

INFANT - TODDLER - PRESCHOOL

LENA SEARS
Child Development Center

Parent Handbook



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<https://cojc.org/cdc.php>

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Welcome

Welcome to Lena Sears Child Development Center. We are delighted that you have chosen us to fulfill your childcare and educational needs.

Caring for your child is a responsibility we take very seriously. Our goal is to provide a loving atmosphere that supports your child's developmental needs.

We have been serving this community for over twenty-five (25) years. We have qualified teachers and staff dedicated to providing quality childcare in a nurturing environment.

Please take time to read the entire parent handbook, as it will answer many of the questions you may have concerning our policies and procedures.

Our goal is to supplement your parenting and support you in your role as a working parent. We encourage you to become an active participant in our program.

If you have any questions, concerns, or problems, feel free to talk to your child's teacher or the Center's Director.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education's, Division of Early Learning is our licensing entity. Children can enter our program at four (4) months through five (5) years old.

Mission

Lena Sears Child Development Center's mission is to take advantage of the teachable moments that happen each day by focusing on creative, social-emotional, and physical growth and development.

Our children inspire a lifelong commitment to learning. A caring, cooperative Daycare Center environment promotes cultural values and supports positive relationships and respectful interactions. We will provide an environment that allows children to learn by hands-on experiences to more abstract concrete development.

We believe that a stable, safe, healthy, comfortable, and culturally relevant environment is crucial to a child's growth. It provides a child-centered curriculum directed by teachers in which children are encouraged to construct their knowledge.

We believe that the Lena Sears Child Development Centers program reflects the need and goals of children and families. We look forward to working closely with our families to provide quality care and learning for children.

Center Hours of Operation

The Center is open all year, Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except holidays.

Arrival and Departure

- All students **must** be at school by **9:00 a.m.**, except for extenuating circumstances.
- **(Subject to the Director's Approval) In some cases, parents will not enter the program for repeated lateness!**
- Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must report to the office for a "**late slip**" to give the child's teacher and sign a late log.
- **All parents must pick up their child/children by 5:00 p.m. or incur late fees. A child cannot attend school the next day without paying the late fee.**
- **Late Fee: \$20. The first minute late (5:01 pm late \$20.) for every minute after 5:01 there an additional \$2.00 added.**
- All parents must sign their child in and out of school daily.
- **Parents should notify the Center director of doctor appointments at least 48 hours in advance.**
- Parents must notify the Center director when students are absent **for two consecutively**.
- Parents needing to take their child from the Center during the day must inform the teacher and sign the child out of daycare for the day.
- Parents must notify the Center if someone other than the parent picks up their child in advance. Identification is required.
- All parents must be sure that a staff member has acknowledged the arrival and departure of their child and that all children are dropped off and picked up by the parent in the classroom. **No child shall escort him or herself into or leave their classroom alone.**
- Parents of infants must complete an arrival form every morning detailing their child's activities before arrival.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is **mandatory** for all students entering the Center. **Parents must take the time to wash or supervise their child's handwashing procedure each morning.**

Hand washing occurs during the following: entering the program, before and after each meal, after using the restroom, after diaper changing, after outdoor play, before and after cooking projects, and whenever hands are solid.

Complaint Procedures

Complaints are reported to the center's Director/Assistant Director or Supervisor either in person or by telephone; call: (202) 584-7761 for assistance.

Outside Policy

All children participate in two hours of outdoor play every day! In the summer, children do not go outside if there has been a code red or orange alert.

In the winter, children do not go outside if the temperature is below 32°F. **Regardless of children's medical conditions children must go outside.**

It is mandated by the office of the State Superintendent of Education, Division of Early Learning that children are required to go outside twice a day. All families must adhere to this law. Please keep sick children home.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

Parents must provide sunscreen and insect repellent for their children. Sunscreen must be 15 SPF, and insect repellent must have DEET in it. Clearly label each item with your child's name and date.

School Closing

The school is closed on all Federal Holidays. Please, check the "Yearly Calendar" for all school closing.

Inclement Weather & Emergency Closing

Lena Sears Child Development Center follows the Public School System Snow and Ice Emergencies Closing ONLY! We will not close for any other public-school closings! Please watch Fox 5 News for all weather-related school closing!

Weather-related emergencies, lack of heat, water, electricity, etc., will force Lena Sears CDC to close. We are obligated to follow the guidelines set for by our licensing department.

Contact information must be accurate so that we may communicate with parents in cases of emergencies! Failure to keep contact information current will result in late fees if the Center cannot contact you or an alternate person in cases of emergencies cannot be reached.

