



Parent/Student Handbook

Early Learning Community

Collage Day School

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Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082

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Early Learning Community Directory

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Introduction

This handbook is intended to inform parents of Collage's programs, schedules, and procedures. It contains general statements regarding Collage Day School (CDS) policies, which Collage reserves the right to apply or alter at its discretion, based on individual situations and regarding the safety of all students and the best interests of Collage.

Collage administrative personnel and faculty strive to maintain exceptional communications with all families. Our administration works hard to keep this manual up to date and keep all families informed as policy changes occur. Please understand that there may be times when policy will change before this manual can be revised and distributed, but Collage staff will inform parents of significant changes via e-mail or other means.

All staff members and adults working in the school (including volunteers) will have access to this handbook. A copy is available to view in the front office upon request.

Organization and Population

Collage Day School is located in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. We are a private school serving children from infants through grade five. We serve a diverse population of students within our program model.

Collage Day School welcomes students and administers, its educational program without regard to race, color, religious belief, gender, sexual preference, nationality, or ethnic origin. All families, regardless of family structure, socio-economic circumstance, cultural background, ability, or preferred language, are included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities. Collage Day School is an equal opportunity employer.

Collage Day School is proud to be part of ISP Schools, a global network of international schools committed to high-quality education and continuous improvement.

Collage Day School is fully licensed by the Florida Department of Children and Families and the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida, which promotes excellence in early childhood education. Our Early Childhood and Preschool Programs are accredited with the Florida Association for Child Care Management (FACCM) through APPLE and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

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Mission

At Collage Day School, we empower students to succeed as skilled communicators, keen observers of nature and creative thinkers to become responsible citizens and innovative leaders.

We provide a nurturing environment that encourages individual expression, inspires creativity, promotes a sense of community spirit, and prepares children for a future of personal and academic success. We offer a comprehensive curriculum with an integrated arts approach where children grow to feel that music, visual arts, and movement are important parts of their world.

Our Educational Approach

At Collage Day School, our vision is to create a literacy-rich, play-based early learning environment grounded in strong family partnerships and guided by intentional, relationship-based teaching practices. We prioritize the child's perspective and believe that meaningful learning begins with connection, curiosity, and a deep understanding of each individual learner.

Through low teacher-to-child ratios, ongoing developmental assessment, and individualized lesson planning, we meet each child where they are—supporting growth based on readiness rather than age alone.

A Literacy-Rich Environment

A literacy-rich environment in early childhood is not defined by worksheets, sitting still, or formal instruction. Instead, it is created through meaningful, engaging experiences that foster language development in natural and authentic ways.

Children are immersed in:

- Books, storytelling, and rich conversation
- Songs, rhymes, and expressive language
- Purposeful print thoughtfully integrated throughout the classroom

Through play and hands-on exploration, children build vocabulary, express ideas, and develop early literacy skills in ways that are developmentally appropriate and aligned with how young children learn best.

The Importance of Play

Play is essential to early learning. It is through play that children explore their environment, build relationships, solve problems, and make sense of their world.

Our play-based approach allows children to:

- Engage in meaningful, hands-on learning
- Develop creativity and independence
- Build social-emotional and problem-solving skills

Play is not separate from learning—it is the foundation of it.

Family Engagement

We believe that families are a child's first and most important teachers. Strong partnerships between home and school create consistency, trust, and deeper learning experiences.

Family engagement at Collage includes:

- Open and ongoing communication
- Collaboration around each child's development
- Respect for each family's values, experiences, and culture

The Value of Low Ratios

Low teacher-to-child ratios are essential to high-quality early childhood education.

They allow educators to:

- Build strong, meaningful relationships
- Observe and respond to individual needs
- Provide intentional, individualized support

The Role of Assessment

Assessment in early childhood is not about testing—it is about understanding.

Through ongoing observation and assessment, teachers:

- Identify strengths and areas for growth
- Recognize developmental needs early
- Adjust instruction to support each child

Individualized Learning

Every child develops at their own pace.

Our teachers:

- Plan based on readiness, not just age
- Build on individual strengths and interests
- Create meaningful and engaging learning experiences

Commitment to Playful Learning

All children—from infants to school-age children and even teens—need time to play every day. Play allows children to be active, calm their minds, follow their own ideas, pretend, be creative, and build physical, social, and intellectual skills. In fact, play is the main way that young children learn.

Children need a balance of structured and unstructured play. Each type of play supports important parts of their development.

- Structured play is organized by adults, and the child follows directions or rules to complete a task. This type of play is often activity-based, like going on a scavenger hunt, playing board games, or participating in noncompetitive sports.
- Unstructured play, often called free play, is when the child decides to play on their own or with other children. The child decides what to play with and how to play. During unstructured play, children need enough time to explore their own interests and ideas and use their imaginations.

Playful learning is incorporated into our daily learning experience by creating a rich environment where children can actively engage in imaginative play, exploration, and hands-on activities, allowing them to learn through natural curiosity and fun, often with the guidance of teachers who facilitate learning through open-ended questions and providing various materials to support different types of play, like blocks, dress-up clothes, and sensory items; essentially, making learning enjoyable and child-centered.

Infants & Ones & Twos (8 weeks – 36 months)

Collage provides the highest quality of care for our youngest learners in a safe, nurturing environment. A dedicated team of professionals, collaboration with families, and on-going monitoring of developmental milestones ensure that your child is off to a healthy, happy start. Teachers plan weekly to include individualized instruction that promotes early learning success for all students. Lesson Plans are posted weekly within the classroom for parents to view.

Preschool (3-5 years of age)

Children enrolled in Collage's preschool program benefit from a comprehensive approach to childcare and early learning. With a heavy emphasis on the acquisition and development of language and learning skills and social interactions, Collage offers both naturalistic and structured learning opportunities. Collage supports students through a purposefully designed environment and atmosphere that promotes appropriate conduct and development. Our philosophy reinforces caregiver-child interactions to support intellectual, social and behavioral success right from the start.

Collage's PreK 4 program prepares children for kindergarten. Instructional design is based on Florida Standards for Four Year Old's and curricula strategies are on a continuum of developmental benchmarks. Low student-to- teacher ratios, ongoing assessment and dedicated teachers provide learning opportunities that are responsive to each child's unique needs and interests and that appropriately challenge each child to continue their academic and whole-child growth.

