



# Parent Handbook 2023

[www.ekobeschooloflearning.com](http://www.ekobeschooloflearning.com)  
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## INTRODUCTION

### **Our Purpose**

We believe children are active learners. We believe they are capable. Together, we nurture the learning process. We create the environment for growth. We help them thrive...one child at a time!

### **Ekobé School of Learning**

Our school name was carefully chosen by the founder of Ekobé School of Learning. Ekobé means the "Essence of Life" and we believe the "Essence of Life is Found in the Child." The letter "O" has a brush stroke in the middle of the word to represent the creative mind of the child, the leaf in the center represents the growth of the child, and the circle represents community engagement.

The essence of life is found in the creative mind, the inquisitive thoughts, the passion, the love, the compassion and the curiosity of the young child..

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide an educational environment that fosters a positive approach to respecting children's ability to learn and grow in an open-ended learning experience through exploration, creativity and collaboration.

We are committed to creating a nurturing environment that inspires learning while stimulating the social, emotional, cognitive and physical well-being of the child to fully thrive in a diverse and inclusive community.

We value the communication among children, teachers and parents to create a challenging and joyful space that promotes the potential of all children.

### **Our Approach**

Our teaching philosophy is inspired by the Reggio-Emilia approach to learning.

#### *THE IMAGE OF THE CHILD*

We view the child's ideas as valuable tools for learning and exploring their potential growth. The Reggio Emilia approach takes the children seriously and the children are trusted as active participants in building knowledge while exploring the environment.

#### *THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER*

The teacher takes a distinguished role from the traditional teaching approach. The teacher is the listener, the observer, the documentor, the researcher, the negotiator, and the supporter of the children's ideas.

#### *THE THIRD TEACHER*

The environment is the third teacher. The environment is created with flexibility to stimulate opportunities for transparency, curiosity, relationship and reciprocity. The environment, the children and the teacher collaborate in the social construction of knowledge.

#### *THE EMERGENT CURRICULUM*

Our curriculum is child-centered. It is created with flexibility to embrace children's interests. The children provide the direction for how the curriculum will be developed. Teachers engage with children by asking reflective questions to encourage more elaborated answers.

#### *THE RELATIONSHIP*

The relationship among the children, teachers, and parents is fundamental to how well children construct knowledge based on reciprocity. The culture of engagement builds the shared sense of responsibility for all children.

#### *THE DOCUMENTATION*

Documentation makes children's growth development and interests visible. Documentation creates an opportunity to have a glimpse into children's world of imagination. It allows teachers to understand and interpret children's working process instead of simply evaluating. Documentation is produced and presented by photographs, written observations, journals, audiotape and videotape.

### **Emergent Curriculum**

Our curriculum is child-centered and Reggio Emilia Inspired. It is created with flexibility to embrace children's interests. The children provide the direction for how the curriculum will be developed. Teachers engage with children by asking reflective questions to encourage more elaborated answers.

Our experienced staff embraces a dynamic curriculum that will prepare our young learners to thrive in the classroom and beyond. Our curriculum incorporates a play-based approach with a variety of hands-on opportunities for exploration of the world around them.

We also implement the Conscious Discipline and Kindness Curriculum within our learnings.

### **Language Program: Portuguese and Spanish**

The language program will be offered twice a week (Tuesday and Thursday) for children attending Ekboé School of Learning. Parents will be notified once the Language Program starts. Program is still under development and preparing qualified teachers. Parents will be provided with the choice of language Portuguese or Spanish. We hope to implement the Language Program by 2024.

### **Atelierista - Art Room**

The atelier (art room) will be used by all students under the supervision of their teachers and the Atelierista. The atelierista will incorporate art concepts and explorations of different art mediums (clay, wood, paint, fabric, charcoal, etc) with the children. The atelierista will collaborate with your child's teacher to further explore their interest and ways of expressing their learnings and views. Parents will be notified once we hire the right Atelierista to join our team. We hope to implement the Art Exploration by 2024.

### **Hours of Operation**

Ekobe School of Learning is open Monday through Friday at 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

Half-Day : 7:30 am to 12:00 pm (noon)

Full-Day : 7:30 am to 5:30 pm

### **Calendar**

The yearly calendar will be posted online for easy access to parents and inside the classroom.. The school reserves the right to make any changes necessary to the calendar during the year at any time.

