at the Center, and they will be requested to pick up their child immediately. Should a parent be unable to pick up their child within one hour, they are responsible for making arrangements for their child to be picked up by someone from their list of emergency contacts.

Procedures for handling a child who has already been admitted to the school and exhibits symptoms requiring exclusion until he/she can be taken home: The child will be kept in a quiet isolated area in the classroom on a resting mat. All mats and sheets will be cleaned after the child leaves the centre.

Policies for when excluded children may return:

We have no separate facilities for long term care of a sick child, parents are asked to be especially aware of and plan for impending illness. If a child becomes sick while at the centre, a staff member will contact the parent to ask that the child be taken home.

We will ask parents to take their child home if we feel that he/she needs to see a doctor, if they present with an undiagnosed condition, is contagious, or has a greater need for individual care than staff can provide while providing care for the needs of other children. At the school, the child will be made comfortable on a mat in a quiet area away from the other children. Staff will provide the child with food and beverage as requested.

Some of the common conditions for which a child will be sent home are as follows:

1. **Temperature** - A child will be sent home if he/she has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher. The child must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) before returning to the school.
2. **Diarrhoea** - A child who has more than one instance of diarrhoea (watery stools) will be sent home. If your child has an allergy or condition that regularly causes diarrhoea, please alert the staff to this during orientation. The child must be diarrhoea-free for at least 24 hours before returning to the school.
3. **Vomiting** - A child who is vomiting will be sent home and should remain home until vomiting has stopped. Most vomiting is caused by infection. Stomach viruses are highly contagious and can spread through the school very rapidly. The child must not have vomited for at least 24 hours before returning to the school.
4. **Respiratory Infections** - Are very common and usually are caused by viruses. It is advised that your child remain at home and if fever is associated with the infection, must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) before returning to the centre.

If a child is ill with a contagious disease (i.e., chickenpox, etc.) parents are to let the staff know so that other parents at the centre may be informed. The staff shall post notice of the type of communicable disease, symptoms, and precautionary measures that can be taken in addition to information on when an infected child can return to the centre. In cases of highly contagious illnesses, the return to centre timeframe may be extended to ensure the health and wellness of the child care centre community.

Emergency Medical Forms

The Ghana Education Service requires parents to provide the school with a current immunisation record, annual physical exam report and for children between the ages of 9 and 12 months and annually thereafter a health screening test result, within 30 days of enrolment. *ALL MEDICAL RECORDS MUST BE UPDATED YEARLY.* In addition, consent forms for authorisation of medical treatment, emergency transportation and child release, must be signed by parents and kept in each child's file. *FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY, PLEASE REMEMBER TO NOTIFY THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGES OF TELEPHONE NUMBERS OR ADDRESSES LISTED ON THE CONSENT FORMS.*

Emergency First Aid / Security Procedures

All staff are required to have current training in either Red Cross or EEC certified First Aid, Heimlich Manoeuvre and CPR. In cases of minor injury, the staff will administer simple first aid and will notify parent(s) in writing about injury and treatment. The school is protected with Fire Hydrants, CCTV and other security apparatus to protect the children and all staff.

Emergency Medical Procedures

Depending upon the severity of the emergency, the school will contact parents or authorised persons. Transportation to the hospital will be by either ambulance or police when time is of the essence, or if parents are not available. Should immediate transportation be necessary, the Centre Site Director or Assistant Director will accompany the child.

Administration and Storage of Medication

- **Prescription Medication for Children:** When prescription medicine is to be administered to a child at the school, the medication must be presented in the original bottle with a label affixed by the pharmacy or physician showing the child's first and last name, the dosage and schedule of administration, what the prescription contains, the date purchased and the physician's name. In addition, a medical authorisation form must be signed or emailed by the parent in each case.
- **Non-Prescription Medication for Children:** When non-prescription medicine is to be administered to a child at the school, it must be accompanied by a medical authorisation form signed by the parent in each case.
- **Topical Non-Prescription Medication:** Topical non-prescription medications such as sunscreen, diaper cream, petroleum jelly or other ointments may be applied to a child only with written parental authorisation via a signed consent form.

