

Kid City

Employee Handbook

Mission Statement

Our mission is to see families and children experience God's love through our words, actions, and the environment we create. We will be vessels of God's love by loving God, loving people, pursuing excellence, and choosing joy. We will love God by cultivating a personal relationship with Him. We will love all people through humility, generosity, excellence, and joy. We will pursue excellence by working unto the Lord in all that we do. We will choose joy in every circumstance by remembering that our joy is found in Christ. By pursuing the faces of God in all that we do, we desire families to know God, find freedom, discover their purpose, and make a difference.

Core Organizational Values

At Kid City, we desire for all of our employees to live a life that follows these core principles:

Love God | At Kid City, we want to carry the presence of God with us wherever we go. We want employees to cultivate a personal relationship with God and grow closer with Him.

Love People | God made each individual unique and with value. Employees carry influence and must treat each child, family, and coworker with honor and respect, regardless of personal, cultural, or other differences. We are called to love people sacrificially just as Jesus does.

Pursue Excellence | We want to distinguish ourselves with an excellent spirit. We will do this by always doing our best and focusing on the details. This will help us create an inviting and warm environment for all of our families.

Choose Joy | We want our attitudes to reflect the Lord's servant heart by having willing spirits.

General Center Information

Administration

Director: Sherilyn Grissom sherilyn@kidcity.co

Assistant Director: Alex Murray alex@kidcity.co

Administrative Assistant: Jade Meara jade@kidcity.co

Hours of Operation

Kid City is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm. The center is closed for the following holidays.

Good Friday

Thanksgiving Day

Memorial Day

Black Friday

Independence Day

December 23 - 27th

Labor Day

December 31st - January 1st

Programs Offered

Preschool Programs

Part-time Preschool 3

Our Preschool 3 Program meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am - 12pm

Part-time Preschool 4

Our Preschool 4 Program meets on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am-12pm

Full-time Preschool

Our Full-time PrePreschool Program meets Monday- Friday from 9am-3:30 pm

School Age Programs

Before School Care

Our Before Care Program opens at 6:30am and runs until children are picked up by the bus (approximately 8:15am-8:45am).

After School Care

Our After Care Program starts when the bus drops children off between 3:40pm and 4:00pm. Parents must pick up their children at or before our center closes at 6pm.

Ratios

At Kid City, we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios at all times in our classrooms:

Age of Children	Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children
3 years old	1 staff for every 10 children
4 years old	1 staff for every 10 children
5+ years old	1 staff for every 15 children

Children of different age groups may be combined if the following guidelines are followed:

- Classrooms of children 3 and above may be combined, with the ratio determined by the number of 3 and 4 year olds present
 - 5 or less children ages 3 and/or 4 - max capacity of 30 children: 2 staff
 - 6 to 9 children ages 3 and/or 4 - max capacity of 25 children: 2 staff
 - 10+ children ages 3 and/or 4 - max capacity of 20 children: 2 staff

During naptime, at least **one** staff member should be present in every room where children are sleeping/resting.

Volunteers may *not* be factored into staff-to-child ratios.

Active Supervision

It is important that every staff member's attention remains on the children *at all times*. A second's lapse in attention could result in a serious accident, which, with appropriate supervision, would have been prevented. Classrooms must have at least **one** qualified staff member present *at all times*. Leaving a classroom unattended is grounds for immediate termination. Children should be supervised by staff members when leaving the classroom for any reason including but limited to going to the bathroom, getting water, grabbing personal belongings, etc. We are fully responsible for each child in our care until parents pick up their children.

Zoning

Staff members are expected to use zoning techniques when there are multiple teachers present in a classroom. Classrooms will be split into zones (the ball zone, the riding toy zone, the playground, the field, by centers, etc.) and each staff member will be responsible for supervising a zone. This ensures that all children are receiving active supervision. Staff members should not be present in the same zone at any time.

Exchange of Care

Parents are expected to walk their child into the classroom to ensure that teachers are able to provide appropriate supervision. Once a child is in our care, we must know where they are at all times. If a child steps into another classroom, teachers must communicate with one another to ensure that an exchange of care is made. When children are picked up, teachers may never allow children to leave their supervision until a parent is present in the classroom and has taken over care.

Supervision Policy: Two Adult Rule & Rule of Three

At Kid City, the safety and well-being of the children in our care are our top priorities. To ensure a secure and supportive environment, we adhere to the following supervision guidelines:

Two Adult Rule:

Whenever possible, at least two screened and unrelated adults must be present in every classroom, vehicle, or enclosed area during all activities. This policy helps maintain a safe environment and promotes accountability.

Rule of Three:

In situations where the Two Adult Rule cannot be met, there must always be at least three individuals present, with at least one being an adult employee or screened volunteer. This ensures that no staff member is ever alone with a child, reinforcing safety and transparency.