### **Daily Routine**

Our daily routine is determined by the children and their teachers; it can be a routine that is flexible, predictable and balanced, loud/quiet, indoor/outdoor, child-led/teacher-led, and structured/free play.

### **Schedule**

7:30 AM : Ekobé School of Learning opens

8:30 AM: Breakfast (provided by parents)

9:00 AM : Small snack (provided by parents)

11:45 AM : Lunch (provided by parents)  
12:30 PM to 2:30 PM : Rest Time  
2:45 PM : Afternoon Snack (provided by parents)  
5:30 PM: Ekobé School of Learning closes

### **Holidays Closed**

Labor Day  
Veteran's Day In-service  
Thanksgiving  
Winter Break  
Martin Luther King Day  
President's Day  
Winter Teacher in Service  
Spring Teacher In-Service  
Memorial Day  
Summer Teacher In-Service  
Independence Day  
Fall Teacher In-Service

## **ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

### **Admission and Registration**

Students may enroll at any time through the year. If space is not available, you can request to be placed on our waitlist. The application process must be completed each year, as student records must be updated annually.. To secure your spot in the program, please submit the documents (hard copy) below. All forms must be turned in on the first day of attendance. Any forms not returned within two weeks, a charge of \$25 per week will be added to your account.

Enrollment application  
Registration fee (annual/non-refundable)  
Materials fee (annual/non-refundable)  
Admission Agreement (contract)  
Notification of Parent's Rights (LIC 995)  
Personal Rights (LIC 613A)  
Identification and Emergency Information (LIC 700)  
Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment (LIC 627)  
Child's Preadmission Health History (LIC 702)  
Physician's Report (LIC 701)  
Up to date immunization record Immunizations

Child's Profile Photo 4X6 - photo will be used for Child's Folder - Office (color)

### **Payment Method**

Tuition payments must be made through our software system. Please check online for direct payments and/or with our office.

### **Adjustment Period**

Some children take their own time to adjust to a new environment. Please, prepare your child for the new transition by talking to your child about the new preschool and visiting the preschool before his/her first day in class. Enrollment fee and material fee are nonrefundable.

### **Easy Goodbyes**

Prolonged goodbyes might create more anxiety and emotional distress to your child. Quick, clear, and eye contact with your child will help make the goodbye easier on a daily basis. Keep the same wordings and routine daily, "I love you and mom/dad will pick you up after working/running errands." Always say goodbye to your child even if your child is upset. They will remember your words and teachers will comfort your child. Sneaking out is never suggested as it can create frustration and fear in the child. Always say goodbye.

### **What to bring to preschool on your child's first day**

A list of items will be accessible to parents online. Please, do provide all the items on the list. Teachers will communicate if any item needs to be replenished.

### **Personal Rest Mat**

In order to avoid the spread of germs, we consider resting mat a personal item. Parents are responsible for purchasing and providing their child's rest mat. Rest mat (tri-fold) is available for purchase at the office (price will be the same as online to facilitate) or online at [www.comunityplaythings.com](http://www.comunityplaythings.com). No other type of rest mat will be accepted. Please, check with the office for purchase.

### **Emergency Kit**

Please do provide an emergency kit for your child in case of emergency or major disaster (earthquake, lockdown, etc). The emergency Kit List is provided to you online on our website. Please, make sure to label all items before handing over the kit to your child's teacher.



## **Attendance/Sign- In and Sign-out**

Children may attend only on those days and for those hours that they are enrolled under a signed contract. Parents are required by law to sign in and out the child daily. Ekobé School of Learning reserves the right to terminate any contract and service if a parent chooses to disregard this important policy

## **Notification of Absence**

Parents should notify Ekobe School of Learning by phone or email whether the child will not be present for the day or a time period such as vacation and/or illness. All absences should be reported/ communicated by 9:00am.

## **Late Drop-off**

The child attending childcare must be present by 09:30 a.m. No child will be accepted after this time. We will only accept a late drop-off by 11:00am with a doctor's note. Parents should present a doctor's note to the front office.