PARENTS MUST PICK UP OR ARRANGE AN ALTERNATE PERSON TO PICK UP THEIR CHILD IN CASES OF EMERGENCIES - WITHIN AN HOUR OF COMMUNICATION FROM THE SCHOOL OR INCUR LATE FEE CHARGES.

All alternates person must be 18 years old or older with a valid Identification.

Alternate Pick Up

1. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education's, Division of Early Learning has mandated that an **alternate person is listed on the child's application for pickup of children when parents cannot do so.**
2. Parents, please call the Center or submit a letter in advance when someone other than the parents will be picking up your child.
3. Unless you have given us written authorization or a telephone call in advance, please understand that this is the PARENT'S responsibility to communicate with the Center about pick-up arrangements.
4. Parents are still responsible for late fees if the authorized person is late picking up your child or the provider does not release the child due to Court documentation.

Part-Time Care

Lena Sears Child Development Center does not provide part-time care.

Drop-in Care

Lena Sears does not provide drop-in care. The exception is for previously enrolled students that are five years old age or younger.

Alternate Care

Alternate care is the responsibility of the parents when children cannot attend school because of illness or other circumstances. **Therefore, it is critical to find alternate childcare before it is needed!**

Contact Information

Keep the following telephone numbers for home, work, and cell phones updated. Please notify the daycare center's office immediately when your contact information has changed!

Center Staff

The Center staff is comprised of teachers and assistant teachers. Our teachers have one or more of the following credentials:

- Early Childhood Education Degree
- Child Development Associate (CDA) Certification

Our assistant teachers have a high school diploma and at least two or more year of experience in a licensed child development center with specialized training in early childhood education.

Our teachers to child ratios are:

- 4 Months - 2 years 1 Teacher: 4 Children
- 2 years - 3 years 1 Teacher: 4 Children
- 3 years - 4 years 1 Teacher: 8 Children
- 4 years - 5 years 1 Teacher: 10 Children

Child Care Philosophy

We believe children need opportunities to create and discover because they learn best as they play and explore their environment. We consider a child-centered atmosphere, which encourages the process rather than the product, helps develop problem-solving skills, builds self-esteem, and promotes creativity.

Our teachers plan appropriate activities for each child's age and stage of development. These areas are:

- Social Development
- Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development
- Physical Development

We always keep in mind that each child is a unique individual and will develop at their own pace.

Child Care Goals and Objectives

Provide a caring and knowledgeable staff that is cooperative partners with parents in their child's development.

- Provide a compassionate staff that is sensitive to the family's childcare needs.
- Provide a warm, nurturing, and learning environments for all children in the Center.
- Provide a healthy, safe, supportive, and secure environment for all children in the Center.
- Encourage each child's developmental growth by providing an environment that fosters learning through action, inquiry, creativity, and exploration.
- Help each child gain better control and understanding of their body through interaction with the environment, materials, and equipment.
- Help each child develop language skills to enable self-expression.
- Promote self-esteem within each child through an environment that encourages independence, decision-making, caring, and sharing.
- Help each child develop social skills so they can successfully interact with other children and adults.

Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum is research-based and approved by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. This curriculum provides interactive learning between teachers, children, and their environment.

For example, as a child participates in a pre-planned activity, his genuine interest may lead him/her to add another item from a different learning center to this activity.

The teacher then encourages his exploration by asking leading questions or helping him/her to make observations about relationships. We prepare for this type of curriculum by providing interest areas and learning centers. Some examples of these are:

- Art
- Science
- Manipulative
- Dramatic Play
- Blocks
- Language *
- Computers *

* Language

Lena Sears Child Development Center provides Spanish as a foreign language to its students. As the world becomes more multicultural, learning a foreign language at an early age becomes paramount in our society.

* Computer Lab

Our computer lab is an extension of our academic program. It reinforces the Creative Curriculum with familiar animated cartoon characters. Children using a computer have improved their performance in reading, writing, and basic mathematics.

Our nursery students learn about the world around them by using all their senses (touching, tasting, listening, looking, and smelling). As the nursery students get older, they learn to:

- Recognize Numbers and Letters
- Recognize Shapes and Sounds
- Develop Hand and Eye Coordination
- Build Character

Division of Early Learning Annual Forms

The District of Columbia Licensing Department requires the following forms annually. Failure to complete these forms **entirely** on an annual basis will result in termination.

- Authorization for Child's Emergency Medical Treatment
- Registration Record for Child Receiving Care Away from Home.
- Travel/Field Trip (Field Trip Form)
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Emergency Contact Form

Dental Exam

All Children three (3) years old and older are required by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's Licensing Department to have an oral dental exam by a Dentist annually.

