



APPLEWOOD
LEARNING CENTER

FAMILY HANDBOOK
2025-2026

The Applewood Learning Center
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Londonderry, NH 03053

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Incorporated in 1989
Tax Identification # 02-0433124
An IRS 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization

(603) 434-3139
www.applewoodlc.org

The Board of Directors 2025-2026

Julia Kapala
President

Trevor Baldwin
Treasurer

Ted Combes
Member at Large

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Teacher Representative

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VACANT
Secretary

Ashley MacKinnon
Member at Large

Libby Brunette
Educational Director

Janine Burch
Member at Large

Joe Ruscitto
Member at Large

STAFF LIST

OFFICE

Elizabeth "Libby" Brunette
Melissa Vaccaro (PART TIME)
Kayla Klement (PART TIME)

Director
Enrollment Coordinator
Bookkeeper

INFANT/TODDLER ROOM I

Melissa Vaccaro
Kaitlyn Silke
Dylan Juneau

Head Teacher
Teacher
Support Teacher

INFANT/TODDLER ROOM II

Kaz Francis
Abbie Lemay

Teacher
Teacher

INFANT/TODDLER ROOM III

Ariana Connors
Aara Jensen
Jaylin LaPlante

Head Teacher
Teacher
Support Teacher

PRESCHOOL I ROOM

Samantha Greenwood
Jonny Cross

Teacher
Teacher

PRESCHOOL II ROOM

Ashley Student
Susan Weiszeck

Head Teacher
Teacher

PART TIME

LeeAnna Alabachian
Julia Davis
Tonya Kirichok
Abby Ramshaw
Ella Berlin
Samantha Perry
Milly Brunette
Ryiot Whalen

Teacher Assistant
Teacher Assistant
Teacher Assistant
Teacher Assistant
Teacher Assistant
Teacher Assistant
Teacher Assistant

SUMMER STAFF

Laura Power

Summer School Age Teacher

UNITY

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors
there.

The clay they used was a young child's
mind And they fashioned it with care.

One was a teacher, the tools she
used Were books and music and
art;

One, a parent with a guiding hand
And a gentle loving heart.

Day after day the teacher toiled,
With a touch that was deft and
sure, While the parent labored
by her side And polished and
smoothed it over.

And when at last their task was done
They were proud of what they had
wrought, For the things they had molded
into the child
Could neither be sold nor bought.

And each agreed he would have
failed If he had worked alone,
For behind the parent stood the
school And behind the teacher, the
home.

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OUR FOUNDATION

MISSION

At The Applewood Learning Center, we create a community comprised of children, teachers, and families that fosters healthy relationships and imaginative self-expression through play-based, authentic learning and progressive teaching.

APPLEWOOD'S HISTORY

In 1989, after the closure of a local child care center, residents of the Londonderry/Derry area identified a desperate need for affordable, quality child care. Four months later, this group founded The Applewood Learning Center.

The generosity of parents, in the form of time and/or monetary donations, made it possible to open the Center in such a timely manner. In only four months, this parent team was able to find an appropriate location, obtain a bank loan to fund start-up costs, hire an Educational Director, organize the Board of Directors as our governing body, and recruit families and teachers.

In the years following the opening of Applewood, the Board of Directors, working with several families at the Center, received grants from The Building #19 Foundation, NYNEX and AT&T. With these monies, Applewood was able to purchase equipment and acquire the building where we reside today.

In 2015, through negotiations with Town Fair Tire, we were awarded a grant to improve the playground. This project was completed in 2017. In the summer of 2018, Applewood took on a renovation of the existing building to accommodate a move to mixed-age grouping of Infants and Toddlers thus allowing a child to remain with the same teachers and caregivers for their first three years of life.

In March 2020, the Covid-19 Pandemic hit, and for the first time in ALC's history, we shut our doors for two months. During this time, the Board committed to paying the staff through this unprecedented time. After re-opening, the Board worked to ensure Applewood's continued success through securing federal and state funding. We continue to pursue all funding opportunities, as they are offered at the state and federal level.

Applewood has been able to accomplish so much because of the commitment the families and staff make to Applewood. It is this commitment that distinguishes Applewood from other programs. Our staff of Early Childhood professionals provides direct care and education of our children, while the voluntary and active participation of our families assists us in all other aspects - from serving on the Board of Directors to participating on committees to painting to fundraising.

Today, The Applewood Learning Center is the only self-supporting non-profit [IRS 501 (c) (3)] child care center in the Londonderry/Derry area.

As we live out our mission, we hope to become recognized as the model for early childhood care and to have our expertise in early childhood development utilized as a resource by the community.

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PHILOSOPHY

At the Applewood Learning Center, we believe that each child is an individual with their own set of emotional, social, cognitive, and physical needs and that learning is an on-going process in which each child learns at their own pace. Our programs are designed to facilitate the child's development in a non- competitive, supportive atmosphere.

Children learn about their world through play. A child's play is the cornerstone in the foundation of their development. Applewood Learning Center provides an environment that stimulates and encourages a child's natural desire to learn.