Collage Day School is a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) participant. Qualification for the VPK voucher will depend on approval from the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida. To participate in the VPK voucher program, a student must reach the age of four or five before September 1 of the year of enrollment.

Children enrolled in our VPK Programs must attend class on a three-day or five-day schedule following the Collage Day School calendar. Attendance is monitored by the state to ensure the hour requirement is met by the school. No payment or additional services are required to participate in Collage Day School's VPK Program.

Should parents voluntarily elect for additional programming, Collage Day School offers programs from 7:00am-6:00 pm each day, Monday-Friday. For more information regarding the VPK voucher and regulations, and additional programs please contact our Director of Admissions.

Community Resources

Zero to Three	www.zerotothree.org
CDC's Developmental Milestones	https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html
Florida Division of Early Learning	https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/
Department of Children and Families	www.myflfamilies.com
Florida Division of Early Learning/VPK	https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/account/login

Admission Policy

Collage Day School admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of educational or admission policies, scholarship or loan programs, or other school-administered programs.

The academic progress and behavior of each new student is subject to periodic review by the Preschool Directors. Students not demonstrating acceptable progress/behaviors may be asked to leave the school.

Admission Documents

The following documents must be submitted to complete student enrollment:

- Proof of a Florida physical exam on DH Form 3040 (required when a student enters school for the first time)
- Proof of up-to-date childhood immunizations on DH Form 680/681 (form may be secured from the St. Johns County Health Department or at the child's healthcare providers office).
 - Religious exemptions are accepted and must be provided on the proper county forms.
 - Medical exemptions will continue to be accepted.

New Student and Parent Orientation Procedures

Collage Day School offers a rolling admissions process, with enrollment determined by available spaces and overseen by the head of each building. Families interested in visiting the school are encouraged to schedule a tour through our website. Simply navigate to Admissions and select "Visit Our Campus." Following the tour, students applying to the Tawny and Spotted Owls programs will participate in a Discovery Day. During this visit, our trained staff will conduct observations and an assessment to better understand each child. After Discovery Day, families will be notified of the admissions decision. Accepted students and their families will then have the opportunity to attend a Meet the Teacher session prior to the start of the school.

Families applying to the Snowy, Bay, and Barns classrooms will participate in an interview with a member of our school team. This interview provides families with the opportunity to share important information about their child, including interests, strengths, routines, and any concerns that may help us better support their success in the classroom.

Information shared during the interview also assists our team in making thoughtful classroom placement decisions. By learning more about each child's individual needs and personality, we are able to create balanced classrooms and supportive learning environments that promote social, emotional, and developmental growth.

We value open communication and view this interview as a collaborative step in building a strong partnership between families and our school.

The enrollment process will not be complete until the school has received and processed all the applicable administrative fees, the non-refundable enrollment fee, the enrollment forms, and the official contract. All contracts must be signed electronically or in-person. Families begin paying tuition and fees at the beginning of the enrollment contract period. Families who wish to defer enrollment can elect to either pay the monthly tuition and fees to maintain enrollment or be placed on the waitlist for a future opening.

Age/Grade-Level Requirements

Pre-Kindergarten students must be three or four years old on or before September 1st of the school year in which they are enrolling. Kindergarten students must be five years of age by September 1st. Age must be verified by an original birth certificate.

Payment Plan and FACTS Account

Collage Day School uses FACTS Management as our only form of accepting tuition payments. There are two payments options available: major credit cards (3% processing fee) or auto drafts from your bank or credit union. Any fee related to the fees for FACTS service is considered non-refundable and will not be reimbursed by the school. Payments are scheduled through FACTS monthly to pay for tuition for the upcoming month. Parents must have a FACTS account to ensure their child's continuous enrollment. Students are not officially enrolled until the parent account is completed. The final component of a fully enrolled student, is a signed enrollment contract by the student's legal guardian(s).

Multiple Child Discount

For parents enrolling more than one child, the child with the highest tuition pays 100% and subsequent children enrolled receive a 10% discount. For students with external scholarships awarding less than 100% coverage of school tuition, the sibling discount is applied to the parent's tuition portion only; discounts on tuition may not be greater than what is owed.

Continuous Enrollment Policy – Requirements for Withdrawal

Families enrolled in the Early Learning Community participate in a continuous enrollment program designed to provide consistency and stability for children.

Enrollment remains in effect from the initial start date and will continue until a formal written withdrawal is submitted.

To terminate enrollment, families are required to provide written notice at least 30 days in advance. During this 30-day notice period, families are financially responsible for full tuition and any applicable fees.

If proper written notice is not provided, tuition will be charged for the full 30-day period beginning on the date the written notice is received.

All outstanding balances, including tuition and fees, must be paid in full by the child's final day of attendance.

Dormant Enrollment Fee

Families who wish to temporarily pause attendance while maintaining their child's enrolled status may select our Dormant Enrollment option. This option allows families to hold their child's space without paying full tuition.

While on dormant status, a monthly dormant enrollment fee is charged to reserve the child's placement. Full tuition will resume once the child returns to active attendance. Dormant enrollment is subject to availability and must be approved in advance by administration.

General Financial Policy

It is the policy of Collage Day School that currently enrolled families must ensure all financial matters have been resolved for the current academic year to ensure continued enrollment. Additionally, student records will not be transferred to new schools at the end of a school year unless all financial obligations have been met.

School Operating Policies

Hours/Holidays/Weather Closures

Collage is open 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for faculty in-service professional development days and holidays indicated on the Collage calendar.

Tuition is based on your child's program, not the number of days he/she attends. Therefore, full tuition is due even if your child is absent or when school is closed for holidays, weather, or emergencies. Collage will be closed to all for the following holidays:

- Teacher Preplanning (Typically Last Week in July)
- Labor Day (First Monday in September)
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day (Fourth Thursday in November)
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Week of Christmas
- New Year's Day
- MLK
- Presidents Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed on the Friday prior to the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the Monday following the holiday.