Immunizations & Physicals

An annual physical examination is required for your child to attend childcare. Health exams must be completed by a **licensed physician** and validated with the **Doctor's office stamp annually!**

Before enrollment, a child's health exam, tuberculosis (TB) test, and lead screening is submitted into the office. All required Immunizations at the appropriate age must be completed.

The Department of Health requires that the TB test and Lead Screening test be done **annually**.

Parents must consult pediatricians about any needed shots during Dr. visits to limit repeated visits!

Where Do I Drop Off Forms?

All forms, notes, etc., are to be dropped off in the Director's office. Please ONLY give Doctor's notes/excuses to the Director. HANDWRITTEN NOTES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Voucher Families

All families participating in the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's "Voucher Program" must adhere to the following:

Children are allotted 4 absent days a month without a doctor's note. We will accept documentation relating to the child, the child's siblings, parent, and other events such as funerals as excuses. Handwritten notes/excuses are not accepted.

Children that have been absent repeatedly (More than four days a month) without documentation supporting a child's absence cannot attend daycare! Please call the center and speak with the Director; your child can be terminated for excessive absences.

Voucher families have 15 days of vacation a year. Please submit your vacation dates to the Director's office before your departure.

Families must contact the childcare center's office when your child is going to be absent from school. Failure to communicate your child's absences can result in termination!

Please, do not keep your child home when they are ill, but take them to the pediatrician and submit you are not/excuse from the doctors!

Your child's attendance is reported monthly to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's Attendance Tracking System. All documentation is uploaded into this system.

Field Trips & Special Events

We view field trips and special events as an extension of our program. We invite parents to participate in field trips, special events, and other special events.

We enjoy visiting the Francis Gregory Library. The library's location is near the daycare center on Alabama Avenue SE, Washington, D.C.

The Washington Tennis and Education Foundation

WTEF works closely with the Ward 7 neighborhood to create and implement programming at the East Capitol Campus that is responsive to the needs of its residents.

WTEF's Tennis Tots program provides free tennis instruction for children, ages two to four, who attend nearby preschools and early learning centers.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are held three (3) times a year to discuss student's developmental progress. Parents or the center staff can request additional conferences, as necessary. The focus of these conferences will be:

- Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
- Emotional Development
- Social Development

Child Assessments

Assessments are completed every 45 days by the Lead Teacher and shared with the parents of each enrolled child during Parent-Teacher Conferences. The assessment tools are from the Early Stages and are aligned with the Creative Curriculum and are kept confidential.

Each day, parents of younger children receive Daily Progress Reports to keep them informed of students' daily activities.

Discipline

One of the goals in guiding young children is teaching them to become self-disciplined. However, self-control takes a long time to develop and requires nurturing and understanding from adults. Therefore, any corrective action teacher's use will be appropriate to the child's development level.

Accordingly, We Will Not Permit:

- Physically punishing, threatening, or shaming children.
- Denying food or water to any child.

However, to eliminate negative behavior, we will:

- Redirect a child's attention.
- Use a quiet area for a child to calm down.

Sign In and Out Procedure.

Signing your child in and out of daycare daily is a **mandatory procedure** required by the Office of the State of Superintendent of Education. These forms become a matter of record. Please, sign all names clearly and do not use your initials.

Please, print your name and the name of the child clearly; please, do not initial.

Items Needed for Children Entering the Program:

- Two undershirts
- Two outer shirts
- Two pairs of pants or dresses
- Two pairs of socks
- Two pairs of underwear
- Two Boxes of Kleenex **(Replace every (3) months)**
- Sheet and Blanket **(Taken home each Friday for Washing- Return these Items on Monday)**
- Wipes (Enough for a week)
- Diapers and Pull-ups **(Enough for a week Initial Each Diaper or Pull Up)**

PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S ITEMS.

Dirty or Soiled Clothing

Children's clothing may become soiled because of activities, such as painting. **Please, do not dress your child in their BEST clothing it is inappropriate for this environment.** Lena Sears will not replace or pay for soiled clothing.

Labeling Items

It is the parent's responsibility to label all their children's belongings. Remember, this is group care, and this practice helps to eliminate confusion and lost items. Please label the following:

1. Sheets and Blankets
2. Jackets and Sweaters
3. Hats and Caps

Potty-Training

The Center staff will work with parents to help children master potty training. Children are taken to the restroom at regular intervals during the day to get them accustomed to going regularly. Also, children can use the restroom whenever they indicate they need to.

