



Staff handbook outline

Each row is a section your handbook needs, with the questions it has to answer. Write the answers in your own words, tick the section off when it is drafted and reviewed, and note the page it lands on.

HANDBOOK VERSION WRITTEN BY EFFECTIVE DATE REVIEWED BY ATTORNEY ON

The non-negotiables FRONT OF THE HANDBOOK

SECTION AND THE QUESTIONS IT MUST ANSWER	DRAFTED	REVIEWED	PAGE
1 • Welcome and how we work Who we are, what we expect of each other, and who a new teacher asks when they are unsure.	☐	☐	
2 • Supervision and ratios Line of sight at all times, a count at every transition, ratios by room, and the rule that a group is never left alone. State these as non-negotiables.	☐	☐	
3 • Mandated reporting Written as a procedure: what triggers a report, who makes it, the timeline, what gets documented, and that no one may talk a staff member out of reporting.	☐	☐	
4 • Guidance and discipline of children Approved approaches with examples, and the practices that end employment immediately. Plain language, no euphemisms.	☐	☐	
5 • Health and safety routines Handwashing, diapering, safe sleep, allergy protocol, medication handling, and when a child or a staff member stays home.	☐	☐	
6 • Emergencies Evacuation, shelter in place, and lockdown, drill schedule, and where the posted plan and emergency bag live.	☐	☐	
7 • Phones and personal devices Where phones live during a shift, the photo rule, and what may never be posted. Vague phone policies cause the most repeat conversations.	☐	☐	
8 • Confidentiality What may not be shared about children and families, inside the program and outside it, and who may access records.	☐	☐	

What staff actually ask about ANSWER IT ONCE, IN WRITING

SECTION AND THE QUESTIONS IT MUST ANSWER	DRAFTED	REVIEWED	PAGE
9 • Schedules, breaks, and call-outs Shift times, how breaks are covered and whether they are paid, and exactly who to call at 6am when they wake up sick.	☐	☐	
10 • Pay, timekeeping, and overtime Pay dates, how hours are recorded, rounding, overtime approval, and what happens if a timesheet is wrong.	☐	☐	
11 • Time off and holidays How time off accrues, notice required for a request, paid holidays, program closure days, and unpaid leave.	☐	☐	
12 • Training and development Required annual hours, who pays and whether it is on the clock, deadlines, and how certificates get filed.	☐	☐	
13 • Reviews and corrective action When reviews happen so nobody wonders, what the steps are before separation, and what skips straight to the end.	☐	☐	
14 • Conduct with families and each other Dress, tone at pickup, how staff disagreements get handled, and babysitting outside the program.	☐	☐	
15 • Employment basics and changes That the handbook is not a contract, who may approve exceptions, and how changes are announced.	☐	☐	

Policy change log HAND OUT THE REVISED SECTION

DATE	SECTION CHANGED AND WHAT CHANGED	ANNOUNCED HOW	NEW SIGN-OFF COLLECTED

Acknowledgment of receipt KEEP THIS PAGE IN THE STAFF FILE

I have received the staff handbook and had the chance to ask questions about it. I understand the supervision, mandated reporting, guidance, health and safety, and confidentiality sections, and that I am responsible for following them. I understand the handbook describes current policies, is not an employment contract, and may be updated with notice.

STAFF SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

DATE

DIRECTOR SIGNATURE

HANDBOOK VERSION RECEIVED

DATE

Substitutes get a short version covering supervision, emergencies, allergies, and reporting, and sign for that.