When the above conditions have been met, administration of medication to children shall be limited to the Education Coordinator, Teachers or Centre Site Director. **All medication is stored out of reach of children at all times.** Parents must provide a medicine spoon that correlates to the measurement type listed on the prescription. After medication administration window is complete, all remaining medicine shall be returned to the parent. We request that the Centre Site Director or Teacher be made aware of any medication that is brought into the school, even if it is teething gel.

NO MEDICATION OF ANY KIND SHOULD EVER BE PUT IN A CHILD'S BOTTLE, CUP OR LEFT IN A CHILD'S BAG, LUNCH BOX OR CUBBY.

When an antibiotic medication is needed, a child will be excluded from the school from the time of diagnosis until 24 hours after the first dosage. The Centre Site Director may ask to speak to your paediatrician for prolonged administration of medicines; if your child seems to have adverse effects from the medication or if there is a potentially contagious condition.

Procedure for Identifying Children's Allergies: The initial conference with parents and the enrolment forms establishes existing allergies. Teachers and assistants throughout the centre are informed by the Centre Site Director of type of allergy, treatment, and if applicable, location of child's medication. Allergy lists are posted in each room. Children who develop allergies over the time present at the centre will be added to the existing list of children with allergies. **PLEASE INFORM TEACHERS OF ANY FOOD EXCLUSIONS NOT RELATED TO ALLERGIES.**

G. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR ON SCHOOL PREMISES BY ADULTS

Approved by: Full Governing Body | Date: January 1, 2020 | Next review due by: January 2023

The vast majority of parents, carers and other visitors to our school are supportive of The WIT Schools. They are supportive of members of staff, pupils, parents and other visitors, and act in a reasonable way, ensuring that the school is a safe, orderly environment in which children can learn and staff can work. Occasionally, however, a negative or inappropriate attitude is expressed in an aggressive, fraudulent, verbally abusive or physically abusive way towards members of the school community which is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The WIT Schools does not tolerate bullying of any kind including racist, homophobic, transphobic or biphobic bullying.

1. Staff Conduct:

If any member of staff is involved in an incident where unacceptable behaviour has taken place they must report this to a member of the School Leadership Committee. The head of the SLT (principal director) will speak with the member of staff and support them in any way necessary to help them overcome any anxiety, trauma or upset that has occurred. Counselling can be made available if necessary and in the longer term, support can be given by the member of staff's trade union. At The WIT School we expect all of our staff to behave professionally in situations of unacceptable behaviour by:

- attempting to diffuse situations wherever possible
- speaking calmly and without raising their voice
- being polite but firm
- seeking involvement of other members of staff as appropriate
- politely terminating the conversation if necessary and explaining the reasons

However, all staff have the right to work without fear of harassment, violence intimidation or abuse. Where the behaviour of parents or visitors falls below the acceptable standards, the school will act in accordance with this guidance.

2. Types of behaviour which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- Conduct which undermines the safe and calm environment in a school, either in a school office, classroom, around the school site, immediately outside the school or on a school trip.
- Using loud or offensive language, such as swearing, or displaying an unacceptable amount of anger and aggression
- Threatening physical violence to a member of the school community
- Damaging school property

- Abusive telephone calls, emails, letters or other forms of written communication
- Unauthorised visits and attempting to take a child from the school without written permission of the parent / guardian on records
- Defamatory comments about school staff or governors on social media sites
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child
- Approaching someone else's child in order to chastise, threaten and bully them
- Criminal offences - such as common assault, actual and grievous bodily harm, criminal damage, possession of an offensive weapon

If the school believes that a parent or visitor's conduct would amount to a criminal offence, the school will report the incident to the police for immediate investigation and prosecution. The Ghana Children's Act 1998 (ACT 560 section 2, 8 and 13) defines "disorderly conduct" as: verbal abuse, threatening abusive or insulting words or behaviour or any disorderly behaviour whereby a person is caused alarm, harassment or distress among others. "Threatening behaviour" is when a person fears that violence, or threat of violence, is likely to be provoked. The school has a responsibility to ensure that any act of actual or threatened violence is referred to the police immediately. In a school context this could mean someone shouting at a member of staff, either in person or on the phone; acting aggressively, including using intimidating body language, as well as actual violence. It also covers comments posted on social networking sites or situations where members of staff are approached off school premises.