Inclement weather may warrant late openings, early, or full day closings. Closings will be communicated to families through Parent Alert, Brightwheel and our social media page for the most recent advisories and updates. Please note, Collage Day School does not follow the school calendars nor closures of neighboring counties and schools. Full tuition is due for any week in which a holiday or inclement weather closing occurs

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policy

Please be punctual in dropping off and picking up your child. Children will only be allowed to be picked up by authorized adults with proper identification who are designated on the transportation and authorization forms filed with your child's registration materials.

If you are late for regular pick-up (i.e., your child is not enrolled in full-day), please note that you will be assessed a late pick-up fee. If an emergency arises, or there is a change and another person will be picking up your child, you must notify the front office with a phone call and in writing. Anyone picking up your child must be designated on your child's emergency form and must have a valid photo I.D. *Telephone calls alone are not sufficient to authorize a pick-up. All changes must be made in writing, by email, or fax and sent to your child's teacher, administrator, and front office personnel.*

Any parent or other authorized person who arrives at the school while intoxicated or in an impaired condition endangers the child's welfare and safety. Such a person will not be permitted to leave the school with the child/children whom they are authorized to pick up. Collage staff will use professional judgment in determining the best interests of the child in the situation, including making alternative arrangements for the child/children pick-up by attempting to contact another person on the authorized child pick-up list. Collage Day School also reserves the right to report the incident to appropriate authorities.

Arrivals after 10:00am are only accepted with prior written notice to the ELC administration. When dropping off or picking up, please park your car in an assigned spot and shut off your engine when you come into the building.

Welcome Tour and Class Visits

At the beginning of each school year, Meet the Teacher visits provide parents and staff an opportunity to discuss classroom policies and procedures, including expectations prior to the start of the first day of school for each student.

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Daily schedule
- Special activities for parents and students
- Helpful community services
- Volunteer Information
- How to help their child learn and do well at school
- Initial introduction to school staff and special resources

Communication

Collage Day School works very hard to keep parents informed and the lines of communication open. Collage has established a variety of ways to keep parents informed of all school events and activities.

- Our website, www.collagedayschool.org, is the primary source for Collage information.
- Collage's Facebook and Instagram pages are updated regularly.
- Weekly email updates/newsletters.
- Communication with teachers may be done through email, teacher conferences, home/school communication logs, Brightwheel, or phone calls.
- Teachers make use of Brightwheel on a daily basis.
- All general feedback or suggestions are welcome by calling the front desk.

Open Door Policy

To support Collage families, administrators are available to address your questions or concerns regarding Collage and its policies and pledge to be responsive in resolving any issues. We welcome comments, suggestions, concerns, and compliments! We encourage parents to seek direct communication with those involved with your child to address any situations or concerns, including the lead teachers and Collage leadership team.

Conferences With Teachers

Parent-Teacher conferences are valuable in assisting student growth. Regularly scheduled conferences will occur twice per year for Tawny & Spotted families, as established on the school calendar.

Additional conferences will be scheduled by teachers whenever necessary and may be initiated by the parent. The teacher will arrange a time that is mutually convenient. Parents may not approach teachers during school hours or at dismissal to discuss concerns.

Phone/Email

Parents/guardians may contact school personnel via email as needed. Please refer to the front of this handbook for all email addresses. Parents/guardians may also call the school and leave a message for a teacher. Because teachers are expected to be actively instructing and supervising students throughout the day, please allow 48 hours for a response. Out of respect, parents should not contact teachers about school business on their personal phone numbers.

Conferences with the Preschool Director/Assistant Preschool Director

Parents/guardians may request a conference with the Director or Assistant Director by emailing to schedule an appointment. If the concern relates to a child's development, classroom experience, or behavior, families are encouraged to first communicate directly with their child's teacher to discuss the matter.

If additional support is needed, administration is available to collaborate and will gladly assist in facilitating a conference with the teacher to ensure open communication and a shared plan moving forward.

Policy for Parent Communication and/or Grievance

We value parent involvement as an essential part of our program and recognize that, at times, families may have questions, concerns, or differing perspectives regarding school practices or procedures. Open communication between families and staff is important in supporting each child's success.

We encourage parents/guardians to share feedback and work collaboratively with teachers and administration to ensure a consistent and supportive approach between home and school.

To help facilitate effective communication, we ask that families follow these guidelines:

- Ensure your child is signed in and accounted for by classroom staff each day.
- If your concern relates to a classroom matter, please first communicate directly with your child's teacher. We ask that these conversations take place privately, outside of the classroom, and not in front of children or other families. Teachers will work with you to understand concerns and collaborate on solutions.
- If the concern is not resolved at the classroom level, please contact the Director or Assistant Director to schedule a meeting. Administration is available to support and may facilitate a joint conference with the teacher as needed.

Our goal is to address concerns thoughtfully and collaboratively at the appropriate level before escalating further. Collage Day School staff and leadership are committed to maintaining a professional, respectful, and supportive environment for all members of our community. While we understand that concerns may arise, respectful communication is expected at all times. Behavior that is disruptive, aggressive, or disrespectful toward staff or others may result in further action, including possible termination of enrollment.

Mandated Reporting

All staff at Collage Day School are mandated reporters under Florida law. This means that any staff member who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect, or abandonment is legally required to report those concerns to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Our staff receive training on recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect and follow strict procedures to ensure that reports are made promptly and in accordance with state regulations. While we are committed to maintaining strong partnerships with families, the safety and well-being of every child is our highest priority. All reports are made in good faith and handled with the utmost professionalism and confidentiality.

Meals

All students gather for snacks and lunch. These are times for sustenance as well as for group conversations, practicing table manners, and making healthy food choices. Please provide snacks and lunch for your child each day. Your child's snacks and lunch must be packed in an insulated, labeled (with first and last name) lunch box or bag, including a cool pack if necessary. Lunches will be kept in the student classroom cubbies until the designated lunchtime. Please do not pack lunches in breakable glass containers.

Infants and Early Learning Community

Collage Day School supports all families in their individual decisions regarding how they choose to feed their infants. We recognize that feeding practices are deeply personal and may be influenced by a variety of factors, including family preferences, cultural traditions, medical needs, and guidance from healthcare providers.

Our program is committed to working in partnership with each family to ensure that feeding routines are consistent, responsive, and supportive of each child's developmental needs. Families are encouraged to communicate their child's feeding schedule, preferences, and any special instructions so that our staff can provide individualized care.