Premise Monitors:

Kid City Administrators will act as premise monitors. Premises monitors are additional screened adults who patrol hallways and common areas within your organization's facility when children, youth, or vulnerable adult activities occur. They observe classrooms and activity areas through windows or open doors on a roving basis. They also help maintain your Two Adult Rule or Rule of Three if a worker must step out of the room or assist a child in the restroom.

Extenuating Circumstances:

If there is ever an unavoidable situation where these supervision requirements cannot be met, we will always comply with Maryland State Department of Education and Office of Child Care standards and best practices to ensure the highest level of safety and care for the children in our program.

By following these guidelines, we create a safe, nurturing, and professional environment that prioritizes the well-being of both children and staff.

Weather-Related Closing

Kid City will remain open during most severe weather. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

If the opener is unable to make it in due to inclement weather, the Director/Assistant Director should be notified no later than 5am in order to determine if there are any alternatives or if care must be postponed/canceled. Employees will be notified within an hour of their scheduled shift of any changes due to inclement weather.

Quality Rating (EXCELS)

Kid City participates in the Maryland EXCELS which uses quality standards and best practices to promote quality program improvement. There are a variety of requirements for Kid City to maintain and elevate its current Quality Rating. Staff members should familiarize themselves with these requirements by visiting <https://marylandexcelstoolkit.org/ratings/gr1/>.

General Staff Expectations

Professionalism

Each Kid City staff member is a child care professional and is expected to act as such. Professionalism is seen as conducting oneself with responsibility, integrity, accountability and excellence¹. The following general guidelines for professionalism should be maintained at all times:

- Arrive on time and stay for the entire shift, if needed.
- Not absent from work on a regular basis and finds a substitute when necessary.
- Dress appropriately for interactions with children.

- Take directions, suggestions and criticisms, and follow through to improve performance.
- Respect confidentiality regarding children, families, and co-workers.
- Display a positive attitude toward the entire center (the program, children, families and co-workers).
- Attend staff meetings and other Kid City events.
- Conversation relates to the children and work at the center and not personal information.

¹ U.S. Department of Labor. 2012. "Professionalism." <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/odep/topics/youth/softskills/professionalism.pdf>.

Dress Code

At Kid City, staff members are to dress in a clean, casual manner. Clothing should not restrict movement and should be comfortable.

Staff members may not wear clothing that contains alcohol, drug, or cigarette references. Vulgar sayings or suggestions are forbidden. Certain articles of clothing are never appropriate for the child care environment such as halter tops, strapless "tube" tops, short skirts/shorts (must hit fingertip length or below), sweatpants, excessively torn jeans/shorts, and low-rise jeans/shorts which expose undergarments.

It is expected that all staff members will present themselves and Kid City in a professional and respectable manner. Staff members who do not adhere to the dress code may be asked to leave and return in appropriate dress.

Cell Phone

Attention and supervision is of the utmost importance in order to maintain a safe environment for all children. Therefore: Cell phones are not permitted in any of the program rooms with the exception of administration. Cell phones should remain silenced and put away while a staff member is clocked in. Cell phone use is permitted only during an approved break and never in a classroom. It is never appropriate to make a personal phone call, send a text message, check a voicemail, etc. while in the presence of children, even while on an approved break. iPads should be used by teachers to clock in/out, check children in/out as needed, take pictures of activities to send to parents via Brightwheel, or message parents. Any use of a cell phone in the classroom must be approved by an administrator.

Computers/Ipads

All Kid City devices are to be used for work purposes only. Under no circumstances may software be installed without the permission of the Director and/or Assistant Director. The wireless network password may be obtained from the Director and/or Assistant Director. The teacher computer in the staff room can be used during rest times when another teacher is present in the classroom and within ratio. Classroom devices should only be used as needed as connection and

engagement with children and families is our top priority.

Timecards and Payroll

Each hourly staff member is responsible for clocking in and out each scheduled workday using the Brightwheel App on the classroom iPad. Staff members may not clock in more than 5 min early before their scheduled shift and are expected to clock out immediately after their shift ends. Staff members may only clock in early if they are *actively working* (ie. planning, prepping, or needed in the classroom as determined by the lead teacher present). If a staff member forgets to clock in or out, the director should be notified promptly via a Brightwheel message when this situation occurs. Failure to follow the above guidelines may delay processing of a staff member's payroll until the following pay date or result in loss of compensation if administration is not notified.

Payroll is separated into two pay periods. The first pay period is the 26th through the 12th of each month. The pay date for this pay period is the 15th of each month. The second pay period is the 13th through the 25th. The pay date for this period is the last day of the month. If the pay date falls on a Saturday, employees will be paid the Friday before or the Saturday it falls on. If the pay date falls on a Sunday, employees will be paid on the Monday immediately following it.

Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit is available and encouraged for all staff members. Interested staff should complete and return the Direct Deposit form to enroll. Processing may take one to two weeks; staff will receive a paper check until direct deposit is processed.

Personal Belongings

Coats, backpacks, purses, etc. must be safely put on hooks, in closets/cabinets and out of reach of children. Kid City is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Professional Development

Required Trainings

Required training within the first three months of employment, for ALL staff members:

- Basic Health and Safety Training
- Americans with Disabilities Act Training
- Orientation Training

Staff Meetings

At Kid City, staff members are required to attend monthly staff meetings. Important information, procedures, and policies are introduced and reviewed at these meetings, so it is important to have 100% attendance. Staff meetings will be held every fourth Thursday of the month. Any changes made to the date and time will be communicated no less than two weeks prior. Employees will be notified of the exact date at least a month in advance and must meet with the Director and/or Assistant Director if unable to attend a staff meeting.

New Staff Orientation

All new staff members will be asked to read staff and parent handbooks. Prior to working in the classroom, the Director and Assistant Director will schedule an orientation meeting to complete required paperwork, and review center operation and policies.

New staff will receive an orientation on their first day at Kid City. This orientation will consist of reviewing clock in/out procedures, a brief Brightwheel tutorial, classroom policies and procedures, Office of Child Care Regulations, one-on-one schedule, and identifying the new staff's direct report and training partner. After meeting about these things, the New staff member will be integrated into the classroom and begin training with their training partner. The training partnership will last one week [unless changed at the discretion of the Director/Assistant Director]. At the conclusion of this training week, the new staff member will meet with the Director/Assistant Director to discuss any questions or concerns that may be had in preparation for independent work to begin.

Training Partner

As a training partner, teachers are expected to model appropriate behavior and strategies and classroom policies and procedures. During the first two training days, the new staff will be an observer. Teachers who are designated training partners should model behavior and explain it. They should also encourage the new staff member to connect and engage with the children in the classroom as we move at the speed of relationship. The next two days, the designated training partner should invite the new staff member into their new role. This can be done by asking them to do xyz and providing opportunities for them to lead activities with your support. The last day of the training partnership should consist of the new employee acting independently with little to no support from the training partner. Near the end of this training shift, the training partner will meet with Administration and provide feedback on the new staff member and their training experience.

Evaluations

Evaluations of a staff member will be conducted by the Director and/or Assistant Director. Formal evaluations will be performed three times annually, during the Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters. Pay increases will be assessed annually based on staff member's formal evaluations. Informal evaluations will be performed throughout the year during scheduled and unscheduled classroom evaluations for the purpose of professional development. In addition, parent surveys will be distributed annually to assess program implementation and success. Relevant feedback will be included in staff member evaluations.

Formal Evaluations

Staff members will be given a self-evaluation no less than one week prior to their scheduled evaluation meeting. Staff members are required to complete this self-evaluation prior to meeting with the Director and/or Assistant Director and bring it to the meeting with them. During evaluations, multiple criteria will be assessed and discussed and employees will receive both positive and constructive feedback. At the conclusion of this meeting, three goals for growth will be created and a plan will be developed on how Kid City Administration can help support the employee to achieve these goals. At each meeting, these goals will be evaluated to determine if they were hit or missed.

Personnel Policies

The following policies are intended to protect the rights of staff members and to ensure maximum understanding and cooperation. Kid City staff members are expected to be:

- On-time, attentive, and alert when scheduled to be at work.
- Careful and conscientious in performance of duties, including the use of positive words and actions.
- Respectful, thoughtful, and considerate of other people.
- Courteous and helpful when dealing with children, parents, visitors, and other staff members
- Engaged with children and parents

Background Check Requirement

All employees of Kid City are required to undergo and pass a criminal background check and a CJIS (Criminal Justice Information System) fingerprint check in compliance with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Office of Child Care (OCC) requirements. Employment is contingent upon the successful completion of these background checks. Any

person who may pose a threat to children, youth, or vulnerable adults will be prohibited from working in any capacity with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

Job Application Requirement

All individuals applying for a position at Kid City must submit a written job application. Applications must be completed in full and include three references, as references will be checked, and submitted by the designated deadline to be considered for employment.

Confidentiality

It is important that all staff members be discreet in sharing information regarding the children and their parents in public areas. Names and other identifying characteristics of children and families should not be shared with anyone other than staff members working in the classroom and the Director and/or Assistant Director. Confidentiality is expected and required when grievances arise: staff members who discuss issues with individuals not directly related to the situation may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure.