3. Permission to enter the school premises

Parents have 'implied permission' to enter and be on the school premises for reasons relating to their child / children's education. This means that parents are welcome to come to the school to drop off and collect their children, to speak to teachers and other members of staff about their children, or for meetings, parent consultations, celebration of learning events, assemblies and social events. Parents do not have a legal right to enter or be on school premises without a good reason. Other visitors also have 'implied permission' to be on the school premises if they have a reason. For example a delivery person or a member of the public enquiring about something in the school office. Members of the public without a good reason for entering or being on the school premises are trespassing.

4. Withdrawal of Permission to enter or be on the school premises

The school has the right to withdraw the 'implied permission' for a parent or visitor to enter or be on the premises if their behaviour is or has been unacceptable. If a criminal offence has taken place, immediate 'implied permission' will be withdrawn, without a warning letter (see below) and other arrangements will be made for meetings and parent consultations.

5. Procedure for withdrawing implied permission to be on the school premises:

This procedure will be carried out by the (Headteacher) or (Deputy Headteacher) in her absence. The decision will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Chair of Governors:

1. Warning letter sent from the headteacher indicating that if the unacceptable behaviour is repeated the 'implied permission' will be withdrawn.
2. Letter from Headteacher withdrawing 'implied permission' if unacceptable behaviour has been repeated or a criminal offence has taken place. The prohibition will initially last for **ten school days** from the date of the letter. The parent or visitor will be invited to provide written comments within **five school days** of the date of the letter.
3. By the **tenth school day** from the date of the letter the Chair of Governors will review the headteacher's decision based on any written comments received and the record of the decision the headteacher made.
4. The Chair of Governors will, within **ten school days** of the date of the letter notifying the parent or carer of the withdrawal of the 'implied permission' to enter and be on the school premises, review the decision made. The Chair of Governors will consider any written comments from the parent and the decision made by the headteacher. At this stage, the Chair of Governor's will decide if the letter will be revoked and send a letter explaining this or if the withdrawal is to continue until the next review which will be for a period of 15 to 30 days, or the last day of half or full term, to a maximum of 30 days. The parent or carer is invited to provide further written comments which will be looked at before the next review.
5. If a review date has been provided from Stage 3, the Chair of Governors will write to the parent or carer with their updated decision, based on any further written comments or concerns at that time. A parent or carer may be given another review date and given the reasons for the decision or they may have their 'implied permission' permanently withdrawn.

If a parent or carer enters the school premises when they have had their 'implied permission' permanently withdrawn or they have had a temporary withdrawal and are awaiting a decision, the police will be called.

If other members of the public or visitors need to have their 'implied permission' revoked, the Headteacher will contact the individual or the company that they work for by letter, stating the reasons for the decision to ban them from the site. (Appendix, Letter 3)

Policy

This policy will be published on The WIT School website and be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Attachment A: Emergency Contingency Plans

Evacuation Procedures

- Staff will remove the children for whom they are responsible from the building. Floor plans indicating the evacuation route are posted by the doorway in each room. Sign in/out sheets will be taken.
- They will go to the evacuation site: the tree by the School Gate.
- Center Site Director/Person in Charge checks all rooms including bathrooms for stragglers or sleeping children, taking sign in/out sheets that may be left behind and the office red Emergency Binder for phone numbers.
- At the evacuation site, attendance of children and staff is taken. Staff will be prepared to move the children to another site (opposite house) for traffic, weather, and/or emotional reasons.
- A final decision to evacuate the area and/or to re-enter the building will be the responsibility of the commander on the scene of the Adenta Fire Dept. and East Legon Security Services. Parents will be contacted if circumstances warrant.
- Evacuation drills are conducted monthly. The WIT School Security, in conjunction with the Adenta Fire Department, may schedule evacuation drills outside of the school's monthly drill process. Advance notice of a few hours is given on some drills, while others are unannounced.

