

Curious Critters Early Learning Tree

**Parent Handbook
2020**

7415 Buchanan St
Hyattsville, MD 20784
301-577-KIDS



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Welcome

Welcome to the Curious Critters Early Learning Tree (CCELT) community.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to care for your child. We take pride in our program and vow to protect, nurture and encourage your little critter. Our mission is to raise the standard of child care in Prince George's County by providing outstanding customer service at affordable rates.

Curious Critters is an ALL-INCLUSIVE educational program. We provide a wide range of amenities to help ease the everyday stress parents experience trying to balance their work & home lives. Our students will enjoy learning in a safe and exciting hands on learning playing environment.

We look forward to building a strong partnership with your family.

Registration Process

Please complete all forms in the enrollment packet and return them along with all supporting documents. There is a one-time, non-refundable registration fee of \$25, due at the time of enrollment. Once your child(ren) are registered, you will have 5 business days to occupy your space. If the space is not occupied, it will become available to the next family. The registration fee only reserves your space for five (5) business days.

The \$25.00 registration fee is per family, not per child.

Tuition and Fees

The 1st week's tuition is due prior to your child's first day. Weekly tuition is due every Friday by 7:00pm est. **There is a late payment fee of \$10 per child/ per day due by Monday at drop off.** We will not accept your child unless full payment with late fees are collected or other arrangements agreed upon. Partial payments are also subject to late payment fees.

Tuition is due each week, unless your child is unenrolled or services are terminated. CCELT reserves the right to refuse payment refunds.

We accept cash, money orders and CashApp. Personal checks are only accepted for payments of four weeks or more.

UNDERSTANDING LATE TUITION FEES

Tuition is due each Friday by 7:00pm. You may opt to pay as many weeks in advance as you like. However payments must be made PRIOR to service. If by chance tuition is not paid prior to the service week, please see the following grid for help understanding your late fees.

Friday 7:01pm-11:59pm	Add \$10.00
Saturday 12:00am- 11:59pm	Add \$20.00
Sunday 12:00am – 11:59pm	Add \$30.00
Monday 12:00am – 11:59pm	Add \$40.00
Tuesday 12:00am-11:59pm	Add \$50.00

CCELT reserves the right to terminate service at any time for late payment.

In rare cases Curious Critters Early Learning Tree will make payment arrangements. Failure to adhere to the arrangement will result in termination of service until the full balance (including late fees) has been made.

CashApp Payments:

Curious Critters Early Learning Tree is not responsible for CashApp malfunctions or payments made incorrectly. There is a \$7 transaction fee for each payments made via cashapp. Always send CashApp payments to: \$CCELT

Late Pick Up/ After Hours:

All students are to be picked up no later than 7:00pm Monday-Friday. There is a late pick up fee of **\$1 per child, per minute for the first 10 minutes, starting at 7:11 pm, the fee is \$5 per minute.** This fee also applies to all families in the building after 7:00pm! You must contact admin if you anticipate a late pick up, however the late pick up/ after-hours fee is non-negotiable. Late pick up payments are due no later than the next business day at drop off.

In the event of

Attendance and Holidays

Full time tuition rates are based on 5 days per week at 10 hours per day. Part-time enrollment and reduced tuition rates are not offered. Tuition rates are not adjusted based on your child's absence due to illness, family vacation or any other personal family events. If CCELT is closed (due to inclement weather,

power outages, etc.) for 3 or more days within the same week, a credit will be issued for the inconvenience. All emergency closing notifications will be made via email, website and automated phone calls. Please make sure all contact information is current.

CCELT will close on the following major holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

Please provide at least 1 weeks' notice if you plan to keep your child out of class for more than 5 days. Tuition is still due in order to hold your classroom placement.

Weather Related School Closings and Delays

CCELT will announce school closings, delays and early dismissals via CuriousCrittersELT.com, email blast, text messages and/or phone calls. Please

make sure we always have current contact information. We are not responsible for miscommunications due to change of phone number, full voicemail, etc.

NEW! Family Vacation Policy

Curious Critters Early Learning Tree **will close Monday, December 28th, 2020 thru Jan 1st, 2021** for a school wide “Family Vacation”. We recommend all families plan ahead and schedule your family vacation during this week or make other childcare arrangements during this time. Based on our School Closing Policy, **we will waive the tuition for the Family Vacation Week.**

Daily Schedules and Activities

Each age group will have their daily routine and scheduled activities posted on the “Parent’s Post”. All students, infants through school age will participate in a variety of language, cognitive, social-emotional and physical development activities daily.

Creative Curriculum and Learning Activities

The Creative Curriculum allows children to learn through hands on exploring and discovery. Therefore, we've designed our classrooms to do just that. Our classrooms are specifically designed to make sure your little ones can touch, climb and explore. All activities are planned to promote physical, social-emotional, cognitive and/or language development.

Education and Health Accommodations

Please be sure to share if your child has an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or require any special accommodations. By sharing this information, it will enable our staff to provide your child with the support they need. It is very important to share with CCELТ if your child has been screened and diagnosed with any form of disabilities or special health care needs. We want to make sure we are able to provide your little one with the love, care and education they deserve.