We support breastmilk feeding, formula feeding, and the gradual introduction of solid foods in accordance with each child's developmental readiness and family guidance. All feeding practices are handled with care, respect, and in compliance with health and safety regulations.

Our goal is to create a nurturing environment where each child's nutritional needs are met while honoring the values and choices of their family.

Collage Day School works cohesively with families to coordinate a student's developmental nutrition needs. We do not support serving cow's milk to children under 12 months of age.

We encourage families to provide lunches that include healthy, balanced options such as fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy (cheese or yogurt), and other sources of protein.

To ensure the safety and well-being of all children, Collage Day School will not serve food that lacks freshness, does not meet nutritional or safety guidelines, or is not developmentally appropriate.

Foods that pose a high risk of choking must not be provided for children under five years of age. Examples include, but are not limited to: whole or round sliced hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, cheese cubes or sticks, and other foods of similar size, shape, or texture that may obstruct a child's airway.

All food must be prepared in a developmentally appropriate manner to reduce choking risk. Food for infants must be cut into pieces no larger than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and food for toddlers must be cut into pieces no larger than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, taking into account each child's individual chewing and swallowing abilities.

These guidelines apply to all food consumed at school, including meals and snacks provided by families. All food, bottles, and milk brought from home must be clearly labeled with the child's name and date, and include an ice pack when necessary to maintain safe temperatures in accordance with USDA guidelines.

Thank you for your partnership in supporting healthy eating habits and ensuring a safe mealtime environment for all children.

Outdoor Play

This is a time for children to engage in gross-motor activities, such as running, climbing, gardening, and digging in the sand. It is also a very important time for peer interaction. We spend a large part of our day outdoors, so please dress your child appropriately.

During warmer months, we recommend clothing that provides sun protection, as well as applying sunscreen and, if desired, insect repellent to your child before arriving at school. If you would like teachers to reapply sunscreen or insect repellent for afternoon outdoor play, please provide labeled bottles and be sure to sign the “permission to apply” form provided with your child’s materials.

We recommend bringing a raincoat and rain boots to keep at school so that we may go on walks, even on rainy days. We also enjoy outdoor play during chilly weather, so please ensure your child has mittens or gloves, boots, a coat, and a hat for winter months.

If the weather is extremely cold or there is heavy rain, we will remain indoors.

Media Release

Unless notified in advance and in writing, registered students give consent for Collage to include their student in photographs, audio- or videotape-footage (royalty-free), audio and electronic promotions, or Collage’s website and social media.

Confidentiality/Privacy

Collage staff members may be apprised of confidential information related to students and parents. This information may include personal financial or medical details. Only administrative staff have access to tuition payment or financial information. All staff members are instructed on what information is confidential and to keep such information confidential. The obligation to keep any medical related information provided to us is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Lost and Found Items

Please label all your child’s items including jackets, lunchboxes, and water bottles so they can be returned if misplaced. Lost items are taken to the front desk. We invite you to check our lost and found area if your child has misplaced any items. Once per quarter, all unclaimed items will be donated to charity. Reminder announcements will be made prior to the donations. Please remember that valuables, keepsakes, and electronics should not be brought to Collage. Collage is not responsible for any lost items.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Students celebrating birthdays are invited to share a treat with their class. If sending in treats, please check with the classroom teacher for a list of allergies or diet restrictions. Other celebrations are held during the year to honor various occasions (Thanksgiving, Veterans Day, etc.) Parents and students may be asked to help organize these events.

Food provided for a classroom celebration or other event must be store-bought and have a clearly legible ingredients label so that caregivers can confirm that the food is safe for consumption by all students, including those with food allergies. This policy helps us to do our best to honor parent wishes regarding dietary restrictions.

Collage is concerned with the development of a positive self-image for all students. Therefore, if you are hosting a party for your child outside of school where all the students or all the students of the same gender are not invited, please do not send invitations to school.

Health & Safety Policies

School Physical and Immunization Requirements

To comply with state of Florida licensing requirements, all children must receive certain immunizations. Entry into Collage is contingent upon receiving all documentation. In accordance with Florida Statute (s. 1003.22(1), F.S.) and Rule (Chapter 6A-6.024, FAC). Children attending Collage must provide Form DH 680, Florida Certification of Immunization, and Form DH 3040, school entry physical.

- Religious exemptions from immunizations can be obtained from your local county health department. No appointment is necessary, and the child does not need to be present. You must present this form to Collage, which will be kept in the child's file indefinitely.
- Medical exemptions from immunizations are accepted at Collage Day School with the proper medical documentation along with DH Form 680.

Collage requires all students to obtain a school physical prior to their first day of class on campus. A valid DH Form 3040 (no more than 6mo prior to start) must be provided to the school upon entry.

Illness Policy

Collage Day School requires that children exhibiting any of the following symptoms remain at home until they are symptom-free or have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours:

- A fever of 101°F or higher
- Colored discharge from the nose, eyes, or mouth accompanied by other symptoms
- Unexplained rash
- Chest congestion that interferes with normal breathing
- Vomiting or diarrhea

In addition, any two occurrences of vomiting or diarrhea warrant removal of the child from school until symptoms have ceased for 24 hours. A communication with this reminder will be sent home specifying what is needed for the child to return to school.

A student must be kept home if he/she has a communicable disease, has had a fever, or has excessive vomiting/diarrhea within the previous 24 hours. Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill (i.e., fever, unexplained rash, lethargy, or a cough which makes it difficult for the child to breathe).

Please be considerate of the health of other students, families, and staff and understand that we cannot permit sick children to attend school.

If a child becomes ill while at school, he or she will be provided a cot in the health clinic or taken to another quiet area to rest. Parents or the designated emergency contact will be notified and expected to pick up the child as soon as possible.

Children who are ill may not remain at school. The school reserves the right to require a child to be picked up if they are unable to fully participate in daily activities due to symptoms such as listlessness or lethargy, or if they exhibit symptoms that are difficult to manage in a classroom setting. These may include, but are not limited to, persistent coughing, excessive sneezing, nasal discharge, or adverse side effects from medications or supplements.

Communicable Disease

When you have verification that your child has a communicable disease (such as strep throat, hand-foot-and-mouth, or conjunctivitis), please call the front office immediately so that we may take action

to prevent further spread to faculty and students. Any student having a communicable illness MUST have a note of clearance from a medical doctor upon returning to school.