Staff should be careful in discussing details of the center operation, particularly problem areas, with others in public. Staff members may not distribute or post children's last names, address, phone numbers, etc. with the exception of distribution to Kid City employees. Personal information should never be used for personal purposes.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All Kid City staff members are mandated reporters. Staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Maryland Department of Human Services:

CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE, Dept . of Human Services Cecil County 410-996-0100
(option 3); 410-996-5350 (after hours)

Staff members will directly report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Maryland Department of Human Services and complete all necessary paperwork. Staff members should inform the Director and/or Assistant Director of the report and together decide if parents should be notified.

If a Kid City staff member is accused of abuse and/or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director and a determination will be made as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. If there is reasonable cause, a report must be made to the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Termination of the employee after a child abuse allegation is at the discretion of the Director.

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect

The following are possible symptoms of abuse and neglect according to the Mayo Clinic .²

Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained injuries, such as bruises, broken bones (fractures) or burns
- Injuries that don't match the given explanation
- Injuries that aren't compatible with the child's developmental ability

Sexual Abuse:

- Sexual behavior or knowledge that's inappropriate for the child's age
- Pregnancy or a sexually transmitted infection
- Genital or anal pain, bleeding, or injury
- Statements by the child that he or she was sexually abused
- Inappropriate sexual behavior with other children

Emotional Abuse:

- Delayed or inappropriate emotional development
- Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem
- Social withdrawal or a loss of interest or enthusiasm
- Depression
- Avoidance of certain situations, such as refusing to go to school or ride the bus
- Appears to desperately seek affection
- A decrease in school performance or loss of interest in school
- Loss of previously acquired developmental skills

Neglect:

- Poor growth
- Excessive weight with medical complications that are not being adequately addressed
- Poor personal cleanliness
- Lack of clothing or supplies to meet physical needs
- Hoarding or stealing food
- Poor record of school attendance
- Lack of appropriate attention for medical, dental or psychological problems or lack of necessary follow-up care

² Mayo Clinic. 2022. "Child Abuse - Symptoms and Causes." Mayo Clinic. Mayo Clinic. May 19, 2022. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>.

Grievance Procedure

As child care professionals, all staff members are expected to make reasonable attempts to resolve conflicts with the individual(s) concerned. If a solution cannot be reached, staff members should then seek assistance from the Assistant Director. If a solution is still not reached, staff

members should speak with the Director.

Confidentiality is expected and required when grievances arise. Staff members who discuss issues with other staff members not directly related to the situation may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure. This policy applies both during paid hours as well as on staff member's personal time. In addition, staff conflict should never be discussed with parents or in front of children in our care. If this occurs, the staff member may be subject to immediate dismissal.

Co-worker Communication

Open communication is crucial to a successful program. Staff are encouraged to communicate about planning, positive behaviors, negative behaviors, etc. in order to work together to create a positive environment and experience for all families and staff members. All staff members are expected to function as members of a team at all times.

Supplies

Each program at Kid City has a monthly budget for purchases. Lead teachers are responsible for the budget and for submitting material request forms (via Google Forms) to the Administrative Assistant for purchase. All purchases must be made by/approved by the Administrative Assistant. We ask that all receipts for any purchase of classroom materials be turned in, even if they are ineligible for reimbursement as this will aid in the tracking of program expenses.

Reimbursement

The Administrative must first approve all purchases made by a staff member using personal funds. Any unapproved purchases may not be eligible for reimbursement. Original sales receipts should be submitted to the Director and/or Assistant Director within one week of purchase to receive reimbursement.

Suggestions

Kid City is always seeking suggestions that will: improve methods, procedures, and working conditions; reduce cost or errors; and benefit the children, staff, and center. Staff members who have suggestions are encouraged to discuss them with the Lead Teacher or Director and/or Assistant Director. Staff members can also submit suggestions through the online suggestion box found on the employee website.

Attendance Policies

Attendance

Consistency is crucial to creating a successful program. We make every attempt to put as few staff members as possible in each classroom. Therefore, all staff members are expected to be on time and in regular attendance in order to provide a consistent environment and routine. Staff members can request time off no less than two-weeks before the date they will not be in attendance. To request a day off, staff members must use the Time Off Request Form located on the staff website (www.kidcity.co/staff). These requests are reviewed and the Administration will contact the employee to inform them of denial or approval. Any absences and related communication will be recorded by Administration in the employee's personnel file. Management may review and reclassify absences due to emergencies or unforeseen events if appropriate documentation is provided. This policy applies to all employees consistently and fairly, promoting accountability and a positive workplace culture.