We learn most about children through our partnerships with families. We rely on mutual respect and trust with families and appreciate the diversity they bring to our community to help our children grow to their full potential.

NAEYC

Founded in 1926, The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children with more than 100,000 members, a national network of nearly 450 local, state, and regional Affiliates, and a growing global alliance of like-minded organizations.

All teachers and administrators at Applewood are members of NAEYC.

THE CODE OF ETHICS

The staff at Applewood aspire to attain high ideals. As such, we rely upon the Code of Ethical Conduct to guide our behavior. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct> Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the Code. Periodically during the year, we will ask for your observations on how well we adhere to the guidelines. Your feedback is important to us. Please know that we strive to consistently follow the guidelines set forth in the Code.

GRANITE STEPS FOR QUALITY (GSQ)

GSQ is a quality rating system that recognizes NH child care programs for efforts to improve the quality of care for young children and rewards programs that strive to improve their practices and staff qualifications. It also allows families to identify programs with higher quality. Levels build from a foundation of minimum standards for licensing to full national accreditation. To be eligible to apply for GSQ, a program must be a NH licensed child care program in good standing. Programs must meet the GSQ quality standards and apply. Applewood is proud to be a GSQ program at Step 2.

LICENSE & STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

The Bureau of Child Care Licensing requires that we notify our families of the location of our License and our Statement of Findings from our most recent licensing visit. These can both be found on the shelf in the foyer.

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ABOUT THE APPLEWOOD LEARNING CENTER

The Applewood Learning Center offers a full day, year-round program for children ages 6 weeks through 5 years. The center is open from 6:30AM to 6PM Monday through Friday except for designated holidays. Spaces are available for children to enroll in the program for 2, 3, 4 or 5 days per week, for half days (8:30- 12:30), extended days (8:30-2:30), or full days (6+ hours). However, a minimum of 3 half days or extended or 2 full days of enrollment is required for the program. The Enrichment Program will operate from 11:30am-6:00pm M-F for the 2025-2026 school year. The School Age Program will operate during the summer only.

Each program is based on the developmental level of the children within the group. Our staff meet weekly to explore the various activities that will encourage each child's growth. All programs provide an appropriate balance of individual and group activities.

PROGRAMS

There are four programs available at Applewood. They are:

The Infant/Toddler Program: 6 weeks through approximately 3 years

- *nurturing trusting and secure relationships, active engagement, and blossoming exploration through multi-sensory activities while laying the groundwork for language and social skills.

The Preschool Program: approximately 3 years through 5 years old

- *enhancing social and cognitive development through independent activities and peer interaction
- *encouraging intellectual growth through guided discovery and cooperative play

The Enrichment Program: 5 and 6-year olds enrolled in Kindergarten

- * offering stimulation and excitement with peer discovery. This program operates in conjunction with the public kindergarten program. This program is integrated within our Preschool classrooms.

The School Age Program: 6 to 13-year olds

- *offering a safe space for children engaged in remote instruction from their individual school districts, recreational sports, arts & crafts, dramatic expression and time for children to pursue their own interests in a safe environment

** Age ranges are approximate and transition from one program to the next is based on the developmental readiness of the child and the needs of the program.*

The Kindergarten Enrichment Program is a complement to the morning session of the public Kindergarten at Moose Hill School. The Londonderry School District provides transportation from Moose Hill School to Applewood. Arrangements for this transportation must be made with the Londonderry School District or their transportation company.

Residents outside of Londonderry are welcome to apply for the Kindergarten Enrichment Program, however, they are responsible for arranging their own transportation.

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KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT

The Kindergarten Enrichment program is available for those children attending the morning session of Moose Hill Kindergarten (or any other morning session in another town, provided the family arranges transportation).

The daily tuition rate is the same regardless of the length of day. Children in this program are not billed for full school vacation weeks during which they are absent from Applewood, provided at least one week's written notice has been provided to the Bookkeeper and Director. Individual days off from the public program when the children are not in attendance at Applewood are billed at the regular rate. This includes holidays, teacher workshops, snow days, or any other unscheduled or scheduled closure.

On snow days, please call or send a Remind message to the classroom and the Director to ask if there is available room to attend. **WE DO NOT GUARANTEE SPACE AVAILABLE FOR SNOW DAYS!**

The public school has many days throughout the year when they are closed. If you want your child to attend on these days, you must notify the Director in writing at least 2 weeks prior. The office will notify you if there is availability for the extra day. Enrollment for these days and vacations with notice less than two weeks will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **WE DO NOT GUARANTEE SPACE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CLOSINGS!**

Busing from Moose Hill to Applewood is provided by the Londonderry School District. Arrangements for this transportation are the responsibility of the family and should be made through the school district or through their transportation agent. If your child is going to be absent from Moose Hill, it is the family's responsibility to inform Moose Hill, the transportation company, and Applewood. The typical daily hours for this program (on a school day) are from 11:30-6:00. We do not provide programming prior to the Moose Hill day.