Collage may consult with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Florida Department of Health regarding an identified illness to determine precautionary measures and additional requirements for a student's return to school. For more information regarding communicable diseases, please refer to <https://www.daycare.com/florida/state4.html>. *Regardless of illness, any student who is absent for three or more consecutive days, might be asked to provide medical clearance (from a pediatrician, urgent care, or emergency room physician) to return to school.*

Communicable Disease Notification Policy

If a communicable disease is reported and confirmed at Collage Day School, the School Nurse will promptly notify all families whose children may have come into direct contact with the infected individual. Notifications will be made in accordance with privacy laws and health department guidelines, and will include information about the disease, potential symptoms to monitor, and any recommended next steps. The school will also implement appropriate cleaning and safety protocols to minimize further risk of transmission.

Allergies

Collage strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children, but we cannot guarantee that we can keep our environment completely free of food or other allergens that might cause a severe reaction in your child. For this reason, we remind you that we must have a completed 'Food/Allergy Action Plan Form' on file for your child, indicating that they either have no allergies, or listing those which they have. We also caution you to consider staff and other students in packing lunches and snacks for your children to bring to Collage.

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide appropriate treats for their child with allergies in order to celebrate birthdays and/or special events. The teacher will do his/her best to inform you of an upcoming special event or birthdays, however, providing acceptable snacks that can be stored in the classroom will ensure that your child will be included in celebrations.

Allergy Precautions

- The sharing of food in lunches or snacks is not permitted. Lists of allergies are posted in every classroom. The teachers are required to be familiar with every child's allergy and keep the posted list updated. School Nurse will assist with this.
- If a child has life-threatening food allergies, parents should provide a non-perishable snack to be kept at school and served as an alternative, as needed. Per parent request, these children may sit apart from others when eating snack or lunch.
- Every staff member who works in a classroom with a child with severe allergies is required to be trained in the use of an Epi-Pen.
- While we do our best to assist our children with special needs, please be aware we cannot guarantee the complete elimination of allergens.

While Collage cannot provide a completely allergen-free environment for students with food allergies, we can, through education and compassion, create a safe and respectful place for learning for all students.

Medication

Child care programs are not required to administer medication; however, if Collage Day School chooses to do so, the following procedures must be followed to ensure the health and safety of all students:

Authorization

- Written authorization from the custodial parent or legal guardian is required for all prescription and non-prescription medications.
- Authorization must be **dated and signed** and include:
 - The child's full name
 - The name of the medication
 - The dosage amount
 - The date and time the medication is to be administered
- For medications given on an **"as needed" basis (PRN)**, additional written documentation must describe the specific symptoms that indicate when the medication should be given.
- Under no circumstances will medication prescribed for one child be administered to another child.

Medication Requirements and Storage

- All medications must be provided by the parent or legal guardian in the **original container**.
- Prescription medications must include a label with:
 - Physician and/or pharmacy name and contact information
 - Child's name
 - Name of medication
 - Clear dosage instructions
- Non-prescription medications must include the original manufacturer's label with directions.
- All medications will be administered according to labeled instructions and stored at the appropriate temperature in a secure location.

Emergency Administration

- In emergency situations, non-prescription medication that was not supplied by the parent or legal guardian may only be administered if prior **written authorization** has been provided by the parent or legal guardian.

Lice

Upon determining that a student has a case of head lice, he/she will immediately be sent home. To be readmitted to school, the student will need to provide proof of treatment (home/lice clinic). School-wide lice checks will not occur, unless it is determined there is a widespread outbreak. In the case of a widespread outbreak, families of affected classrooms will be notified and a check of every student in each classroom will be facilitated.

Sleep Safety

Childcare providers can maintain safer sleep environments for babies that help lower the chances of SIDS. In the belief that proactive steps can be taken to lower the risk of SIDS in childcare, and that

parents and childcare providers can work together to keep babies safer while they sleep, Collage Day School practices the following safe sleep policy:

- All staff who work with infants and toddlers receive ongoing training and certifications. Specifically: Sleep Safe, CPR and First Aid. Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep, unless we are directed to otherwise. For this, we must have a signed Sleep Position Medical Waiver on file. In that case, a waiver notice will be posted in the classroom and a copy filed in the infant's file.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends babies be placed on their back to sleep, but when babies can easily turn over from the back to the stomach, they are allowed to remain on their stomach.

Toilet Mastery

Toilet mastery status is a preschool eligibility requirement for enrollment at Collage Day School. Toilet mastery procedures and expectations can vary according to culture, family, and individual children. It is important that staff members communicate with parents and be sensitive to these differences in the event that the child is not toilet trained prior to enrollment. Toilet mastery is an important developmental task and is accomplished more easily when the child is ready, and parents and teachers work together using a consistent approach that emphasizes self-mastery and positive reinforcement. Parents and teacher will meet prior to beginning the process to determine the child's readiness based on observable behaviors that signal a child's readiness for successful toilet mastery.

Toilet Mastery includes:

- Use the potty independently.
- Manage both urination and bowel movements on their own.
- Pull clothing and underwear up and down without assistance.
- Wash and dry their hands independently after using the restroom.

Food Handling

- Bottles and sippy cups brought from home shall be individually labeled with the child's first and last name and shall be returned to the custodial parent or legal guardian daily.
- Child care personnel, while distributing snacks and serving food, must use disposable gloves, utensils, or similar items to prevent skin contact with food.
- Food provided by parents/guardians must be properly stored and handled in a sanitary manner at all times to prevent contamination or spoilage. If food is supposed to be kept cold, parents/guardians must include ice packs to keep food cold.

Breastmilk, Infant Formula, and Food

- Breastmilk and formula must be handled in a sanitary manner at all times and according to manufacturer's instructions and instructions by parents/guardians. If instructions are not readily available, child care personnel must obtain information from the World Health Organization's Safe Preparation, Storage and Handling of Powdered Infant Formula Guidelines, as referenced in Caring for Our Children Basics Health and Safety Foundations for Early Care and Education, which is incorporated by in 65C-22.001(7)(v), F.A.C.
- The provider must make sure all formula and food brought from home are labeled with the child's first and last name and date it was expressed. The provider is responsible for the label; therefore, if the label is not completed by the parent, child care personnel must put the label on when the formula or food is received.