***NOTE:**

Children that are being potty-trained need to bring extra items, including rubber (plastic) pants. The rubber pants will hopefully limit the amount of soiled clothing. Teachers will notify parents when children are ready for potty training.

Teachers will not force potty training or even attempt training if students are not ready to master this skill!

Storage

Lena Sears Child Development Center does not have adequate/sufficient storage space for our families. Therefore, we are asking parents to ONLY bring in requested items.

Mailbox/Center Correspondence

Parents check their child's mailbox daily for tuition statements, correspondence from the childcare center's office and your child's teacher.

Children's Cubby

Each child will have a cubby for storage purposes. Storage is limited. Only provide items that are requested.

Illnesses

The Center cannot take care of sick children! Therefore, all children must be able to participate in all activities of the day, including outdoor play. Parents should keep children home if they are exhibiting these signs.

- **Exhaustion.**
- **Excessively Irritable.**
- **Need One-On-One Attention.**

Children exhibiting signs of illness 24 hours before scheduled attendance at the Center must stay home until they are symptom-free.

Upon arrival at the Center, a child exhibiting signs of illness will not attend childcare that day. In this instance, children cannot return to the Center until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

A child with a fever of 100°F or higher must have an average temperature for 24 hours before returning to school. **This 24-hour safety zone is also in effect for, but not limited to:**

- **Diarrhea**
- **Vomiting**
- **Persistent Cough**

- **Newly Medicated Infections**
- **Contagious Disease**
- **Heavy Runny Nose or Cloudy Mucus (Yellow and Green)**
- **Persistent Bloody Nose**
- **Any undiagnosed or infectious skin condition**

All infectious diseases, such as chickenpox or Coxsackie's virus, must be reported immediately and typically call for a one-week absence from the Center.

A follow-up doctor's visit is required, and a doctor's note before your child can re-enter to the facility.

Parents are responsible for payment regardless of illness, vacations, snow and Ice closings, etc.

Medical Notes/ Medical Absence

Children that need to see a pediatrician must do so before they can return to school! Please, bring your child's note or excuse from the Doctor's office to the childcare center office before dropping your child off into class.

Absences

Parents must inform the childcare center office when a child/children will be absent from school or late entering school. Voucher students that have been absent from school four (4) days a month without a doctor's note or other supporting documentation cannot return to school.

Medication Administration

Lena Sears Child Development Center's staff will **administer prescribed medication by a licensed physician.**

Prescription medication must have the child's name, date, dosage, and name of the physician on the label. **We will not orally administer any over-the-counter medication/s.**

The parent and physician must complete and sign the "Medical Authorization Form." **The parent(s) must administer the first dosage to the child.**

1. Take medication home daily.
2. Medications are kept in the refrigerator when needed.
3. Medications, creams, and inhalers are kept in the First Aid box in the child's classroom, not in the child's cubby where other children have accessed.

The Center will administer lotions and creams to children with the parent's **written** consent. The written permission must be signed and dated by the parent.

Infant Toddler Program

Diapering

Infants and children must enter the facility with a **clean and soil-free** diaper or pull-up. If your child happens to relieve themselves on the way to school, please take a few minutes and change them! The teacher will ensure that all children are diapered and clean when picking them up from childcare.

Each child in diapers and pull-ups must have a week's supply of diapers or pull-ups to accommodate their needs, along with two boxes of wipes clearly labeled!

Breast Milk and Formula

Infants and toddlers will be given breast milk or formula until 12 months. **NO Exceptions!** Infants and toddlers need the vital nutrients in breast milk or formula for proper growth and development!

Pacifiers

Infants and toddlers can have pacifiers with the attachment ONLY to prevent pacifiers from becoming lost and other students from using them. Pacifiers must be taken home at the end of the day for cleaning.

Toddlers able to communicate verbally are **not** allowed to use pacifiers because it stifles language development. When your child starts daycare, we will slowly wean them off the pacifier if they are verbal.

Infant Bottles and Food Policy

Lena Sears CDC requires three (3) READY MADE BOTTLES each day for your infant/toddler. Remember, this is group care, and we do not want infants and toddlers to wait to eat when they are hungry. Parents must prepare infants and toddler bottles before arrival.

All formula milk bottles must be prepared and ready for consumption. All bottles, jar food, lunches, and box foods must have the infant's or toddlers' names clearly labeled with the dates.

Infant Feedings and Diapering

We will feed infants when they are hungry and change their diapers when solid. Failure to do so is a form of abuse and neglect! It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that teachers have enough supplies to take excellent care of your infant or toddler!