## **Late Pick-Up**

Please, be considerate of our teacher's schedule. They are to close the preschool by 5:30pm. Please, pick up your child before 5:30pm. I understand that if I fail to pick up my child by the scheduled closing time and agreed under contract, I will be charged a late-flat fee of **\$50.00** per any minute up to every 15 minutes increments if my child is not picked up after closing hour 5:30p.m. The late fee will not be prorated by minutes. If you enter any 15 min block, another \$50.00 will be charged. Late-fee will be charged to your account.

## **Authorized Pick Ups**

Any person picking up your child must be listed in the State Form as authorized person to pick up your child. The person authorized must present their ID at the reception and sign-out the child. Please, do not send anyone without adding the person's name to the list.

## **Fees**

Wait List Fee (non-refundable)

Annual Enrollment Fee (non-refundable)

Annual Material Fee (non-refundable)

Four-week Notice Deposit (to be used towards the last month of withdrawal)

Tuition must be paid via Procure/Tuition Express.. Parents will complete the Recurring Payment Authorization Form so that payments will be automatically deducted from bank account or credit card weekly or each month.

Tuition payments are deducted every Monday for an amount determined under a signed contract. Please, review the Admission Contract for more detailed tuition payment guidelines and fees.

### **Annual Registration and Materials Fee**

An annual non-refundable registration fee and material fee are due at time of registration.

### **Four-week Notice Deposit**

A payment of four-week notice deposit must be made upon registration period. This deposit will be used towards the last month your child will be attending (withdrawal). A **60-day** withdrawal must be filled within the office.

### **Delinquent Account**

A late-payment charge of \$35.00 per week will be applied to your account until the delinquent amount is paid in full. The preschool reserves the right to remove the child from attending preschool, at any moment, until the account is paid.. If legal action is taken to collect delinquent accounts, parents or guardians are responsible for the payments of all costs associated with the collection of debt, including but not limited to the following: any collection costs, court costs, applicable fees, and attorney fees.

### **Returned Payment Fees**

Any and all returned payments and declined ACH payments will be charged \$40.00. Ekobé School of Learning does not accept out-of- state checks. Cashiers' check or money order will be accepted until a proper payment is issued.

### **Tuition Reductions**

Ekobé School of Learning staffs its program, purchases supplies and equipment, and plans its operational budget on the assumption that children are enrolled for a complete year. As such, there is no reduction in tuition for absences, sick days, vacation, holidays, inclement weather, school closures, emergency closures, or short academic months.

### **Siblings Discount**

Ekobé School of Learning does not offer discounts for siblings attending our center. We believe that every child and family deserves the same quality of care and the same applies to the fees applied to every child and family.

## **Schedule Change Request**

All changes in schedule require a 30-day written notice by completing and signing a new contract and requires approval from the Director. No schedule changes are permitted for illness or holidays. We will facilitate schedule changes on a first come, first serve basis and will accommodate schedule changes sooner than 30-days if possible. Parents must sign a new contract/tuition reflecting the new schedule.

## **Withdrawal**

Withdrawal from the program after the start date requires **a 60-day notice** to the Director. Full tuition for this period is required. If no written withdrawal is given, the full tuition will be due and payable for the entire 60-day. **A Withdrawal form must be completed.**

## **Dismissal**

Ekobe School of Learning reserves the right to dismiss a child from attendance for any reason whatsoever, including, but not limited to, health, lack of adjustment to the preschool setting, behavior that disrupts the cooperative climate of the classroom, or delinquency of the tuition account.

## **Public Health Emergency closing and inclement weather**

It is the intention of Ekobé School of Learning to be open and provide childcare service every week of the year specified in the contract/calendar. I agree that in the event the preschool is closed for an extended period of time due to inclement weather, natural/national disaster, major building issue, any public health emergency (e.g. covid ) and/or any other public health emergency defined by the State that may disrupt or cause the childcare service to close from time to time; it is parents full responsibility to continue tuition payments according to contract. During such time, parents are to contact the preschool to ensure the preschool will be open or closed.