Unexpected Absence

Unexpected circumstances may come up that hinder staff members from working their scheduled shift such as sickness, injury, etc. Staff members must notify Administration of any unexpected absence as soon as possible, ideally at least 2 hours prior to the scheduled shift. If they are unable to make the notification, they should have someone else notify Administration on their behalf. Kid City Administrators may require documentation, such as doctors notes, for unexpected absences. Disciplinary action will be assessed for employees who have three or more unexpected absences within a 90-day period- *even if a doctor's note is provided*.

Tardiness

All staff members are expected to be on time and work their scheduled hours unless otherwise approved by Administration. Tardiness will be recorded for any staff member that clocks in more than 5 minutes after their scheduled shift. If staff members are more than 5 minutes late to a shift, they are expected to communicate this with the staff member(s) who they will be relieving. If a staff member shows up later than 30 minutes past their scheduled shift, it will be considered a no-show. After 3 tardies, the staff member will be subject to disciplinary action.

No-Show

If a staff member shows up for their scheduled shift more than 30 minutes late, it will be considered a no-show and the staff member will be subject to disciplinary action. If a staff member fails to show up for scheduled shift and does not contact/notify Administration within 12 hours after their absence, it will be considered their resignation from Kid City.

Substitutes

Staff members who have unexpected absences are responsible to notify Administration and find coverage for their shift. If they cannot find coverage, they must notify the Administration who will fill-in for emergencies. Staff may not come in on their day off to make-up hours without the approval from an administrative staff. Approval may only be granted due to a staff shortage.

Schedules

Kid City is open Monday through Friday, 6:30am to 6:00pm. All scheduling requests should be submitted in writing to the Director and/or Assistant Director no less than 30 days before the start of each semester. Schedules will be created based upon the needs of Kid City, the children, and staff member availability.

Occasionally, staff members may need to dedicate time outside their regular work schedule to satisfactorily complete carry out of Kid City responsibilities (parent-teacher conferences, staff meetings, trainings, lesson planning, etc.).

Voluntary Resignation

Staff members should submit a letter of resignation to the Director and/or Assistant Director when resigning from a position. Kid City appreciates at least four weeks' notice if you choose to resign. This will ensure an appropriate replacement can be hired and adequately trained.

Disciplinary Procedures

Unacceptable Job Performance

Kid City uses progressive discipline to positively correct unacceptable job performance. This is not a contractual obligation because all Kid City employees are "at will" meaning that an employee can be terminated at the will of Kid City for any reason or no reason. The first approach (when practical) will be that of guidance. Counseling by the Director and/or Assistant Director is intended to assist you in correction of your conduct. The following are steps that are taken using progressive discipline.

STEP 1 | Verbal Warning

If an employee's performance is not meeting Kid City standards, or if an employee is in violation of any policy stated in this handbook, they will be informed of the issue and secondary consequences if their job performance does not improve. Suggestions on ways to improve job performance will be discussed with the employee.

Verbal warnings will be recorded, discussed, and signed by both the employee and the Director and/or Assistant Director. After one (1) verbal warning for any reason, employees will receive a written warning for infractions occurring during the six (6) month period after their verbal warning.

STEP 2 | Written Warning

A written warning will be given for serious incidents, repeated issues, and poor employee performance. A written warning will consist of a formal meeting with the Director and/or Assistant Director in which the problem will be addressed and an action plan will be created. This will be documented and kept in the employee's personnel file. A copy of this form will be given to the employee. Employees are subject to termination after being given two written warnings.

STEP 3 | Termination

Termination may result when using progressive discipline if steps have not produced satisfactory and acceptable performance. Termination may also be immediate without using progressive discipline. Reasons for immediate termination include but are not limited to:

- Commitment of child abuse under Maryland Law
- Harassment
- Theft
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work
- Leaving a classroom unsupervised

The above violations are only examples and are not meant to be all inclusive. Disciplinary action up to and including termination can be taken immediately at the discretion of the Director.

Classroom Arrival and Departure Procedures

Student Arrival Procedure

Staff members are expected to greet each child and parent by name upon their arrival to the classroom. Arrival time is an opportunity to discuss how the child's night was, if/what they've eaten before arrival, special instructions for the day, etc. Upon arrival, each child should have direct contact with a staff member. Staff should be looking for previous injuries, signs of illness, or unusual behavior.

Student Departure Procedure

When children are picked up, staff are required to greet the parent/approved pick up when they arrive in the classroom. If outdoors, staff must maintain supervision until the parent/guardian walks up to the class. If parents want the child to come to them, staff members must walk the

child to their parents to ensure the child is properly supervised. Staff can communicate positive behaviors, activities that were implemented, or behavioral concerns at this time. Parents are responsible for checking their child out, but the teacher must confirm that a child has been checked out of Brightwheel to ensure that the ratio is accurately recorded. Any adults that are unfamiliar must be ID'd and checked against the child's approved pick-up list located on their Emergency Contact Form.