We have found that periodically, the teachers at Moose Hill want to relay information to the family via the bus driver, and then via the Applewood staff. This is an ineffective means of communication. If your child is in this program, it is your responsibility to communicate directly with your child's Moose Hill teacher via phone or email. Our staff will not be able to relay messages from Moose Hill.

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM

A child is eligible for enrollment in the School Age Program after they enter first grade and turn six years old and has completed Kindergarten. This program is for children ages 6 to 13 years. The program operates Monday through Friday 7:30-5:30.

There is a \$100 registration fee to enroll in the School Age program.

Summer program information is distributed in March. You may opt to sign-up for full weeks or partial weeks. **You are financially responsible for the days that you have enrolled your child, regardless of whether your child attends or not.** If you schedule your child for summer enrollment, we expect that your child will attend. **Any changes in summer schedules must be submitted in writing to the Director by Monday, June 1st. Schedule changes after this point must also be in writing and each occurrence will be subject to a \$25 administrative fee. Schedule reductions without two weeks' written notice will be billed as an absence incurring the full day's tuition.**

APPLECORPS

AppleCorps is a program for 13, 14 and 15-year-old members of the Applewood community. It is based on our belief in community service and volunteerism. AppleCorps' goals are to provide opportunities for early

adolescents to learn more about young children, to gain an understanding of the early childhood profession, and to actively participate in the community through service. AppleCorps Volunteers (ACV's) are scheduled to work each morning in the classrooms alongside the staff and then to work together in the afternoon on a center-wide project.

If your teenager is interested in becoming a member of AppleCorps, please see the Director or the ACV Coordinator.

ADMISSION POLICY

Families interested in applying for enrollment should email the Enrollment Coordinator (EC) and will be asked to complete our Inquiry/Waiting List Form. As openings become available, the EC reviews our waiting list for families whose child's age, ideal schedule, and preferred start date are suited to the openings we have, and then compatible families will be contacted to start the application process. The prospective family is provided with our virtual visitor packet to include our Family Handbook and other materials for all adult decision makers to review.

The next step in the application process will be to schedule an intake visit with the EC. This is an opportunity to observe the program in action, meet some of our teachers and tell us more about your child. During the visit, the prospective family will meet with the EC to answer any additional questions and discuss next steps.

If everyone agrees that Applewood and the family will be a good fit, the family is offered an opportunity to enroll. To do so, they register with a two-week nonrefundable/nontransferable deposit and a \$100 per child or \$160 max per family nonrefundable/nontransferable annual registration fee. This secures the child's spot for the agreed-upon start date, and the deposit is credited to the family's last two weeks at Applewood according to our admission policy. Next, families will complete and return an enrollment packet and schedule a minimum of two additional visits with their teachers as the start date approaches.

The deposit secures the spot until the anticipated start date. During this time the Applewood administration plans ongoing enrollment to account for a child's enrollment. We frequently turn other families away based on secured deposits. Child care is in high demand and the deposit is our assurance that we will have the enrollment we're planning on as we turn other families away.

The registration fee and the deposit are non-refundable and non-transferable. The deposit will be credited toward the last two weeks of the child's enrollment after a minimum of 90 days from the child's first day of regular attendance. Prior to attending for 90 days, the deposit is not credited, and will not be refunded, or transferred. This policy also applies to any reductions in the number or length of days scheduled.

When a family confirms a start date, that date is firm. A delay of enrollment of up to 4 weeks will be permitted with a minimum of two weeks' notice. If the start date must be delayed for more than 4 weeks, to continue holding the spot, the family will need to pay full tuition. Alternatively, the family can forfeit the enrollment and deposit, withdraw from the program, and re-apply later.

The Applewood Learning Center does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, financial background or marital status. Siblings of children already enrolled in our programs receive priority placement on our waiting list.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

In the event that a child is exhibiting frequent, prolonged, challenging behavior that is not responding to mid-level interventions (direct teaching of social/emotional skills, problem solving, etc.), the teaching staff will gather documentation of the child's behavior including description of the behavior, the time of day, others present in the

general vicinity, what triggered the behavior, and what the consequences of the behavior were (positive or negative).

The teaching staff, Director, Behavior Consultant (when available), and the family will team up to brainstorm ideas for what needs the child is having met through this behavior, other avenues to have the needs met, and how we can teach alternative behaviors. We **MUST** have the family as part of this process to make the most effective and meaningful plan for the child. The team will develop a plan of action, implement said plan, and reconvene at a specified time to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

1. Teachers will identify specific behaviors.
2. Teachers will document behavior incidents
3. Teachers will consult with the Director, Family, and Behavior Consultant.
 - a) Review triggers, behaviors, and consequences
 - b) Review other important information such as eating/sleeping/elimination information; time of day; others present in the room.
 - c) Brainstorm ideas re: child's needs being met through behavior; how else can the needs be met; how we can teach the child to meet the needs in an acceptable manner; how can we teach alternative behaviors
 - d) Create a plan to be implemented at school and at home.
 - e) Identify follow up meeting time to evaluate and adjust as needed.