Birthday and Holiday Celebrations

Parents are to contact and coordinate all birthday celebrations with their child's teacher or CCELТ Director. Please take into consideration, the class schedule, dietary concerns and age appropriate activities/gifts when planning

your child's celebration. The following guidelines are in place to ensure the safety of every child in our care:

- Absolutely NO lit candles
- All cakes/cupcakes, food and drinks must be store bought and sealed prior to being served.
- "Goody Bags" must be distributed by CCELT staff only.
- Cake/cupcakes must be cut and served by CCELT staff ONLY
- PLEASE PROVIDE A LIST OF ALL VISITORS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR EVENT TO THE CCELT DIRECTOR PRIOR TO THE EVENT. This includes family members, friends, magicians, clowns and other entertainers. ANYONE not on the list will not be admitted into the building. (We can accommodate a maximum of 10 guests including entertainer for birthday parties).

Holiday celebrations and special events are planned by CCELT staff. Due to limited space, we will issue tickets to each family.

Field Trips and Classroom Visitors

CCELT will host theme related field trips and classroom entertainers. These special events will be announced in our 'Curious Fox News' newsletter. All

children must have your written permission to participate. All field trips and special activities are included in your child's tuition.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Throughout the school year, we will track and monitor your child's growth and development. At the end of each quarter we will conduct parent-teacher conferences to discuss your child's progress and goals. At this time parents may also address any behavior, academic and developmental concerns. All families are encouraged to attend the conferences.

Illness, Incident and Boo-Boo Reports

To reduce the spread of germs and viruses, children should not attend school if they are experiencing vomiting, diarrhea, fever, conjunctivitis (pink eye), flu like symptoms, severe skin rash etc. We ask that the child is kept home until they are free from symptoms for at least 24 hrs. In cases of communicable diseases, a doctor's note is required before the child may return, however we reserve the right to refuse care (even with a doctor's clearance) if we feel that your child's illness might affect the wellbeing of other children and staff. We will contact you and/or your emergency contact person if any of these illnesses arise while in our care.

No matter how big or how small all incidents will be documented and parents will be notified. Small scratches, scrapes and cuts will be cleaned, bandaged and documented by CCELT staff. Larger scratches and wounds will be cleaned, bandaged, documented and parents will be notified. Parents will be called immediately for all head or life threatening injuries. In the event of a life threatening injury CCELT will contact 911 immediately; parents will be notified.

In the event of a bite, you will receive a written incident report. If the bite breaks the skin, parents will receive an incident alert via text or email including picture. Both families involved will receive an incident report.

Medication Administering Policy

All prescriptions and over the counter medications, ointments, lotions, sprays etc **MUST** be accompanied by a medication administration form. Physician signature is required for ALL prescriptions. The form must be completed in its entirety before CCELT can administer medications. Specific instructions from your doctor such as the dosage, times and dates are required. Only staff members trained to administer medication will do so. All other medications including lotions, ointments, cough drops etc. are NOT permitted on CCELT premises without proper approval and acknowledgement from CCELT administration.

Emergency and Evacuation Policy

CCELT will conduct monthly fire and evacuation drills to ensure all staff and students are well prepared in the event of an emergency. Evacuation plans and emergency contact binders are posted in each class. It is imperative that all parent contact information is up to date.

Drop Off / Pick Up Procedures

You **MUST** sign your child in at drop off and sign them out when picking up each day! It is important to keep all emergency contact and alternate pick up information updated, we will not allow your child to leave with anyone not on that list.

We ask that all students 2 years and older arrive no later than 9:00am for circle time and morning social activities. Arriving prior to 9:00am also minimizes class interruptions and allow children a stress free transition from home to school.

Discipline Policy

Curious Critters Early Learning Tree will implement several positive discipline strategies to reduce and resolve undesirable behaviors. In most cases children will have the opportunity to problem solve and communicate amongst each other to find a resolution to their dilemma. In other cases our teachers and staff will either redirect or offer other alternatives.

If a student becomes frustrated or angry, our staff will calmly communicate with that child. By doing so the student knows his/her concerns are heard and understood. The teacher will then offer two alternatives to resolve the concern. For example: If a student become upset and does not want to participate for circle time, the teacher will first communicate with the child to make sure he/she is not ill, hungry or tired. The teacher may then offer two choices, the child can sit quietly at the table with or the child may choose where he/she would like to sit and participate from a comfortable distance. By offering choices it allows the child to have input into their day.

Redirection is simply a way of distracting or taking their attention away from the source of frustration. If a child is upset during drop off due to separation anxiety, the teacher may try offering the student his/her favorite toy or book. The teacher may also try redirecting the child by singing a song, telling a joke, etc.

The safety of our students and staff is our number one priority. If our teachers are unable to maintain a safe and productive environment, CCELT management will intervene. Immediate pick up may be required and parent conference will be scheduled if needed. We will work as a team to create and implement an action plan in effort to correct any behavioral concerns. In the event we are unable to resolve the issue, we reserve the right to terminate the enrollment agreement.

We look forward to building a strong partnership with you in providing your little critters with the necessary tools to succeed academically and socially. Our team is dedicated to serving your family and building up our community!

Dominique and Kimberly Walker