Late Pick-Up Procedure

Families are required to pick up their child no later than 6pm every day. If a child has not been picked up at 6pm, the teacher present should call the child's parent or guardian using the Kid City phone. If the child's parent cannot be reached, staff members should contact individuals on the approved pick-up list. If you are unable to reach an authorized person, contact the Director and/or Assistant Director.

A template of what should be said is provided below:

"Good evening! We just wanted to reach out because [child's name] has not been picked up and we are closing. Are you or any of your emergency contacts able to pick [child's name] up in the next 15 min?" [If they are unable to pick up for 30+ min say "Ok, I will have to call my director to make her aware. Since it is after hours, we want to make you aware that there will be church members present throughout the building engaging in groups. We will keep [child's name] in the office with a staff member until someone arrives. As a reminder, we do charge a late pick-up fee and someone from the office will message you in regards to this tomorrow."]

*Please call the Director/Assistant Director immediately if you are unable to stay with the child. The Lead Teacher is expected to stay until 6:15pm, but should notify the Director/Assistant Director if they are unable to stay longer so that they can get there as soon as possible.

Guidance Strategies

Children crave consistency and structure. They thrive in an atmosphere where they are given plenty of choices and very clear rules to follow. We believe that children need space and opportunity for play in order to interact with their friends. Our goal in guiding children is for them to move towards controlling their own behavior.

Because a very young child does not have the cognitive maturity and is very egocentric, it can be very difficult for them if they do not get their way. Conflicts will arise. When they do, we will guide the child in a constructive manner. If a child has had a difficult time, staff members should give parents a verbal or written note, which summarizes their child's day. We will then work together with the family to assure consistency at home and at school in working with the child, and all will

be discussed in a confidential manner that is respectful to each family.

Reasons for Misbehaviors

- They feel sick, bored, tired, or hungry
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home
- A child does not understand the rules or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels
- They want to test if their caregiver will enforce the rules
- They have been previously “rewarded” for their misbehavior by adult attention
- They want to assert their independence
- They lack accurate information and prior experience

Preventing Misbehavior

Environment, consistency, boundaries and clear expectations are essential to prevent misbehavior before it occurs.

- Set clear, consistent rules (*ie. walking feet, helping hands, etc.*)
- Arrange the environment to prevent discipline problems. This includes planning interesting activities, not asking children to be still for too long, and meeting their needs for food, rest, and active play.
- Encourage children to make controlled choices throughout the day (*selecting which free play center they would like to explore, which art supplies they would prefer to use during craft time, etc.*)
- Positive reinforcement and acknowledging appropriate behavior that should be continued in the future
- Giving children positive attention (*playing with them, praising them, etc.*)
 - Tell children what they can do, rather than what they can't do (*ie. “I need quiet voices” not “Stop being so loud”*)
- Model desired behavior - *be the example*
- Continual focus on building self-help skills in order to strengthen self-esteem and positive self-image
- Encourage children often and generously

Responding to Misbehaviors

Our Methods of Positive Guidance Include:

Redirection:

This strategy should be used most frequently in the classroom. Quickly get the child's attention (if they do not respond quickly to hearing their name, walk to them and get their attention visually) and introduce another activity. Redirecting them to focus on a different activity by offering

choices such as magnet tiles, coloring, a fidget, or spending time with a teacher one on one when they are angry or upset should help them calm down. If a toy/activity is taken, another activity should be given in its place.

Calming Strategies:

If children are emotionally charged, they are not able to make logical decisions. When children experience big emotions, their limbic system may activate their fight, flight or freeze reaction. When this reaction is activated, children will not be able to think logically and respond to direction. Staff members should first use calming strategies before reasoning with children experiencing this reaction. Calming strategies include:

- **Deep breathing** - balloon breaths, box breaths, simple in through the nose and out through the mouth breaths, etc. (you can give children bubbles to stimulate deep breathing)
- **Space** - provide a designated space that is safe and within your sight, for children to sit and calm down. Building toys, sensory toys, or fidgets can be given in this space. A timer should be set so that children understand the purpose of this space and do not abuse it.
- **Mindfulness** - give children a creative activity that lets them express emotion (painting, coloring, collage, etc.)

Once a child is calm, staff members should talk with them about the situation and teach them to acknowledge feelings and associate feelings with actions. Staff members should also assist children to plan their actions and language for similar situations in the future. *(I.e. If you feel angry because someone took your toy, you should ask them nicely to give it back. If that doesn't work, you should tell a teacher).*

Participate in the Solution:

If a child damages something, they should help “repair it” or clean it up once they are calm. This will help to reinforce expectations and show them that, regardless of behavior, they are still required to meet expectations.