Teachers will not borrow another child's belongings to take care of your infant and toddler. We will prohibit entry into the program if we do not have enough supplies.

Diaper Changing Continued

Within an hour or two of being at the Center, teachers will change all infants and toddlers' or assist them with potty training. Teachers will continue to change infants and toddlers' diapers every two hours or as needed throughout the day. After each diaper change, we wash staff and infants' hands. The changing table is cleaned and sanitized.

Baby Food and Nutrition

Parents must provide daily portions of baby food and formula for infants that cannot eat table food. Breakfast, snacks, and a hot lunch are provided daily for all other children at the Center. A monthly menu of breakfast, snacks and lunch items is available in advance.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Research states that putting an infant on their back to sleep is safest. All infants will be placed on their backs when sleeping. If infants can turn themselves over, then we will not turn them onto their backs again.

Napping Policy

Infants and toddlers come to daycare with their sleeping patterns. Lena Sears will try to meet these new patterns while gently getting children into the routine in the daycare.

Children typically nap each day after lunch. The length of naps depends on the individual child. During nap time, infants will sleep on their backs until they can reposition themselves.

Naps are not mandatory. Children who have outgrown naps will have quiet time, read books, and engage in puzzles or other appropriate activities.

The Child and Adult Food Program

Junk Foods (Candy/Sugary Foods)

Parents, please **do not** give your child junk such as sodas, candy, and other sugary foods.

Lena Sears Child Development Center has partnered with the Child, and Adult Care Food Program. Junk is prohibited!

We are teaching children healthy food choices. Please, do not give children junk food to bring to school!

Children with Special Nutritional Needs

For children that cannot consume food and milk provided by Lena Sears Child Development Center, parents must provide meals or a portion thereof.

Eating is an essential part of a child's growth and development. The Center provides nutritious meals from the four primary food groups: fruits and vegetables, meats, milk, and bread and cereal.

We encourage good eating habits by serving only nutritious meals. Parents must ensure any foods brought from home to supplement or replace foods served by the Center are equally healthy.

Snacks

Lena Sears Child Development Center provides a snack for all children. Parents are welcome to bring a snack from home. PLEASE **DO NOT** STORE SNACKS IN YOUR CHILD'S CUBBY.

PLEASE GIVE ALL SNACK ITEMS TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER CLEARLY LABELED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME. **Please only provide healthy snacks!**

Birthday Parties

Birthday parties are held in the afternoons, after nap, beginning at 3:30 p.m. **Birthday parties are no longer than thirty-five to forty-five minutes long. Parties must start on time!**

Large cartoon characters are prohibited. In most cases, children are afraid of these characters because of their size. Even if your child is not scared, we must consider all children's feelings and emotions!

We recommend using whip cream instead of sugary frosting for cakes and cupcakes. If you provide cake, please do not bring Ice Cream.

Hazardous Items

Toys from Home

Toys from home are not allowed in the Center! Toys from home can cause disruption in the classroom, and toys from home may not be developmentally age-appropriate for children and may cause injury!

Jewelry

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as other children. In addition, we will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children.

Hair Beads

Parents must securely fasten beads to children's Hair! Beads often become loose and, on the floor, where children can put these items in their ears and mouths, this is a safety hazard!

Money

Please, do not give children money! Coins can be a choking hazard.

Emergency Transportation

For children who require immediate medical attention:

1. Staff will call emergency services (911) to respond. Lena Sears will phone for Emergency Medical Services when they deem it necessary for a child or children in their care. The staff at Lena Sears will then call parents or emergency contacts to inform them.

Medical Emergency Plan

Children's Medical emergencies will be handled within the following manner:

1. An ambulance called immediately.
2. Parents are informed immediately.
3. The alternate person is contacted when parents are not available.
4. The Director, Assistant Director, or Teacher will accompany the child to the hospital in the parent's or guardian's absence.
5. The parent will receive a copy of the Incident form and a copy placed in the child's file.
6. An "Unusual Incident Report" will be completed within 24 hours. The Director will report the incident to the Department of Human Services and The Office of the State Superintendent within 24 hours.

Emergencies that occur away from the premises are handled in like manner. Teachers carry Emergency Treatment, and Emergency Contact forms with them on field trips and all outings away from the facility.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

In case of an emergency Lena Sears Child Development Center will evacuate the building and assemble at Francis A. Gregory Library, 3660 Alabama Ave S.E., Washington DC 20020

As in fire drills, teachers will count children before leaving the building, take the roll book and emergency bag when exiting the building.