## **Remote Learning**

Ekobé School of Learning will not be offering remote learning during closures. Teachers will not be required to teach or to provide learning materials during such time. We recognize that pandemic closures can be highly stressful for all families including for our own staff and teachers. Ekobé School of Learning will, in our best capacity, provide online resources to parents with activities they can do at home with their children. Teachers will be required to check in via phone or online weekly with students to continue building connections. Tuition will be processed as normal during this time; please see the contract for tuition payments.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Drop off and Release Procedures**

Please make every effort to be on time for school for both drop off and pick up. Parents are required by law to sign their children in and out each day. Ekobé School of Learning reserves the right to terminate its services to any family who disregards the sign-in and out policies. The parent or guardian should use a full legal signature when signing in/out and record the time of day. If a person from the authorization list picks up the child, photo identification will be required.

### **Parking Area**

Ekobé School of Learning offers a large parking area for drop off and pick up. When arriving at the parking lot, please enter via the first entrance coming from Genesee as you enter Mt. Herbert Ave. To exit, please go around the parking lot and exit to Mt. Herbert on the side where garbage containers are located. Please, be patient and kind to other drivers and aware of children getting in and out of cars. Please, hold your child's hand when cautiously walking in the parking lot to enter or exit the building. Never leave small children unattended in a vehicle when dropping off or picking up preschoolers. Please, be mindful of your child's precious time and turn off your cell phone during drop off and pick up. We highly discourage the use of cell phones within the center.

Please, never park in ADA parking or Director's reserved parking. ADA parking is reserved for those with permits.

### **Personal Items**

The school will not be responsible for items brought from home. All items should be marked with your child's name including sweaters, shoes, lunch bag and water bottles. Staff will not be searching for lost items; if lost items are found by a staff or parent, the item will be placed in the Lost and Found Corner.

### **Lost and Found**

Items left unclaimed for more than two months will be donated to a charity or non-profit organization.

### **Breakfast, Snack, and Lunch**

Parents are responsible for providing their child's daily meals (breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack). The lunch box and spoon must be labeled with your child's name.

All children are required to bring a nutritional lunch. We discourage any sugary items like donuts or cookies.

### **Water Bottle**

A filled water bottle for your child must be sent to school daily, labeled with your child's name. We can refill water bottles with fresh, cold water at school when necessary.

### **Rest Time**

Rest time is from 12:30PM – 2:30PM everyday. During this time, relaxing music is played and the lights are turned off. Children are not required to sleep, although they are required to rest quietly. Resting mats are considered personal items and parents must purchase a resting mat in the office or at [www.communityplaythings.com](http://www.communityplaythings.com). No other style or brand will be accepted due to space and storage in the classrooms. Parents are to provide two child-size bed sheets and/or blankets. Parents are fully responsible for laundering children's bed items. Items will be sent home every Friday.

### **Potty/Toilet**

A potty trained child is a child who can do the following:

- Be able to TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they go on their diapers or underwear. They must be able to say the words "I have/need to go potty".
- Be able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance.
- Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet.
- Be able to get off the potty by themselves.
- Be able to wash and dry your hands.
- Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are outside and away from the bathroom.

The child should be in diaper/underwear during the school hours.. Children are expected to use the toilet and clean up properly without assistance from teachers or staff. Assistance with hand washing reminders and clothing fastening will be given if necessary.

In the event the child is found not to be fully potty trained as indicated by three "accidents" (inability to reach the toilet on time, wetting or soiling undergarments), at the discretion of the teacher, the child will be asked to take a 2-week leave from the center to work towards readiness. Parents who choose not to take the 2 week potty train may continue bringing the child to childcare and potty training will be addressed again in a few months. During the time of leave the parents will be billed as if the child were attending as enrollment will be reserved for the child. Soiled garments will be placed directly in a Ziploc bag to be sent home. Teachers are not expected to potty train your child. It is the parent's responsibility to nurture the process at home until the child is ready to be without diapers and fully potty

trained. Make sure to send 3 pairs of extra clothes during this period of training, extra pair of shoes, and diapers for nap/rest time. Please, avoid any clothing item with snaps and buttons during this period.

At Ekobé School of Learning, we have a no pull-up policy. Before or during potty-training period, the child must wear regular diapers or underwear during the training period.

Before sending your child to preschool without diapers, please communicate with your child's teacher to assess whether your child is ready to be off diapers. Parents and teachers should both agree on the right date to try the process of potty training.