Natural Consequences:

Some actions will produce consequences naturally. For example, if a student forgets a coat, they will be cold. Staff members can allow children to experience the natural effect of their actions. This strategy is only acceptable when the consequences will not endanger a child's health or safety.

Explain Logical Consequences:

Misbehavior often has a logical consequence. Staff members can remind children in the moment of the consequence so they are able to understand why it is unacceptable. For example, if a child

is standing on a chair, you can remind them that this is unsafe because they could fall. This could hurt them and make them

If these strategies do not help reduce or change the behavior, staff members should do the following:

1. Report behavior and what strategies have been implemented to the Director and/or Assistant Director.
2. The Director and/or Assistant Director will observe behavior and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a Behavioral Management Plan.
3. The Behavioral Management Plan will be discussed with the parent and implemented.
4. The Director and/or Assistant Director, Lead Teacher, and parents will continuously evaluate the Behavioral Management Plan and make adjustments if necessary.

If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, or staff members, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program for a period of time.

****Staff members should not put their hands on children unless their behavior becomes potentially harmful to themselves or others***

Relationship Based Approach to Behavior Management

At Kid City, we operate with a relationship based approach to manage behaviors within the classroom. Through engagement and connection, we earn the trust of the children in our care and make them feel seen and loved. By building a strong relationship with children, we earn the ability to keep them accountable and call them up. At Kid City, we move at the speed of relationships.

Removal of Child from a Classroom

Children cannot be removed from a classroom as we do not have enough staff to remain in ratio. In rare, extreme cases, children may be brought to the main office and the Director and/or Assistant Director will assist the child to calm down and/or help staff manage the classroom. Teachers must call the office and speak with the Director and/or Assistant Director **BEFORE** removing a child from the classroom.

If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, or staff members, the Director and/or Assistant Director should be notified immediately.

Parent Relationships

Parent Interactions

Staff members will become familiarized with the parents of children in our programs. This is essential to provide quality care for our families. Due to the importance of parent relationships, there are guidelines our staff members must adhere to:

- Address parents by their first name.
- Provide both positive and constructive feedback to parents about their child's day (if feedback is constructive, please *step out of the classroom if another teacher is present. If you are the only teacher, be as private as possible so that other children do not hear*).
- Be intentional to mention positive behaviors to parents, even if simply saying their child has had a great day
- When stating a concern, always include positive behaviors you've noticed as well. ● Do not use other children's names when discussing behavioral concerns and/or incident reports.
- Avoid the phrase "I don't know." Instead, say "I am not positive/certain of the answer for that, but can I get back to you?" - Make sure you find out the answer and respond to the parent as soon as possible.
- Conversations at pick-up and drop-off should be brief. Your main responsibility is to supervise the children in your care. If you feel a parent needs more time or attention, ask them to schedule a time to meet with you outside of the classroom.

Handling Parent Complaints

- Listen attentively. Sometimes, parents just need someone they can express their feelings to and feel that they have been heard.
- When responding, do not get defensive or say that it never happened. If needed, teachers can respond by saying "I'm so sorry, I was not aware. I will look into this and monitor the situation to ensure that this is not ongoing." If it is an accusation that you know is false, you can say "I'm sorry that [child's name] felt that way. I was able to observe the situation and unfortunately, [blank] did/did not happen. I'm not sure what [child's name] observed, but I can touch base with them today to make sure we get all of the information."
- Paraphrase - Repeat what you heard from the parent and try to summarize it into one sentence ("You would like to make sure that Dave's homework is complete each day").
- State what you will do to solve the problem ("I will let him work on it during our activity time.")
- Follow through. If you tell a parent that you will do something, do it promptly and follow up with them immediately after ("I spoke with our teachers last week about this; How are things going with Dave? Have you noticed any changes?")

- If you are unaware how to solve the complaint, refer the parent to the Director and/or Assistant Director (“I am not sure how to answer that; the Director and/or Assistant Director will be able to better help you. You can contact them by phone/email/or Brightwheel at...”).

Overall Parent Communication

At Kid City, we require parent communication to keep a positive and professional tone. When communicating with parents via Brightwheel, we always want to include a greeting and a statement letting them know they can reach out to us with any questions or concerns. Below, there are message structures provided for different types of communication.