At the assembly area (the corner) the staff will immediately notify the fire department and count the children and staff to ensure that everyone is present. We will wait there until further instructions are given.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Be aware that in the event of an emergency, phone lines and cell phones may be down. Texting may be the only form of communication. The children's safety is always top priority.

Lena Sears Child Development Center will only leave the safety of the building's protection if it is evident that remaining in the building is too dangerous.

The Director, Assistant Director, Supervisor, or designated lead teacher will instruct the child development center of its movement depending on the emergency.

Depending on the type of emergency, flood, earthquake, tornadoes, hurricane, blizzards, or thunderstorm, the facility will evacuate the building and follow the evacuation plan to Ann Beers Elementary School, located: 3600 Alabama Avenue, S.E. Washington DC (The Elementary School located next to Frances Gregory Library)

During a Flood

Staff and students will remain in the child development center unless the need arises to move to another location. Teachers will take the Emergency Contact Binder, Roll Book, and Emergency Bag, which has the first aid supplies when exiting the building.

During an Earthquake Indoors

Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Staff and children will drop to the floor; against an interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. Take cover under a sturdy desk or table and hold on to it firmly. We will avoid exterior walls, windows and hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances, and kitchen cabinets with heavy objects or glass. We will not go outside!

During an Earthquake Outdoors

We will move to a clear area, avoiding power lines, trees, signs, buildings, vehicles, and other hazards.

Unusual Incidents Procedure

Unusual Incidents that adversely affect the children's health, safety, and well-being are inappropriate and authorities are contacted immediately.

- The Director,
- Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) at (202) 671-7233
- (OSSE) Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Email: Childcarecomplaints@dc.gov, by phone (202)727-2993 and fax at (202)727-7295 within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Lena Sears Child Development Center will protect children and comply with state and district laws when interviewing persons convicted or suspected of child abuse or molestation seeking employment.

Lena Sears CDC will report suspected Child Abuse and Neglect allegations to the proper authorities. We will assist in any resulting investigation. If you suspect abuse or neglect, please inform the Director immediately and Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) at (202) 671-7233.

Safety Policy

Parents are required to follow safety procedures. These procedures are designed not as merely inconveniences but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children, and associates of Lena Sears Child Development.

We need to be careful not to allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may be polite; however, strangers cannot enter the building.

Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Center Director.

When you arrive at the playground entrance, ring the doorbell, and stand in front of the camera. If you are unsure about an individual, please notify the office immediately.

Summer Program

Learning doesn't end when summer begins!" Children are consistently challenged academically during the summer months. They are involved in swimming, field trips, and special events. The children enjoy more outdoor learning and fun during the summer months!

Parking

Parking is available for drop-off and pick-up; NO NOT BLOCK THE DRIVEWAY!

Water Table

The water is changed, and the water table liner is cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Sandbox

The sandbox is changed every three months, and the liner is cleaned and sanitized during this time.

Halloween

The Center does not celebrate Halloween in any form.

Lost or Stolen Items

Lena Sears Child Development Center is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Electronics

Please do not give children cell phones, tablets, etc., to bring to school.

Center Rules

There are specific center rules that all children will be taught and expected to follow.

1. **There will be no running permitted in the center.**
2. **Hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, or pinching other children/infants/adults will NOT be allowed.**
3. **No standing or climbing on chairs or tables.**
4. **There will be no use of obscene, derogatory, or disrespectful language.**
5. **Children may not walk around the center with food, cups, or bottles.**
6. **Respectful treatment of other people and all property, toys, and furniture is assumed. Parents are charged a fee for the destruction of property.**

Please support us in the enforcement of these rules to create a better environment for all.

No smoking is allowed on the premises as per state law; this includes parents and staff.

Specific rules have been established, which are essential to the safety and smooth functioning of this facility. These rules are taught to the children and need to be reinforced by the parents.

Rules still apply even if parents are present. Your children will not be allowed to do the following at Lena Sears, whether you are present or not.

- **No running "Walking feet."**
- **No climbing, standing on, or jumping off the furniture.**
- **No gum chewing at any time.**
- **No offensive language or hurtful name-calling**
- **No hitting, biting, pinching, punching, pulling hair, or spitting.**

Respect for each other will always be taught and adhered to while at Lena Sears CDC.

However, if your child is out of control and staff cannot calm them, you are required to come and pick up your child. We will work with the parents on this.

However, after three "sent homes," your child will be given a 30-day notice for termination. (This mainly applies to the older children, not infant and toddlers)

Parent Code of Conduct

Lena Sears requires parents to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect.

One of the goals of Lena Sears is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this environment is the responsibility of employees and parents or adult who enters the center.

Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the **Parent Code of Conduct** will not be able to bring their children to daycare.

Parents are to dress in a manner that is appropriate for young children! Please do not dress in transparent clothing. (See Through Clothing)

Swearing/Cursing

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate languages on Lena Sears CDC property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not.

Such language is considered offensive. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language and speak with the Director directly!

Intoxication/Drug Policy

If a parent/guardian or emergency contact person appears intoxicated or on drugs arrives at the center to pick up a child; the daycare staff will not release the child but call the police and call Child Protective Services.

Firearms and Weapons Policy

At no time is any person permitted to carry any Firearm, Ammunitions, or Weapon in the Childcare facility or premises. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal.

No Smoking

Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco products are not allowed on school property, including daycares.

Restraining orders

Parents must submit Court order documents to the Director's office. Without legal documentation, the provider cannot prevent the non-custodial parent from picking up the child. Anyone picking children up must be **(18) eighteen**.

Verbal Restraints

Staff members familiar with individuals picking up a child will not prohibit a parent, grandparent, or other authorized individuals from suddenly NOT picking up a child unless the parent submits a court order! Staff members do not get involved in custody matters!

Cell Phone Usage

Please refrain from using your cell phone once you arrive in the center. Children should not hear adult conversations!

Biting

Biting is developmentally appropriate for children in the infant through 2 ½-year-old classrooms that cannot communicate effectively. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect some form of biting to occur.

We understand that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident.

We ask that you remember this is developmentally appropriate behavior and that staff is working diligently to identify behavior that may provoke or elicit biting.

The staff will not punish or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will redirect them to different activities in separate areas of the center.

Parents will work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior!

Parents of children involved in a biting incident will receive notification by telephone and an incident report. **The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child. However, some children may communicate this information on their own.**

This information is confidential and cannot be shared with others to protect the safety of children. Lena Sears Child Development Center Staff cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party!

We recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

Bullying

Lena Sears, Child Care Center, prohibit bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any person on center property or at center-sponsored functions or using electronic technology.

The Lena Sears Child Development Center policy prohibits reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of bullying, harassment, or coercion.

Definition of Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation

As used in this policy, "bullying, harassment, or intimidation" means intentional conduct, verbal, physical, or written behavior, or an intentional electronic communication that creates a hostile environment.

Substantially interfering with a child's educational benefits, opportunities, performance, or with a child's physical or psychological well-being and is considered Bullying, Harassment, or intimidation.

Electronic communication - means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Lena Sars Child Development Center does not divulge personal or financial information to other parents or staff at any time. We will not discuss the development or progress of students to another entity without the parent's verbal or written consent. The exception would be in cases of legal or court involvement.

OBLIGATIONS

The center exercises its obligation to require the withdrawal of a child anytime it becomes evident that the attitude of the child or parent is uncooperative.

Lena Sears Child Development Center will terminate your service if your child is out for a week without officially informing the center in writing.

Parents who desire to withdraw their child from Lena Sears Child Development Center must do so in writing and not verbally other than the telephone.

Late Fee's

Lena Sears closes at 5:00 p.m. SHARP! After 5:00 p.m., there is a \$20. Dollar Late Fee charged for the first minute late (5:01 p.m.) and an additional \$2. Dollar Late Fee charged for every minute after that.

Late fees are paid BEFORE YOUR CHILD CAN RETURN TO SCHOOL, the next day. This fee schedule also applies to the late pick-up of sick children!

TUITION

TIMELY PAYMENTS/ Tuition Payments Are Due Friday Mornings

Timely payments are essential to the health of our child development center. Some of the areas your financial investments support is:

- The quality of staff available to care for your child.
- The quality of your child's education.
- The variety and quality of supplies help your child achieve learning goals.
- The type and quality of activities enjoyed by your child.

Lena Sears CDC staff is here to support your family by caring for your child while you work. We have a vested interest in providing the best possible care for your little ones.

Remember, your support is essential to the strength of our center. Together we can provide an excellent environment for your child to grow in.

LENA SEARS CHILD DEVELOPMENT PAYMENT POLICIES

Weekly tuition and activity fee rates become effective beginning **May 1, 2025**. The rates are as follows:

CLASSES	RATES	ANNUAL ACTIVITY FEE
Baby Lambs 4 months-18 months	\$385.00	
Baby Lambs 2 18 months-3 years	\$290.00	
Baby Lambs 3 3 years – 5 years	\$250.00	

**Annual Activity Fees are for Special Events, Water Play, Field Trips and Workbooks.
Registration Fee: \$50.**

Activity Fees can be made in three installments if needed within two months of enrollment.