Potty training is a long process and part of your child's growth.  
Potty training is a major milestone! So, celebrate with your child!

### **Dress code**

We encourage you to send your child in sturdy, washable clothes because we will be painting, enjoying messy projects, and doing exercising each day. Clothing should allow movement without being baggy. Please leave a full change of clothing enclosed in a Ziplock bag in your child's backpack. If no clothes are provided, parents will be notified to bring some. Ekobé School of Learning is not responsible for clothes and shoes that are soiled, stained, or ruined during daily activities.

### **Footwear**

Comfortable running shoes with velcro are recommended in our program. For your child's safety, we do allow flip-flops, crocs, sandals, or open-toed or open-heeled shoes. We play outside everyday so footwear that is strong enough to protect your child's feet and little toes is extremely helpful.

### **Jewelry**

If your child wears jewelry, we request your child to wear pieces that are secured to your child and not easily pulled, tangled, or hooked on to the child's clothing or to other children. If your child wears earrings, as a safety precaution, please make sure that the earrings are properly secured to the child's earlobe and the design will not hook onto clothing of another child. It should not easily be pulled out or fall out. We will not be held responsible for the loss or damage of jewelry or any valuable items that a child wears or brings to preschool. For safety reasons, we highly recommend no jewelry for children under the age of 5.

### **Cubbies**

Your child will have a cubby to keep his/hers belongings in during the day. Please check the cubby at the end of each day. We use the cubbies as a means of communication with the families and you will find your child's artwork and other important notices and information there.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very important for the children and are recognized at our preschool. We do not serve birthday cake or cupcakes at school. Parents are encouraged to check with their child's teacher if you wish to provide a special project/craft for that day. No goodie bags or balloons at school are allowed. If you are having a party at home to which the whole class is invited, invitations may be given out at school. If everyone is not invited, the invitations must not be brought to school.

### **Items not allowed at Ekobé School of Learning**

Any items listed below brought from home or left inside a child's bag will be removed, discarded, or placed under director's discretion. The list includes, but are not limited to items like toys, any electronic device, cell phones, ipads, candy, medicine, spray sunscreen, recording device, glass bottles, glass containers, hand sanitizer for children's use, money, any toy used for "playing war/weapon" and guns. Guns are not allowed in the preschool and you will be asked to leave the premises.

### **Religious Instructions**

While at Ekboé School of Learning we strongly believe it is important to model and teach good values such as concern and respect for all people; we believe it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide religious instruction of their choice and we refrain from religious instructions or worship.

For parents who are interested in religious learning and engagement for their family and child. We will direct you to the Clairemont Fellowship Church upon request and they will provide you with their own resources and teachings.

## **HEALTH , SAFETY AND NUTRITION**

### **Communicable Disease**

Certain symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease

A communicable disease is one that is spread from one person to another through a variety of ways that include: contact with blood and bodily fluids; breathing in an airborne virus; or by being bitten by an insect.

Excluding an ill child may decrease the spread of the disease to others in the child care and school settings. Recommended exclusion varies by the disease or infectious agent. Children with the symptoms listed below should be excluded from the child care or school setting until symptoms improve, or a healthcare provider has determined that the child can return. **A note from the doctor allowing the child's return to school must be presented.** The school reserves the right to deny services to a child who is ill.

Fever: Elevation of body temperature of 100 degrees or above.

Diarrhea and vomiting

Rashes of unknown origin

Discharge from the nose and eyes

Any symptoms or behavior indicating possible illness: when the child is unusually tired, has uncontrolled coughing, unexplained irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual symptoms or behavior for the child.

Any child presenting any of the listed symptoms above, will be isolated and parents will be contacted for pick up.

If a child who is sick has a sibling attending Ekobé School of Learning; in order to minimize the spread of diseases within the center, we ask that both children (in the family) to stay home until well enough to return.

Children attending Ekobé School of Learning must be well and healthy to engage in normal activities, symptom free and/or on antibiotics for at least 24 hrs.

\*Any other diseases not listed above, parents should consult a doctor before bringing the child to school and present a doctor's note for returning to school.