Separation

Children leaving their parents' care may experience anxiety surrounding separation, characterized by crying, not wanting the parent to leave, general sadness and clinginess. This is normal behavior for children and parents. Please keep in mind that:

- New experiences can be unsettling for some children and we understand they may need time to develop trust and confidence in their new environment. Anxious behaviors may return during various growth spurts and/or when changes to the child's routine occur.
- All children will have a different approach to the way in which they adjust and how long it may take them to adjust.

- The time frame in which children adjust to this separation is typically a short window.
- Comfort items, such as a child's blanket, doll, etc., are allowed to smooth these transitions
- New things are unsettling - people need time to adjust and transfer trust.
- Different personalities approach new situations differently; please respect your child's personal approach to situations as it may differ from your own.
- It is generally short-lived.
- It may return during growth spurts and changes in regular schedule.
- Transitional items (doll, blanket, picture) may help and are encouraged.

Smoke Free and Weapon Free Facility

Collage Day School is a smoke-free campus. We do not allow the use of tobacco on the property in any capacity. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Our facility prohibits firearms, weapons, knives, pocketknives, and other significant hazards that pose a risk to children and adults.

Visitor Policy

All visitors must sign the visitor log located at the front office. Visitors will receive a badge identifying them as such and will be required to wear it while on Collage's campus. All visitors must return to the front desk to sign out prior to leaving.

Parent Involvement and Volunteers

Collage Day School promotes a culture of community. Parents are a particularly important part of the large family we create every year. Many parents are actively involved in the school's programs and all parents are encouraged to participate in classroom activities, family fun events, and fundraising efforts. Parents are welcome to sign-up as volunteers for class celebrations and events. During the planning stages of each event, teachers will communicate their needs and will request parent responses and availability. Volunteers need to sign in at the front desk and always wear an identification badge when on campus.

Collage Day School welcomes parents to join the Parent Community Alliance (PCA) to serve as an age level or grade representative. The mission of PCA is to further the development of Collage Day School by supporting the school, staff, and students. Please contact the Directors if you would like to join PCA and connect with the PCA executive board.

Collage Day School is licensed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) for infants through five and adheres to all volunteer policies from DCF including the requirement for volunteers to complete a background clearance if volunteering more than 10 hours per month. Parents who wish to volunteer at Collage should contact the front office for instructions as to how to complete the process.

Visitors on the Playground and Outside Areas

We take our responsibility to protect your child's and every student's personal rights and safety very seriously. Our diligence ensures Collage remains in compliance with the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which exists to protect individuals' medical records and other personal health information.

While we understand many parents may wish to watch their child at play, we must protect the privacy of all children who are using the playground and other outside areas of the school.

Anyone observing children who is not a Collage employee will be asked by staff to leave the area. Please know that, in instituting this rule, we are protecting your child, as well as all children entrusted to our care.

Classroom Monitoring

All of our classrooms have windows, doors with windows, and security cameras (with video and audio) to support student safety. Outdoor spaces are also under surveillance to ensure safety throughout the campus. Please note that these security cameras are for school use only and are not accessible for parent viewing.

Safety and Supervision of Children

At Collage, we practice a "Safety Always" philosophy. All staff members are expected to always adhere to this philosophy. Mindful preparation and practicing safe work habits both inside and outside the buildings is a responsibility shared by all staff and faculty that we take very seriously.

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that children are always under the direct supervision of one or more staff. When indoors, teachers are watching or directing the children's activities within proximity of students in the same room. When outdoors, children always remain within the sightline of their teacher in a designated play area. When more than one teacher is supervising outdoors, teachers are in separate areas to maximize the view of the children and ensure their safety. Entrance and (Front Door) exit ways remain guarded to ensure that children remain in the designated area.

Supervision

Children enrolled in Collage Day School must have adult supervision at all times. DCF Guidelines are as follows:

- Infant 1:4
- Toddler 1:6
- Twos 1:11 (1:22 at naptime)
- Threes 1:15 (1:30 at naptime)
- Fours 1:20

Children must be in sight at all times.

Attendance must be taken often, especially when changing activity areas or moving from indoors to outdoors, etc.

Staff must accompany the child/children to come inside from the playground.

Always supervise the classroom at naptime according to DCF guidelines.

Staff are to sit or stand facing the children at all times. Staff are to interact with the children at all times, including on the playground.

Incidents

At least one staff member with current first aid and CPR certification required to be on premises when children are present. In the event of an injury, staff members will summon the staff nurse or certified staff member, and use basic first aid techniques, unless it is judged that professional assistance is required, at which time 911/emergency services will be called. If a child is removed from the school by anyone other than a parent (e.g., ambulance, paramedics), a familiar staff member will accompany the child and stay with him/her and will take the child's emergency contact form with them. Collage administration will contact the child's emergency contact immediately.

Collage's staff will document all incidents occurring on Collage's property. If bleeding occurs, staff will use safety precautions including, but not limited to, wearing gloves, or washing hands before and after contact with the injured student. An Accident/Incident Report Form will be sent home and should be signed by the parent/guardian before they leave the building. Signed forms will be placed in the student's file.

Emergency Numbers & Evacuation Plans

Emergency numbers, including 911 and the Poison Control Center, are posted near all facility phones. An evacuation plan, including a diagram of safe routes, is posted in each classroom.

Collage maintains comprehensive Emergency Response Plans designed to protect the health and safety of students and staff. These plans may include procedures for addressing child injuries and accidents, fire, severe weather, building or utility issues, shelter in place situations, and active shooter situations, among other emergency scenarios. Emergency response procedures are reviewed regularly and implemented as needed.

In the event of an evacuation, Collage has designated evacuation locations where students and staff will safely relocate as directed. Staff are trained to escort students to these designated areas and ensure accountability at all times.

To support emergency preparedness, staff are equipped with emergency "to go bags." These bags are taken during evacuations or shelter in place situations and contain essential supplies such as a first aid kit, student demographic and emergency contact information, and other emergency supplies necessary to care for students until normal operations are restored or emergency personnel arrive.