If after these efforts are exhausted, we find that the child's behavior is beyond the capabilities of the program, Applewood will assist the family in finding an appropriate alternative placement that may better suit the child's and family's needs.

This policy only applies to addressing a child's behavior and not a family member's misconduct or the family's failure to comply with other child care rules, laws, or tuition payment.

CONDUCT OF ADULT COMMUNITY MEMBERS

As members of a community, every adult who spends time at Applewood (including staff, parents, guardians, students, and visitors) should strive to provide the children with a model of civil and respectful behavior and healthy relationships. Interactions by and between adults at the center should support a caring and safe environment for everyone. Language or behavior that is disrespectful, harassing, rude, or abusive is never acceptable within the Applewood environment. This policy extends to all forms of communication concerning Applewood business including phone, email and social media conversations. Any adult who is unable to act in a civil and respectful way will be asked to leave the Applewood grounds. If necessary, the Executive Director may take further action including exclusion from the Applewood facility and events, terminating enrollment, or, in the case of employees, appropriate disciplinary action.

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ALL ABOUT THE DETAILS

CLASS SCHEDULES

A daily schedule of activities is posted in the classrooms. These schedules are basic guidelines and may change on occasion due to the needs and interests of the children. The routine in each class will, however, be consistent from day to day.

For Infants, the staff will follow each child's individual schedule as provided by the family as closely as possible. A copy of that schedule will be posted on each child's clipboard. Families should update this schedule as their child's needs change. You can download the “Infant Toddler Daily Routine Form” from our website under the Core Connections tab.

Half-day children leave the Center at 12:30PM. This tends to be a hectic time of day, because it is also the end of lunch and the beginning of nap, with diapering and toileting occurring as well. Please be aware that teachers probably will not be available for a lengthy conversation at this time. However, you should feel free to call the Center after 1PM at 603-434-3139 to talk further with the staff and/or to schedule an appointment.

Children in all programs go outside for a period each day unless the temperature or wind chill is below 15 degrees. We will also remain cautious on Air Quality Action Days as determined by the NH Department of Environmental Services.

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CALENDAR 2025-2026

The Applewood Learning Center | 2025-2026 CALENDAR

- 01 Labor Day – ALC Closed
08 Board Meeting
16 Staff Meeting
26 Back to School Picnic

SEPTEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MARCH '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- 03 Staff Meeting
09 Board Meeting

- 07 Staff Meeting
13 Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples' Day – ALC Closed
20 Board Meeting

OCTOBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

- 06-10 Week of the Young Child
10 Family Friday
13 Board Meeting
21 Staff Meeting

- 04 Staff Meeting
10 Board Meeting
19 Annual Family Meeting
27 Thanksgiving Day – ALC Closed
28 Native American Heritage Day – ALC Closed

NOVEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

MAY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 11 Board Meeting
19 Staff Meeting
25 Memorial's Day – ALC Closed

- 02 Staff Meeting
08 Board Meeting
24 Christmas Eve – ALC Closes at 4:30
25 Christmas Day – ALC Closed
31 New Year's Eve – ALC Closes at 4:30

DECEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JUNE '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- 02 Staff Meeting
08 Board Meeting
18 End of the Year Celebration
19 Juneteenth – ALC Closed
22 Summer Program Begins

- 01 New Year's Day – ALC Closed
06 Staff Meeting
12 Board Meeting
19 M.L. King Day

JANUARY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JULY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

- 03 Independence Day Obs.
04 Independence Day
07 Staff Meeting
13 Board Meeting

- 03 Staff Meeting
09 Board Meeting
16 Presidents Day – ALC Closed/PDD for Staff.

FEBRUARY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

AUGUST '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 04 Staff Meeting
10 Board Meeting
21 Last day of SACC
26 Last day of Summer Program
27-28 Professional Development Days – ALC Closed
31 – First day of New School Year.

	TUITION DUE
	ALC CLOSED
	STAFF MEETING
	BOARD MEETING
	SPECIAL EVENT



TUITION

Tuition for the 2025-2026 year can be found in the Appendix of this Handbook.

Families enrolling with more than one child on a year-round basis (12 consecutive months) in our Infant through Preschool programs will receive approximately a 10% discount off the lower tuition for two children. A family enrolling 3 children will receive approximately a 15% discount off each child, and a family enrolling 4 children will receive approximately a 25% discount off each child. The discounts are computed using the stated percentages and are then rounded up or down to the nearest dollar.

Tuition is due on a biweekly basis in advance unless other payment schedules have been arranged with the Bookkeeper. **Tuition for the upcoming week is due by 6PM on the first day of the week that your child attends.** It is required that tuition payments be made on time.

Tuition checks may be deposited into the white, locked, mailbox just inside the main entrance. PLEASE DO NOT PLACE CASH PAYMENTS INTO THIS MAILBOX! Check with your banking institution for the availability of arranging automatic payments to Applewood. All cash payments must be made directly to the bookkeeper or to an administrator who will provide you with a hand-written receipt.