### **Accident/Incident reports**

In case of any event like accident/incidents involving your child occurring during daily activities while at our center, an Accident or Incident Report will be completed and placed in your child's file. Review the report and if you find it necessary to have a deeper understanding of the event please reach out to the office or the teacher to set a date and time.

### **Hand Washing**



We kindly ask visitors, parents, children, and staff to wash hands when entering the building. Frequent hand-washing is encouraged at Ekobé School of Learning - LLC as a conscious effort to minimize the spread of germs.

### **Lice policy**

Children with nits or lice will be sent home. Child must be treated and upon return, office staff will check your child's head. Ekobe School of learning reserves the right to deny services to a child who has lice at any time.

### **Dogs**

Dogs are not allowed inside the school grounds or on the sidewalk or parking lot. All dogs must be secured at a safe distance from the premises.

We love dogs! But, we also understand the risks and how we prioritize the safety of all children attending Ekobé School of Learning.

### **Sunscreen**

Parents must apply sunscreen daily before sending the child to school. During warmer seasons, we advise you to apply an 8-12 hour full coverage sunscreen to your child before you drop them off in the morning. Parental permission form must be provided if sunscreen (only lotion, not spray allowed) is needed for the afternoon playground activity. Teacher will only apply sunscreen in the afternoon as needed. Please, check expiration dates before sending it to preschool. We will dispose of any expired item.

### **Medications**

Ekobé School of Learning does not dispense any medications with the exception of asthma inhalers and EpiPen. Parents must provide the inhalers and EpiPen. Medications must be labeled with your child's name, instructions and dosage.

### **Record Keeping**

Records to be obtained and maintained are Parental/Authorized representative permission to provide the incidental medical service. A copy of the prescription and written instructions from the child's Physician are also required. Staff training is to be provided by the child's doctor or a person authorized by the physician in administering the appropriate service, the instructions must be in written format and must include use and maintenance of required equipment/supplies and what to do in the case of an emergency.

### **Storage of medication**

All medications (inhaler and EpiPen) must be given to the office staff in a sealed Ziplock bag with the child's name clearly labeled, storage instructions, and the medication's expiration date. Storage of medications/prescriptions will be kept in a secure location, out of reach of children.

### **Allergies**

Please notify us with any allergies your child has and what precautions must be taken in the case of an allergic reaction. If your child has an EpiPen, parents must provide an EpiPen.

### **Nut - Free Environment**

We are a nut-free preschool. Please, be mindful of foods that can possibly contain peanuts, walnuts, almonds, cashews to avoid any allergic reaction to our little friends.

We strive to be a Nut-Free school. We know that we cannot guarantee this, especially because we share space with the church and outside groups that use rooms. Many children have life-threatening nut allergies. In order to provide a safe environment for these children, please do not send peanut butter or other nut butters, or whole nuts of any kind in your child's personal snack bag. The nut butters stick to fingers and surfaces even through washings and whole nuts can be stepped on and smashed without anyone noticing. Please read the labels on food you send to school for your child's personal snack so we can avoid nuts. If your child has a life-threatening allergy to another food, please make sure the classroom teachers know and office staff as well.

### **Injuries and Other Emergencies**

Minor cuts and abrasions that occur at our school will receive proper care; they will be washed with warm, soapy water and bandaged. Any minor injury and treatment will be communicated. If the injury is serious, the guardian will be notified so the child can be transported to the hospital or doctor's office. (I.e. needs stitches, broken arm, or dislocation, etc.). All expenses associated with injuries to the child will be the responsibility of the guardian.

In case of a medical emergency, guardians will be contacted immediately. If a guardian is not reached, emergency contacts listed on the emergency card will be contacted. If emergency contacts cannot be reached, a staff member will transport your child to his/her doctor or to the hospital, if necessary. If immediate intervention is required, appropriate action will be taken, including calling 911 and having your child transported to the nearest hospital. Guardians are responsible for the cost of medical help or treatment due to accidents or illness while at our facility.

### **Emergency Disaster Plan**

In the case of an emergency, our school has an emergency disaster plan that will go into effect in the event of an emergency or disaster. Your child will be cared for until you are able to pick him/her up. In the event that the building must be evacuated, you will be notified of the new location. Ekobé School of Learning will provide you with a view of the emergency and evacuation plan upon request.