Collage has an established family communication and reunification plan. In the event of an emergency, the school will make every effort to contact families as quickly as possible using the contact information on file. Procedures are in place to safely reunite children with authorized caregivers once it is appropriate to do so, following guidance from emergency officials.

Fire Alarms & Drills

To prepare for potential hazards, Collage will conduct, at a minimum, one fire drill per month. The lead teacher is responsible for instructing students on fire drill procedures. Upon the sounding of the fire alarm, all students are required to leave the building in an orderly manner using the designated fire exit posted in each classroom.

Students, accompanied by teachers, must remain at a safe distance (as outlined by the local fire department) from any building and beyond school driveways and access roads. All staff and students are prohibited from reentering any school building until directed by the Directors, Fire Marshal, or another senior administrative official supervising the evacuation.

Each time the alarm sounds, it must be treated as a possible emergency. Teachers will always remain with their class and follow established emergency response procedures.

Each classroom at Collage is equipped with an emergency egress window through which children and staff may exit if necessary.

Child Protective Investigations

Florida law provides that any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare must report such knowledge to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The school will cooperate with all child protective investigations by DCF or the local law enforcement agency. Reports should be made to Florida's Department of Children and Families by calling the Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

Child protective investigations by DCF or local law enforcement agencies sometimes include interviews of students at school and may occur without advance notice. When it is reasonably possible, the school will ask the investigator for permission to notify parents/guardians if their child has been asked to participate in a child protective investigation. The school may also request that a school staff member be present during investigative interviews on school property. However, the school will follow the direction of the investigator with respect to these requests.

Screening and Assessment

Screening is a process to determine whether a child has any developmental concerns that may require further evaluation and follow-up. Screenings conducted at the center may include vision, hearing, speech/language, nutrition, dental, and overall development. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire will be used at least once per year in our Early Learning Community. Parental consent forms for screening are included in the registration packet.

Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings. At-home activities may be recommended based on the results of the screenings. If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians. Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

Children at every age level will be assessed using on-going child observations and portfolio assessment for the purpose of identifying developmentally appropriate learning outcomes met throughout the year and creating individualized learning goals based on the results of the observations and assessments.

Each child must have a portfolio which includes a sampling of the child's progress. Depending on the age of the child, these samples may include Ages and Stages Questionnaires, literacy and numeracy assessments, artwork, dictation, writing samples, pictures, anecdotal notes, photos, etc. Portfolios for infants and toddlers may also include copies of daily notes, growth charts, and other developmental checklists. Portfolios are to be shared with parents during scheduled conferences.

Teaching staff will use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations, individualization, and ongoing assessment of each child. Information will be gathered from teachers and parents.

Screening Procedure

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) will be used at least once per year for all age groups. Teachers will complete and score the ASQ. Parental input may also be used to complete the ASQ. The scored ASQ will be kept in the child's portfolio.

- Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings either through a letter sent home by the center director or through written documentation of a parent-teacher conference where results were shared.
- At home activities will be recommended based on the results of the screenings.
- If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians.
- Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

Assessment Procedure

- Within 45 days of the start of the school year, teaching staff will do an initial assessment for each child using an approved developmental checklist or assessment instrument.
- Based on parent information, screenings, and initial observations, goals will be made for each child based on their individual needs.
- Teaching staff will conduct teacher-directed small group learning centers daily that will focus on these individualized goals. Progress of goals will be documented.

The ongoing assessment of each child will be recorded and updated at least twice per academic year. Each time an update is made new goals and plans will be made, based on the children's individual needs. Plans for individualization will be kept with the current lesson plans.

Portfolios will be maintained for each child. Teachers will gather evidence of children's progress in these individual files. Things to be included in the portfolios may include literacy and numeracy assessments, artwork, anecdotal notes, writing samples, daily notes, photos, growth charts, etc. These items should be dated and include a statement concerning what objective the child achieved.

- Assessment results will be shared with parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences at least twice during the school year. Optional letters with results may also be shared.
- At the time of a child's transition to the next class, the teacher will pass the portfolio up to the next teacher.
- At the time of a child's transition to kindergarten, the teacher will send the portfolio home.

Dress Code Policy

Collage Day School requires students to follow a unified dress code for ages three and up. This policy includes the following specifications:

Clothing:

- Shirts worn by all students must be monogrammed collared shirt with the official Collage Day School logo Monday through Thursday. These shirts can be either light blue, navy, white, or hunter green. Collage Day School t-shirts may be worn on physical education and Outdoor days. Students may wear monogrammed t-shirt on Fridays.
- Pants and skirts worn by all students must be khaki, grey, navy, or white.
- Girls' skirts should be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Girls may wear fitted shorts or leggings under their skirts.
- Long-sleeved shirts or leggings worn under uniforms for warmth must be solid in color—white, gray, or navy.
- Cold Weather Days: students may wear warm clothing offered by Lands End. Any outerwear jackets, coats, or hoodies may be worn over approved uniforms while outside only. Upon entering a building, any non-approved outerwear will need to be removed.

Shoes:

- Collage does not require uniform-specific shoes. However, all students should wear closed-toed shoes with a back for safety purposes. Please keep shoes simple in design and color.
- Ankle or knee socks in white, navy, light blue, or hunter green may be worn with uniforms.

For further questions regarding uniforms please contact the school administration for more information.

Philosophy of Discipline

Collage takes pride in maintaining high standards as an educationally-based child development center. Our staff receives extensive training in empirically researched educational and behavioral methods. Collage supports our students' development by maintaining an environment that promotes and encourages appropriate pro-social behavior through the use of proven strategies that allow a child to flourish here and in their future classroom environments. Our philosophy is to use caring and positively reinforcing caregiver/child interactions to increase appropriate behavior. *Collage Day School does not use any form of corporal punishment.*

Proactive Positive Behavioral Strategies

Below is a list of potential proactive, positive behavioral strategies that may be used to address and/or redirect common child behaviors. These strategies are intended to increase appropriate behavior by rewarding it and thereby increasing the likelihood of repetition.