Delinquency in tuition payments is unacceptable and may result in dismissal from the program. When occasional circumstances arise that make timely payments difficult, these matters should be discussed with the Director and the Bookkeeper as soon as **they become apparent.**

Families with tuition accounts that are more than three weeks or \$750 (whichever comes first) past due are subject to dismissal from the center. **A \$25 late fee will be assessed weekly on all tuition accounts that are more than two weeks past due.** There is a \$25 fee charged for checks that are returned to Applewood due to non-sufficient funds. Any family who has more than two checks returned for insufficient funds must pay in cash or money order/cashier's check for the remainder of their time at Applewood. If your check is returned for insufficient funds, you expressly authorize your account to be electronically debited or bank drafted for the amount of the check plus any additional fees. The use of a check for payment is your acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms and conditions. For more information on this policy please visit www.checkvelocity.com.

We encourage families to arrange "bill pay" through their banking institution. With this option, you can arrange automatic payments to be made to Applewood on a bi-weekly basis. The bank then mails checks directly to Applewood. This feature is usually a free service from most banking institutions.

Kindergarten Enrichment Tuition

The daily rate is the same on both "in-school" days and "vacation" days. Children in this program are not billed for full school vacation weeks during which they are absent from Applewood if they request the week in writing at least one week in advance to the bookkeeper and the Director. Individual days off from the public program when the children are not in attendance at Applewood are billed at the regular rate. This includes holidays, teacher workshops, snow days, and any other unscheduled or scheduled closures. If you schedule your child for summer enrollment, we expect that your child will attend. **You are financially responsible for the days that you have enrolled your child, regardless of whether your child attends. Any changes in summer schedules must be submitted in writing to the Director by Monday, June 1st. Schedule changes after this point must also be in writing and will be subject to a \$25 administrative fee per occurrence. Schedule reductions without two week's w r i t e n notice will be billed as an absence incurring the full day's tuition.**

School Age Tuition

Summer program information is distributed in March. You may opt to sign-up for full weeks or partial weeks. You are financially responsible for the days that you have enrolled your child, regardless of whether your child attends. If you schedule your child for summer enrollment, we expect that your child will attend. **Any changes in summer schedules must be submitted in writing to the Director by Monday, June 1st. Schedule changes after this point must also be in writing and will be subject to a \$25 administrative fee per child and per occurrence. Schedule reductions without two weeks' written notice will be billed as an absence incurring the full day's tuition.**

To enroll your child in the School Age Program please contact the EC. There is a \$100 registration fee for the School Age program.

Absences & Vacation

During the first year of enrollment, no allowance is made for personal vacation, or other days that children are absent. After 12 consecutive months of enrollment, there is an allowance for vacation. Other than the Vacation and Summer policy, there is no allowance made for illness, absences, holidays, or any other scheduled or unscheduled closings. Please see the Vacation/Summer Policy below.

Withdrawal

A two-week written notice of withdrawal is required. All outstanding payments are due at this time. If the full amount due is not paid within one month of withdrawal, the account will be transferred to a collection's agent. Any family leaving the center with an unpaid balance that results in transference to a collections agency will be ineligible for re-enrollment.

Schedule Changes

A two-week written request for a change of schedule is also required. Families wishing to change their schedule should email the Director or Office Administrator. Not all requests can be granted. A family's tuition account must be current to add or change days.

Tuition rates shall not be changed without a thirty-day written notice.

Applewood reserves the right to change a child's classroom placement due to the needs of the child or the center. This change will be gradual and handled like our other transitions with care and thoughtfulness to ensure the smoothest transition possible.

Extra Hours/Extra Days

Depending upon enrollment, you may opt to add an occasional day to your child's schedule (at their regular daily rate) or add extra hours to a half or extended day. Depending upon your request, this will be billed at either the extended or full day rate. You may request this change by emailing the Director. Once submitted, the Director will inform you if the request can be granted. Advance notice is required. Should you request an additional day and later cancel, we request a minimum of 48 hours' notice in writing to the office. If this notice is provided, your financial obligation will be reduced from the full tuition for the day to the \$25 administrative fee per child, otherwise you will be charged the full daily rate for the day. A family's tuition account must be current to add extra hours or extra days.

You may not "switch" days due to holidays or closings. You are financially responsible for your child's regularly scheduled days, regardless of closings or absences, as well as for "add on" days.

These extra days or hours are not confirmed until the request is submitted and approved by the Director.

REGISTRATION FEE

There is an annual registration fee of \$100 for the first child and \$60 for the second, with an annual maximum of \$160 per family. The registration fee is applied directly to liability insurance and is due with the first tuition payment of the year. Children who enroll for the first time between June and August will not be charged an additional registration fee that September.

OTHER FEES

Throughout the year, classrooms engage in special activities or have guest speakers come in. The teachers may make a request to the families for a nominal fee to cover the costs of these events.

TUITION RECEIPTS/FSA FORMS

Should you require receipts or forms completed for reimbursement for an FSA (Flexible Spending Account) for your employer, please kindly allow a minimum of two weeks turnaround time. There may be occasions when we can return these more promptly, but there are also occasions when we cannot, so please make sure you allow us this time to complete your form or provide your receipt. These forms should be submitted to our bookkeeper, Kayla Klement. You can email her directly at k.klement@applewoodlc.org.