### **Gates and Doors**

Make sure you secure all gates and doors immediately after you go through them. Please do not expect staff to close the door for you. Every child attending the school is important to us. Safety is a priority and it should be taken seriously by all families entering and exiting the school.

### **Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse**

Ekobé School of Learning's staff and teachers are mandated reporters. They are required by law to notify Child Protective Service of any reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

### **Transportation Arrangements**

No transportation will be offered by Ekobé School of Learning. Parents are responsible for their child/ren transportation to and from school. No arrangements or transportation for field trips are determined under this 2023 year.

### **Choking Hazard Accessories/Teething Necklaces**

For the protection, health and well-being of the children. The preschool does not allow choking hazard accessories in classrooms with children under the age of 3 years old.. Although all children in the Center are closely supervised, it only takes a moment for a child to get a hold of a choking hazard accessory and attempt to put it in their mouth. Examples of choking hazard accessories include, but are not limited to: Teething Necklaces, Hair Ties, Rubber bands, Bows, Barrettes, and Earrings. When necessary, the administrative team will determine how to manage choking hazard accessories brought in or worn by a child and the item will be removed.

### **Biting**

Biting is a normal part of development. Preschoolers may have many emotions that they are just learning to manage and may bite to express anger or frustration or simply because they lack the language skills needed to express their feelings. Parents are expected to understand the possibility of this event to happen and how developmentally appropriate

this behavior can happen with and to any child of young age. Parents and teachers are encouraged to find ways to minimize the behavior.

### **Smoking Policy**

Any type of smoking or vaping inside the building, in the playground, or in the parking lot area is prohibited at all times.

### **Behavior Guidance**

Redirection is used to guide inappropriate behaviors. As we implement and make daily use of the Conscious Discipline and Kindness Curriculum, we expect and will strive to curb and diminish any unusual and inappropriate behavior during our daily routine. In the case of persistent behavior, parents and teachers are to address the best way to help the child and both (parents/teacher) must agree to the solutions. Ekobé School of Learning reserves the right to terminate a contract with any child/family whose inappropriate behavior persists or becomes violent, unsafe, and/or creates a tense environment.

### **Health School Act of 2000- Pesticide**

This law requires public schools to notify parents and school employees about pesticides being used in school environments.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT AND COMMUNICATION**

### **General Policy**

Limits are established to assure the safety and well being of all children, and we use positive reinforcement techniques to assist children and adults with peaceful conflict resolution. Mindful and respectful language is always used. Inappropriate behaviors are redirected in a positive way, and appropriate and safe choices are always offered. At no time will a child be subjected to punishment including corporal (physical) punishment, shaming, frightening or humiliating methods, or any type of verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, deprivation of food, or any other violation of personal rights. A child who seems overwhelmed or over-stimulated may be offered the chance to “be mindful,” which is space and time to cool down.

If behavior problems persist and/or begin to be disruptive to the learning environment and/or a child’s behavior begins to threaten the personal happiness and well-being of another child(ren), a parent conference will be arranged as soon as possible. The purpose of the parent-teacher conference will be to determine and implement an appropriate and fair behavior intervention plan.

## **Respectful Behavior**

Parents are to be respectful of all children, families and staff at all times. The preschool reserves the right to terminate any family/child's enrollment at any time without notice if behaviors such as: the use of inappropriate language, yelling, physical and intimidating actions, unprofessional behavior, any speech that may damage the preschool reputation, any gossiping, conversations, and hurtful words about children, staff and/or parents, threats or harassment of any kind are used within the preschool or via social media.

## **Social Media Code of Conduct**

Any use of social media to complain, gossip, harass or to create prejudice by a parent/family enrolled is considered inappropriate by Ekobé School of Learning. Any concerns you may have must be made directly to the classroom teacher and the director. Libelous or defamatory posts will be taken seriously and any family/contract will be terminated. Ekobé School of Learning reserves the right to seek any legal option against such poor use of social media. As educators and parents, we should strive to create an environment where children are protected not just physically but also mentally. Thus, any social engagement that disturbed the environment in which our children are cared for is not appropriate and highly unacceptable.

