

Owens Community College Early Learning Center: Child Guidance Policy

Owens Community College's Early Learning Center ("Owens ELC") believes in a positive approach to child guidance and is committed to providing an environment where children feel safe, comfortable, and have fun. Child guidance guidelines and procedures are in place in order to protect the safety of all children and staff members.

At Owens ELC, children are taught expectations for appropriate behavior and encouraged to act accordingly. Children are expected to be kind, helpful, and to follow age appropriate instructions. Child training and guidance will be handled with kindness, consistency, and understanding in accordance with the individual needs of each age group and each child.

Child guidance procedures will consist of the following strategies (this list may not be all-inclusive):

1. Encourage children to use words when having a disagreement with another child.
2. Assist and facilitate children in solving disputes safely and productively.
3. Redirect behavior by offering an alternative toy, area of the room to play in, etc.
4. Separate a child from the group for a short period, and offer the child something to do while being separated (for example: offering a puzzle to child at one of the tables if he/she is unable to be redirected). This should be used as a time for the teacher to communicate with the child as to what transpired and to encourage the importance of acceptable behavior.
5. Counsel children individually about their behaviors.
6. Model desired behavior for the children.
7. Encourage children to control their own behavior and cooperate with others
8. Involve parents/guardians in creating successful experiences for children.
Parents/guardians know their children best, so when concerns arise, teachers and parents/guardians should work together to develop positive strategies and solutions.

Disruptive behaviors can be distracting for everyone at Owens ELC. The following behaviors may be considered disruptive (this list may not be all-inclusive):

1. Requiring constant attention from the staff.
2. Inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self.
3. Disrespecting people and materials provided at Owens ELC.
4. Consistently disobeying classroom rules.
5. Verbally threatening other children or staff.
6. Using verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from other children.

Generally speaking, the following constitutes guidelines for chronic disruptive behavior:

1. Chronic disruptive behaviors will be documented on a behavior log/ report. The log/report will be used to document any inappropriate behaviors that directly impact other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. This log/report will be shared with the parent/guardian and will explain the behavior and how the behavior affected others.
2. If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents/guardian's will be asked to meet with the child's teacher and the Owens ELC manager or director to identify possible solutions and create a plan of action. Owens ELC recognizes the need to communicate and consult with parents/guardians prior to implementing any specific behavior management plan. Any such plan shall be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

If the plan of action is not successful, parents will be called for another meeting with the director, teacher, and/or an early childhood mental health or other similar specialist. Another plan of action will be created which shall also be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

If no progress is made, and the disruptive behaviors continue, the child may be suspended from care at Owens ELC. Suspension may range in length from the rest of the day to permanently.

Parents/guardians should always be aware it may become necessary to suspend or dismiss a child from the Owens ELC either temporarily or permanently depending on the particular behavior involved. If a child's behavior places the child, other children, or adults at consistent or extraordinary risk of harm, it may be necessary to ask the family to withdraw the child. Likewise, parents/guardians are never permitted to discipline other children at the Owens ELC. All parent/guardian concerns should be directed toward the staff.

Child Guidance Policy

I have read the Owens ELC *Child Guidance Policy* and have discussed the expectations with my child. Our family agrees to comply with all policies and procedures set forth by the Owens ELC program.

Parent/Legal Guardian (signature)

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (printed)

Child's Name (printed)

Date