Incident Report:

1. Describe the antecedent behavior
 - a. What happened first?
2. Describe the behavior that occurred (whether it was an injury or a negative behavior)
 - a. What did he/she do? Or what happened to them?
 - b. Where did this behavior occur?
3. Describe the consequence/what you did to take care of the issue/injury
 - a. Negative Behavior
 - i. How long did the episode last?
 - ii. What occurred as a result?
 - iii. How the child is now
 - b. Injury
 - i. What we did as a response (such as icing it, etc.)
 - ii. How the child is now

Position Descriptions

Administration

Assist and support the Director in the daily operation of the center. Recruit new staff and provide an orientation. Manage program enrollment center-wide. Oversee the Quality Rating Process for Maryland EXCELS, including monitoring adherence to program standards and practices and completing application procedures. Develop schedules for staff members. Audit and update personnel and enrollment files annually. Conduct formal and informal observations to evaluate teaching staff; provide counseling through immediate feedback and annual performance evaluations. Administer parent surveys; review feedback and set center-wide goals; assess progress. Review and edit staff and parent handbooks at least annually. Manage training requirements for staff members. Conduct center tours and provide information to prospective

clients. Substitute in the classroom as needed.

Lead Teacher

Plan and implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum/activities and rotate toys on a regular basis. Provide a safe, responsive, and stimulating environment by actively engaging oneself in daily activities and routines. Form and maintain professional relationships with parents and families. Assess all areas of development of children using the Creative Curriculum Approach. Create and maintain a portfolio for each child. Conduct at least one parent-teacher conference per year with each family.

Responsible for communication and supervision of Assistant Teachers, Aide's, and Volunteers in their classroom to ensure that all center expectations and Office of Child Care requirements are adhered to daily.

Assistant Teacher

Assist the Lead Teacher to plan and implement daily activities. Supervise activities of children and provide stimulating activities. Provide behavioral support and assist with classroom management and comply with all center expectations and Office of Child Care requirements. The Assistant Teacher may be left alone in the classroom with children.

Teacher's Aide

Assist the Lead Teacher in implementation of daily activities and performance of daily routines. Provide behavioral support and assist with classroom management and comply with all center expectations and Office of Child Care requirements. Teacher's Aide's are not to be left alone with a class of children. They may take children to the bathroom, but must ensure that each teacher is within ratio when doing so.

Staff Benefits and Pay Scale

Pay Scale

Kid City will evaluate starting pay based on experience and credentials. The table below reflects a minimum pay for an individual with little to no experience and a maximum pay that Kid City employees will be offered for their experience and credentials. Pay increases will be evaluated annually based on performance evaluations and will generally be between 10% and 25% increase in wages.

Position	Minimum	Maximum
Teacher's Aide	\$15/hour	\$16/hour
Assistant Teacher	\$15/hour	\$17/hour
Lead Teacher	\$16/hour	\$22/hr
Administration	\$16/hour	\$25/hr

Benefits

Childcare

Full-time staff will receive free childcare on their scheduled days of work and will be exempt from additional program fees. Part-time staff will be eligible for 50% off of tuition.

Paid Days Off

Staff who would be scheduled for work on the following holidays will be paid according to their normal schedule: Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving, December 24th-26th, December 31st, January 1st, Good Friday, the Monday following Easter, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.

Paid Time Off

Full time employees are employees who work a minimum of 40 hours each week. All full-time employees begin accruing Paid Time Off (PTO) on their first day of employment. PTO may not be used during the first 90 days of employment.

Full-Time (12-Month) Employees

Vacation Time

Years of Continuous Service	Paid Vacation
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1 year	40 hours
2-4 years	80 hours
5+ years	120 hours

Vacation time does not carry over annually.

Sick Time

Full time employees will accrue 2.8 hours of sick time per pay period. Up to **40 hours** may carry over each year.

Full-Time (10-Month) Employees

Employees in this category will accrue **1 day of sick time per month worked** and receive **40 hours of vacation time each school year**.

These benefits *do not* carry over to the next school year.

If an employee submits a voluntary resignation of employment and offers Kid City a minimum of a 2-week notice of resignation, up to 80 hours of vacation time will be paid out. If an employee is terminated for disciplinary reasons of any kind, no vacation will be paid out.

Maternity Leave

All full-time employees employed for at least **12 months** are eligible for maternity leave benefits. Up to 12 weeks of maternity leave may be taken. The **first 6 weeks** will be paid at **60%** of regular wages. The employee may use available PTO or take unpaid leave for the remaining 6 weeks. Employees must provide **30 days' written notice** before the anticipated start of leave when possible. A healthcare provider's note confirming the due date may be required. Employees returning from maternity leave will be reinstated to the same or equivalent position.

Insurance

Full-time staff will be eligible for health insurance through Kid City. Insurance packages will be created on a case-by-case basis and discussed with each employee. Health, vision, and dental insurance are available through Kid City.

401k

All staff members will be eligible to contribute a percentage of their paycheck to a 401k account with Kid City. Contribution matches of up to 3% will be made on a case-by-case basis and discussed with each employee.

Acknowledgement

I, _____, have read and agree to the policies set forth in the
2025-2026 Kid City Employee Handbook.

Signature

Date