## **Parents Right to Access**

Unless provided with a court order, both parents and guardians will have equal access to their child. In case a court order is placed, parents should provide the center with a certified copy and the stated orders in the document will be strictly enforced. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the preschool of such conditions.

## **Parents Right to Immediate Access**

Parents and guardians of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child as provided by law. In cases where the child is the subject of a court order we must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed. In the absence of a court order on file, all guardians shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law.

## **Communication**

We believe that a good relationship between the teachers and parents is an important part of each child's experience. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have questions about your child's day or would like more information about what is happening in the classrooms.

Parents are also encouraged to communicate with the teachers about their child's day when picking up their child. A parent - teacher conference can be requested at any time during the year by the parent or teacher. Teacher will communicate with parents via *Weekly Exploration Newsletter (WEN)*. Please, keep communications during childcare hours from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. No text or email will be answered by teachers or any employee after childcare hours or during the weekend unless it is an emergency. Any concerns and questions should be addressed during the hours of operation.

### **Confidentiality**

For your child's safety, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, special needs information or health related information. California authorities with legal rights may review children's files upon request.

### **Babysitting/non-solicitation policy**

Parents are to maintain professional relationships and are not to enter into any contract with any employee from Ekobé School of Learning for personal babysitting activities. The administration understands that parents need babysitters from time to time. We hope this policy does not present difficulty for your family and appreciate your observance. Many babysitting companies are based locally and available for your needs.

Employees of Ekobé School of Learning are not allowed to babysit for enrolled families. No exceptions can be made as it creates a conflict of interest and can lead to favoritism, breaches in confidentiality and privacy of other families and including your own. In case such an event occurs, parents' contracts will be terminated and employees as well.

### **Mindfulness**

Drop off and pick up time is all about communication with your child and the teaching staff and we want to give you our full attention at all times. We prefer you finish all cell phone conversations before you enter the preschool.. Cell phone conversations at any time detract from the importance of your child and his or her day. Please refrain from using your cell phone during this time.

### **Get to know your child's teacher**

Teachers not only play a huge role in the development of our children, they can have a lasting impact on them for the rest of their lives. Be respectful of their time in and outside the classroom. Teachers do one of the most important jobs in our community. Take some

time to show appreciation during Teacher's Appreciation Week (celebrated during the first full week of May), Birthday, and Holidays.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school are required to check in at the front desk upon arrival. Photo identification is required. All visitors are asked to sign in upon arrival with their name, ID, time and purpose of visit.

### **Staff replacement**

Ekobé School of Learning will strive to maintain staff retention. The childcare industry has been changing over the last few years with an average of job changes every 2 to 3 years. While transitions might happen while your child is attending our center, we will try to make this transition as easier as possible for your child.

### **Audio and video monitoring**

At this moment, we do have audio and video monitoring. However, it will be a technical device we will be installing sometime in the future. Parents will be notified once installed. Once installed, the system will be used for administrative purposes and not accessible for livestream for parents/families. Access to video will be only viewable with court order.

### **TLC - Teachers Leading for Creativity**

TLC is the in-service educational training for teachers and staff of Ekobé School of Learning that will happen throughout the year. The goal is to educate the minds and also care for the body. When we take care of our teachers and staff, we take care of our children. We hope to extend some of the training to parents as well. Training will vary from Reggio Emilia understanding and approach, to Behavior guidance, to Nutrition education.. Parents will be informed and invited when open to parents.

### **Parent Yearly Engagement**

The principles of Reggio Emilia were created based on the work of parents and the community in the benefit of the children. At Ekobé School of Learning, we believe that family' participation can only contribute to children's learning and development. Families enrolled at Ekobé School of Learning will be expected to engage in 3 hours per year towards the enhancement of the classroom or preschool aside from regular family events, conferences. The Yearly Family Participation form will be provided online for your convenience.

**Non-discriminatory policy**

Ekobé School of Learning admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, and activities generally accorded to or made available to all students at the preschool. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its policies and programs.

Ekobé School of Learning respects and values all families, children, cultures, traditions, and diversity. Parents and children should respect any other children, family, teacher, staff members who work, attend, or visit the preschool who might have different values, traditions, or views of the world other than their own.

I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook. I have read and I understand its contents and policies and I agree to be bound by the same.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_