PAYMENT POLICIES continued

Tuition payments are due on Fridays in advance of the week(s) services are to be rendered.

For example, a weekly tuition payment received on Friday, July 9, 2021, would cover services to be rendered Monday, July 12 through Friday, July 16, 2021

Registration fees (a non-refundable fee of \$50 per student), tuition (required minimum payment of one week), **and** Activity fees (total balance) are all due upon initial enrollment into the Center.

The accounting Department will charge Activity Fees annually. Unpaid fees will be categorized with outstanding tuition when figuring delinquencies.

Parents have the option of paying weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Parents must make payments **in advance** of the time services are to be rendered.

Monthly payments are due before the 1st of each month and should correspond to the number of Fridays in that month.

"Drop-in" Students. Drop-in students are those who have previously attended the daycare. Drop-in students use the Center occasionally if space is available.

Candidates for this service will be those students who have left the Center (via graduation) and are now attending public/private schools and left in good standing with no balances owed to the Center.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Late Pick-Up Fees are charged **per child** and are due immediately upon the parent's late arrival.

Late pick-up fees are **\$20 for the first minute and \$2 per minute after that.** Children cannot enter the facility whose parents have not paid late pick-up fees.

Withdrawal

Parents give **two weeks'** written advance notice of withdrawing their child from the Center, or a fee of \$50.00 is assessed for withdrawal without proper notice.

REFUNDS, CREDITS, AND DISCOUNTS

Refunds are granted, and any credit will be used to cover charges incurred while the child is enrolled in the Center.

One free week of **Vacation Credit** is awarded after 12 continuous months of enrollment in the Center. This credit should **only** be utilized to compensate a one-week (5 consecutive business days) period of the child's "**non-attendance**" of the Center. Parents should submit a written notice in the payment box two weeks before the intended vacation week to have this credit applied to their account.

Sibling Discount

Sibling discounts are available to families with two or more children enrolled in the Center. The discounts are:

Two children from the same immediate family will receive a \$10 per week credit towards the younger child's tuition.

Three or more children from the same immediate family will receive a \$20 per week credit towards the two youngest children's tuition, not to exceed \$40 per week.

Families' ***monthly*** tuition bills that exceed \$1,000/month will receive a \$50 per week credit towards the younger child's tuition, not to exceed \$200 per month.

A \$50 referral credit (a one-time credit *per referral*) is credited into the account of parents who successfully refers another client, and they enroll into the Center. The referred client must complete one whole week at the Center and have all initial application fees paid in full.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Any payments made after Fridays after 5 p.m. are considered late.

A fee of ***\$15 per week*** is charged for all late payments. **Tuition is due in full regardless of illness, holidays, vacations, leave, snow closing, emergency closing, etc.**

We reserve the right to refuse services to any child whose account is one week delinquent. All accounts with outstanding balances equal to one week of tuition and unpaid fees are considered delinquent and treated so by the accounting department. The accounting department will use two phases of contact for resolving delinquent accounts:

Lena Sears will make initial contact regarding delinquencies equal to one week of tuition or unpaid fees. Then, we place an account statement in your child's mailbox with a note requesting payment of the outstanding balance.

The second contact regarding existing delinquencies will be made (the following week) via an **IMPORTANT NOTICE** requesting payment by a specific date, or your child cannot come to the Center for care.

If delinquencies remain unresolved two business days after suspension, Lena Sears will terminate your child's enrollment.

ACCOUNTING DISCREPANCIES

Parents should keep all receipts and statements. Parents should notify the accounting department immediately with concerns regarding the accuracy of their account statements. In addition, parents must provide receipts in cases of unposted payments.

Please contact Mrs. Rosa Powell if you have questions or concerns at (301) 873-1186

UNLIMITED PARENTAL ACCESS STATEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Parents and Guardians of enrolled children at Lena Sears Child Development Center are welcomed into our program at any time school is in session.

Visiting parents and guardians **must** conduct themselves in an orderly and professional manner while in the Center and must not disrupt their child's classroom or other classrooms while visiting.

Parents and guardians are prohibited from correcting other parents' children. Please, inform the childcare Center's office of the intended day of visit. Children may be sleeping or on a walk in the neighborhood.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Lena Sears Child Development Center does not discriminate against current or prospective clients based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability.

Lena Sears Child Development Center does not discriminate based on marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, familial status, income source, residence or business, genetic information, matriculation, or political affiliation of any individual, etc. Enrollment in Lena Sears Child Development Center is open to all.