YEAR END TUITION RECEIPTS

Every January, our bookkeeper will prepare a year-end tuition receipt for each family that has attended Applewood during the previous year. This will be emailed to each family unless other arrangements have been made with the bookkeeper. This will include all tuition paid. If you must request a replacement, please allow 2 weeks' notice, and make the request directly to our bookkeeper, Kayla Klement. You can email her directly at k.klement@applewoodlc.org.

LATE FEES

A late fee is charged to those families who pick up their children after 6PM or 12:30 PM for half day families or 2:30 PM for extended day families. The fee is \$2 per minute per child. PLEASE CHECK OUR CLOCKS. Late fees will be billed directly from the office. At the discretion of the Director, when several families are late due to an accident or severe weather, a late fee will not be assessed.

Families need to have exited the building at 6:00 p.m. Any family that is still in the building after that time will be billed the \$2/minute late fee.

For those families that are late 2 or more times per month, a 30-day probationary period will follow when no lateness is allowed. Any lateness during this time will result in dismissal from Applewood.

A late fee will be assessed to families that arrive later than the expected pick-up time. Please keep in mind that dropping off late does not mean you can pick up late – the part time hours are 8:30-12:30 for half day and 8:30-2:30 for extended day. We must insist on maintaining these hours for these programs, so that our staffing can be maintained similarly.

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LATE TUITION FEE

A \$25 late fee will be assessed weekly on all tuition accounts that are more than two weeks past due.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE

A \$25/child administrative fee will be charged to families who have reserved extra days, extra hours, or extra enrichment days and then provide 48 hours' notice of absenteeism or a change in schedule for this time. Any less than 48 hours' notice will result in full tuition being charged for the extra time. For School Aged, please see the SA Tuition section.

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS FEE

There is a \$25 fee charged for checks that are returned to Applewood due to non-sufficient funds. Any family who has more than two checks returned for insufficient funds must pay in cash or money order/cashier's check for the remainder of their time at Applewood. If your check is returned for insufficient funds, you expressly authorize your account to be electronically debited or bank drafted for the amount of the check plus any additional fees. The use of a check for payment is your acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms and conditions. For more information on this policy please visit www.checkvelocity.com.

SUMMER POLICY

To maintain your child's enrollment for September, children may not be withdrawn for the summer months. However, you may reduce the number of days that your child is enrolled at Applewood. At a minimum, your child must be enrolled for two days per week. This equates to maintaining a total of 20 days for summer enrollment. Summer Policy can be more than 20 days, but not fewer. A family must have been enrolled for 9 months prior to using the Summer Policy. Summer Policy for 2026 begins on June 22nd and ends on August 28th. If your dates must differ from this schedule, they must be communicated when you sign up on the Summer Enrollment Survey that is emailed to families (via Survey Monkey). If we don't know about your alternative schedule, we will assume the 6/22-8/28 dates work for you and your child will be scheduled as such. If you've reduced your days for summer policy and must return to work full time, and haven't told us, you run the risk of not having care available for your child until our new school year begins in September.

A consistent schedule of days each week is required for Summer Policy. (For example, attending on Monday and Tuesday one week and then on Thursday and Friday the next week does not constitute Summer Policy). Schedules must be submitted to the office by the deadline on the Summer Enrollment Survey. Schedule changes after this point in time or schedules submitted after this date must be in writing and are subject to an additional administrative fee. Please make every effort to finalize your schedule early. We base our teachers' schedules on the enrollment information you provide. The earlier we have that information, the more efficiently we can operate the center.

Please note: the Summer Policy is based on a **significant and regular** reduction in your child's usual schedule. Summer Policy may not be used if your child continues through the summer with his usual school year schedule except for vacation time. Please see the Director to determine if your schedule qualifies as Summer Policy.

By maintaining this minimum enrollment, your child's September enrollment will be ensured.

If you choose to use the Summer Policy, please make note of this on the Summer Enrollment Survey.

Use of the Summer Policy eliminates a family's eligibility for Vacation Policy.

VACATION POLICY

If your child has not had a regular reduction in schedule but takes a vacation of one full week of enrollment or more, this is considered Vacation Policy. Vacation credits must be used in one-week increments. Individual days may not be used.

After 12 consecutive months of enrollment, families are eligible for a 50% discount on the regular weekly tuition rate for **two** weeks of vacation. If the one-year anniversary falls at a time other than September, the family may use their two weeks after their one-year anniversary, but before the end of the fiscal year. The Bookkeeper and Director must be notified **in writing two weeks in advance** of using the vacation credit. Vacation credits cannot be accumulated; they must be used within the year they are earned. Vacation credits may be used after a family has been attending Applewood regularly for 12 consecutive months. Families may use two vacation credits per school year (Sept. 1, 2025-Aug. 28, 2026).

Families that take advantage of the Summer Policy are not eligible for vacation credits. Children must be absent from the Center in order to utilize vacation credits.