This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but is rather an overview of strategies that may be implemented:

- Behavior specific praise
- Attention for positive behaviors
- Using instructions that are concise and easily understood by the child
- Allowing processing of verbal instructions
- Redirection to a different activity
- Modeling pro-social behaviors
- Reinforcing pro-social behaviors of peers
- Giving choices when appropriate

Behavior Guidance Policy

Helping young children develop self-control and the social and emotional skills to function successfully in a group setting is an important goal of the Collage Day School curriculum. We do not expect that children have mastery of these skills when they enter school. Children may act out for a variety of reasons but there are a number of preventative measures and practices that a program can put in place to minimize behavioral issues for all children.

Program Response to Disruptive or Unsafe Behavior

At Collage Day School, we approach all behavior as a form of communication. When disruptive or unsafe behavior occurs, our priority is to understand the root cause while ensuring a safe, supportive environment for all children.

The following steps guide our response:

1. Observation and Assessment

Teachers and administration will observe and document behavior to better understand possible contributing factors. These may include developmental stage, environmental influences, communication needs, or changes in routine or home life. All behavior is considered within the context of developmentally appropriate expectations.

2. Family Collaboration

Families will be contacted when concerns arise and invited to partner with teachers and/or administration. We value family insight and work collaboratively to share observations, identify patterns, and develop consistent approaches between home and school. Ongoing communication is essential to supporting each child's success.

3. Individualized Action Plan

When additional support is needed, an individualized Action Plan may be developed. This plan is designed to support the child's growth and success in the classroom and may include:

- Environmental adjustments
- Teaching and reinforcing replacement skills
- Increased adult support and guidance
- Consistent strategies between school and home

When appropriate, families may also be guided toward outside resources or professionals, such as early childhood specialists or pediatric providers.

4. Positive Guidance Strategies

Staff use proactive, positive, and developmentally appropriate strategies to guide behavior. These may include redirection, modeling, teaching social-emotional skills, reinforcing positive behaviors, and offering structured choices.

Collage Day School does not use punitive, coercive, or exclusionary practices.

Ongoing Support and Review

Action Plans and strategies are reviewed regularly and adjusted as needed. Continued communication with families, documentation, and follow-up conversations help ensure consistency and progress.

Our goal is always to support each child's development while maintaining a safe and nurturing learning environment for all.

Biting Policy

Biting is a common behavior in young children, particularly in infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds, as they are still developing language, self-regulation, and social skills. While this behavior can be upsetting, it is a typical part of early development.

At Collage Day School, we respond to biting in a calm, consistent, and supportive manner:

- The safety and care of all children is our first priority. The child who has been bitten is comforted and cared for immediately.
- The child who bit is guided toward appropriate ways to express their needs, such as using words, gestures, or gentle touches.
- Staff closely supervise and support children to help prevent future incidents, including anticipating situations that may lead to biting.
- All incidents are documented, and families of both children are notified. For confidentiality, the identity of the other child is never shared.

If biting becomes a repeated behavior, teachers and families will work collaboratively to develop an Action Plan to support the child in learning more appropriate ways to communicate and interact.

Our goal is to support each child's development while maintaining a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all children.

Student Suspension

Collage reserves the right to suspend a child from school, either in-school or out of school. Decision of suspension will be based on the judgment of Collage's administration depending on the specifics of the incident and the totality of the situation. Suspensions are reserved for more severe behaviors that are not improved or address through normal classroom management of the teacher.

Student Expulsion

Collage reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment if the child, in the judgment of Collage's professional staff, presents a danger to him/herself or others. Parents also understand that if the parent or guardian of the child and Collage staff cannot come to mutual agreement regarding procedures and policies, Collage reserves the right to discontinue the child's enrollment.

When children enter Collage Day School, it is understood that parents agree to support all rules of CDS as outlined in this Parent Handbook. In situations involving repeated violations of school rules, or if at any time a child's influence is considered harmful, or his/her presence in CDS is regarded as undesirable, the school reserves the right to require withdrawal. Every effort will be made to avoid discontinuing a child's enrollment in CDS.

The following are grounds for expulsion:

- Failure of the parents to cooperate with Collage's policies.
- Failure by the parents to provide completed health forms and to provide other required administrative information regarding enrollment and attendance, including review of, and consent to, any applicable developmental information or assessments.
- Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness (VPK program only).
- Ongoing noncompliance/parent disagreements regarding Collage's sick policy.
- Inability of the school to meet the apparent needs of the child, as determined by the Collage Day School data team, which includes your child's teacher and Directors.
- Parents' disrespectful behavior toward other parents, children, teachers, administrators, or other staff.

Steps Prior to Any Separation

Before considering suspension or dismissal, the following steps will be taken:

Observation and Assessment

Staff will carefully observe and document behaviors to better understand contributing factors, including developmental stage, environmental influences, and individual needs.

Family Collaboration

Families will be actively involved throughout the process. Conferences will be scheduled to share observations, discuss concerns, and collaborate on strategies. Family input is valued and considered at every stage.

Individualized Action Plan

Developmentally appropriate supports and strategies will be implemented through an individualized Action Plan. These plans are designed to support the child's growth and success and are consistently applied across the school day.

Referrals and Professional Support

When appropriate, families may be supported in accessing additional resources such as early intervention services, behavioral specialists, mental health consultants, or pediatric professionals.

Ongoing Review and Support

Progress will be monitored, and strategies will be adjusted as needed. Follow-up meetings and continued communication will occur to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Exhaustion of Interventions

Suspension or dismissal will only be considered after all reasonable supports and interventions have been implemented and documented.

Family Support and Transition Planning

If separation becomes necessary, the school will work collaboratively with families to:

- Provide referrals to appropriate community resources and service providers
- Assist in identifying alternative placements when possible
- Support a thoughtful and respectful transition focused on the child's well-being

Suspension or dismissal is not used as a disciplinary action, but rather as a decision made in the best interest of the child and the overall school community.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents agree to cooperate with educational services in the following ways:

- Attend parent meetings when requested by Collage's Directors or lead teacher.
- Generalize skills taught in Collage to different environments including home and the community.
- Encourage the child to demonstrate appropriate behavior at home, at school, and in the community.
- Alert the school if there are any significant changes in the child's health or well-being that affects his/ her ability to perform in school.
- Alert staff of any medication changes or new interventions.
- Notify administration of changes to custody arrangements.

Handbook Amendments

The administration reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time during the school year. Any and all such amendments are effective immediately and apply to all students and families.