Fire Procedures

The Centre's fire alarm procedure is to provide for the safe and speedy evacuation of the building during an actual or suspected fire. Employees are aware of the closest fire alarm pull station and fire extinguisher in their work area as well as with the following fire rules.

If you discover fire or smoke:

- 1) Pull fire alarm
- 2) Dial 112 / 191 /192 and give the location of the fire
- 3) Evacuate the building (see evacuation procedures)

If you hear the fire alarm:

- 1) Evacuate the building (see evacuation procedures)

Natural Disasters – Rainstorm, Flood, Blizzard, Earthquake

1. If a natural disaster is forecasted in advance, the Centre will close, open late, or close early based on the recommendations of the government
2. If, during the day, the potential of a natural disaster was predicted with limited notice, the Center Site Director/person in charge would contact security regarding the best place to keep the children and staff safe.
3. If a natural disaster occurs unpredictably, the Center Site Director/person in charge would call for an evacuation (see above procedure); however, instead of bringing the children outside, the Center Site Director should consider the safest alternative, i.e. the middle room of the building, cafeteria, etc.
 - a) If possible, the Security Dept would be notified of the situation.
 - b) Proximity of kitchen and bathrooms would be considered.
 - c) Windows would be avoided.

If the Center does need to close, the Center Site Director will call the parents as soon as possible.

Missing Child Procedure

It is our intent that no staff person ever be alone supervising a group of children, whether on or off Center grounds/premises or on a field trip. Staff and children review the expectations for supervision and the physical boundaries of our indoor classrooms and spaces, our outdoor play yards and when traveling off site for a field trip; in this regard, our aim is to prevent a child *ever* going missing. As it is important, however, to have a procedure regarding our response *should* a child go missing, we adhere to the following, outlined below. If a child is not accounted for at any time, the staff member responsible for the child will search the premises for the child; any area that a child could potentially hide will be searched, in both the indoor and outdoor premises of the Center and the surrounding area of the field trip.

If it is determined that a child is missing, the following steps are taken:

- Immediate Missing Child notification to 122, followed by;
- Immediate Missing Child notification to The WIT School Security at **0209633192** followed by;
- Immediate Missing Child notification to the Center Site Director or designee, who will take responsibility for;
- Immediate notification to the child's parent;

A missing child “*Command Center*” will be established at the child care centre where the child is enrolled and all concerned parties will be directed to meet in this location where a land line phone and fax, as well as drinking water and restrooms, will be available.

When the police arrive, the Center Site Director or his/her designee assumes all responsibility for communication with police and security, such as the child’s full name, detailed physical description, where and at what time they were last seen. If an electronically transmittable photo of the missing child is available, the Center Site Director or his/her designee shall furnish police and security with, or with access to, the photo. The Center Site Director or his/her designee stays with the police and security for the remainder of the search.

Additional notes for missing child if group is off site on a field trip:

Based upon the Center the group is from, the appropriate notifications steps (listed above) are followed; when notifying each party listed above, the exact field trip location is provided, and the staff and group of children will remain together in one location until the police arrive.

When police arrive to the field trip location, one staff member assumes all responsibility for communication with the police, providing information such as the child’s full name, detailed physical description and where they were last seen. If an electronically transmittable photo of the missing child is available, the staff member shall furnish police with access to the photo via a telephone call to the Center Site Director or his/her designee.

The staff member responsible for communication with the police will consult with the police on the approach for the remaining children and staff (e.g. do they remain at the field trip site or do they go back to the Center and if so, when and by what method) and will then notify the Center Site Director of the plan. The staff member who has assumed communications responsibility with the police then remains with the police for the remainder of the search or until dismissed by the police to return to their Center.

Following a missing child incident:

The Center will follow notification procedures as outlined by the Ghana Education Service and will conduct an investigation with appropriate authorities to determine what course of action will be necessary to minimise the possibility of a child going missing in the future.



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