DECEMBER WEEK OF VACATION

During the week of Christmas, all families (even those enrolled less than 12 months and those who use Summer Policy) may take advantage of a week of vacation at ½ tuition. For families who are normally eligible for the 2 weeks of vacation, they may take one of their weeks during this week, or they may save the vacation credits for another time. Families who wish to use vacation credit during this week must indicate their intent to use this vacation week in writing to the office no later than Monday, November 24th. We are offering this to reduce enrollment that will allow staff who would like that week to spend with their families the opportunity to do so.

AFTER HOURS CARE

The Applewood Learning Center very strongly discourages all staff from providing after-hours care for families of children enrolled in our program. This policy is intended to minimize the appearance of favoritism and conflict of interest, as well as to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Please DO NOT ask our staff to babysit.

This policy is similar to others implemented at high quality early care and education programs in NH.

Applewood cannot attest to the character or the level of responsibility of any individual outside of the Applewood environment and Applewood's needs. We appreciate that this may be an inconvenience for some of our families. However, we feel it is important in establishing and maintaining the integrity of our programs.

SNOW DAYS

The Applewood Learning Center will cancel school or delay opening when weather conditions warrant. Although we make every attempt to open, we will close or delay opening when the weather and the travel conditions are expected to worsen. There are a variety of ways to confirm school cancellations/delayed openings:

- WMUR on your television or on www.wmur.com.
- Send a message on Remind
- Check for cancellations on our [Facebook page](#), however this method may not be as reliable due to

potential power outages.

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A DAY IN THE LIFE

ARRIVAL

The Applewood Learning Center opens at 6:30 AM. Staff members often arrive at the Center prior to 6:30 AM to prepare for the arrival of the children. However, this is the teacher's "quiet time". **Please do not plan to drop your child off before 6:30 AM.** In general, most of our classrooms open by 7:30 AM. This is dependent upon attendance and is subject to change. You will be notified as to which classrooms open the center. If your child's classroom is not open when you drop off, you may leave any messages for the classroom teacher with the opening staff. You may also leave a message with the classroom via the Remind app. Our opening schedule is attendance dependent and subject to change.

Children arriving at the Center prior to 7:30 AM may bring their breakfast. See Meals and Snacks.

We kindly request that all children arrive at the center by 10:00 a.m. 11:30am is the latest we can accommodate a drop off time to ensure a smooth transition and daily schedule for the entire classroom.

To make the transition from home to the Center as smooth as possible, please allow enough time to say a brief goodbye, so that both of you may start your day on a happy note. Often, we discover that children who have a quick goodbye from their loved one bounce back more quickly than those whose parents/guardians have stayed for a long period of time. Prior to dropping off, please check your child for any signs of illness (runny nose, cough, lethargy, fever, etc.). If you notice that your child is unwell, please keep them home. We work very hard to ensure that everyone at ALC remains healthy. If they are only mildly ill (runny nose, slight cough, no fever), they can attend school for the day. More severe illnesses indicate a need to keep your child home.

Signing-in/signing-out is a licensing requirement. Teachers will sign your child in and out of the room. Please also be sure to fill out the required paperwork for your child's classroom. Make sure to leave a contact number if you need to be reached. It is important that we can contact you during the day should there be an emergency.

Please make every effort to call the Center or send a Remind message if your child will be out for the day. There have been stories in the media of parents who have forgotten to drop their children off at child care and have left them in the car while they are at work. We would like to make every effort to avoid a tragedy such as this. If your child is absent and has not been called in by 10:00 A.M., we will do our best to contact you.

CLOSING

Applewood closes at 6 PM. Parents/guardians should arrive at the Center before this time. To end your child's day in a pleasant manner, please allow enough time for your child to gather their belongings and say goodbye to their friends. No teacher likes to rush a family out of the Center, but teachers are eager to see their families, too.

Circumstances may occasionally arise when you have someone other than a parent or guardian pick up your child at the end of the day.

If a parent/guardian plans to have a friend or relative pick-up their child,

- The alternate pickup must be listed on the child's registration form.
- The family must inform us that the alternate is picking up on that date.
- The alternate pick up will be asked for a license or photo ID.
- If necessary, an age-appropriate car seat or booster seat will be labeled with the child's name and left in the lobby or classroom.

(If the individual is not listed on the registration form, and you want them to pick up just this once, please write a note with their name, the date of pick up, and then sign and date it.)

Some people are offended when asked for an ID. However, we feel that it is a necessary precaution to ensure safety. Please inform your alternate pick-up person of this policy. If you have an alternate pick-up designee who will be picking up or dropping off on a regular basis, please see the Director to request a Brivo Mobile Pass credential to allow them easy access to the building.

The teacher will sign-out your child and record departure time.

Should a parent/guardian or alternate pick-up designee who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, arrive to pick up a child, we will notify the police that we suspect the person to be under the influence. For the safety of the staff, they will not become involved in a dispute with the individual. Our policy is to release the child and let the police handle it. We will attempt to note the make and model of the vehicle and the direction they headed and give this information to the police.

DAILY RECORDS

Daily notes from the Infant/Toddler classrooms will be available to families at the end of each day. These notes will be in your child's bag at the end of the day. Infant/Toddler teachers will make note of each child's sleeping, eating, diapering, and play activities. There is also an area on the daily sheet for the parent/guardian to record pertinent AM info (i.e., didn't sleep well the night before, a parent or guardian is away, etc.). You may take home the record at the end of each day. In addition, each teacher is available to discuss your child's day at the Center.

The Preschool Programs provide general information in the classroom or via Remind.

If your child is picked up at 12:30, please be aware that this is a very busy time in the classrooms and that the teachers may not be available to talk at length with you. Feel free, however, to call the classroom directly during nap which is typically during the hours of 1:00 PM-3:00 PM.

FAMILY MAILBOXES

Family mailboxes are in the main entranceway. In your mailboxes you will find notes from the classrooms, notes from the office, artwork, and other important information. Please check your mailbox regularly.

MEALS AND SNACKS

The Applewood Learning Center provides an afternoon snack for all children over 12 months of age. The staff will strive to provide nutritious and wholesome snacks, taking advantage of seasonal fruits and vegetables. Milk or water will be served with each snack. Snack menus are posted in each classroom and will be shared monthly via email. All our snacks meet the USDA guidelines. All other snacks, morning snacks, lunch, bottles or meals will be provided by the family.

Applewood also provides milk for children in the Infant (at 1 year of age), Toddler, Preschool, and School Age programs. Infants and Toddlers are served whole cow's milk. Preschool and School Agers are served skim cow's milk. Should your child require a beverage other than milk at lunch, we ask that you pack that in the lunchbox, or leave a labeled supply in the classroom refrigerator. Milk alternatives require a note from both you and your child's pediatrician.

Children who arrive at the center early may bring their breakfast. Due to the hectic nature of arrival time, breakfast cannot be served after 7:30 AM.

Families are responsible for providing lunch and a morning snack for their children each day. The Center strives to ensure that each child's lunch is well-balanced and nutritious. The Child Care Licensing Unit for the State of NH requires that a serving of protein, grain, and fruit or vegetable be in your child's lunch each day. In addition to this, 2 of these components (protein, grain, fruit, or vegetable) must be provided for a morning snack. Applewood will attempt to supplement lunches and snacks missing any of these components. The staff will notify you if any of these components are consistently missing from your child's lunch. **Candy and soda are discouraged at Applewood.**

Given children's tendency to engage in power struggles around food, it is our policy that whatever is in a child's lunch is what they are permitted to eat, and they may eat it in whichever order they choose. If you pack a dessert, please know that your child may choose to eat this first (and possibly only eat this). We will not force a child to eat a specific food, nor will we deny them a food item that has been provided by the family, unless it poses a choking or health risk. If you do not want your child to eat their dessert until everything else has been eaten, please save the dessert for home. Please mark which 2 items should be served for a morning snack.

While we would love to allow baby-led weaning at Applewood our group care environment doesn't allow for the kind of supervision that would make that practice safe. If BLW is your preference, we encourage you to use this practice at home. At Applewood, Infants and Toddlers must have their foods cut up into bite size pieces. Please be sure to cut their food before sending it to school. There are some foods that fall in line with the BLW philosophy that are acceptable at Applewood. Examples include:

- Bananas/Berries Slightly Mashed in Yogurt
- Oatmeal Cooked and Cooled with Mashed Berries
- Quinoa with Hummus
- Mashed Chickpeas with cooked spinach
- Ripened cantaloupe cut in small pieces
- Rice
- Scrambled Eggs with cooked veggies and cheese
- Avocado mashed slightly
- Cooked Apples in bite sized pieces
- Cut pieces of ripe Kiwi
- Cooked and slightly mashed Sweet Potato and Squash
- Hard Boiled Egg cut into bite sized pieces

Children are encouraged to feed themselves and to drink from a cup as their abilities allow. Applewood will provide cups and utensils.

The current (as of the publication of this handbook) NH Child Care Licensing Unit states, Child care program personnel shall not serve foods which can cause a choking hazard to children younger than 3 years of age or to children who have been identified as having chewing and swallowing difficulties, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Spoonfuls of peanut butter;
- (2) Whole or rounds of hot dogs or sausage;
- (3) Whole grapes;
- (4) Hard candy and chewing gum;
- (5) Raw carrot rounds, peas or celery;
- (6) Chips or hard pretzels;
- (7) Marshmallows;
- (8) Nuts or seeds;
- (9) Popcorn; and
- (10) Other hard or cylinder-shaped foods that may pose a choking hazard.

When peanut butter or other nut butter is included in your child's lunch, please label it as such. We are very conscientious about serving peanut butter and having this information before we open the package is very helpful. We will wash the area thoroughly after the child is done eating with disposable paper towels, and if PB is visible on a child's clothing after eating, they will have their clothes changed and bagged to be sent home. The child will wash their hands and face after eating PB. You might consider using a less allergenic alternative such as sun butter. Please let us know if that is what you are choosing to do as well. If there is any history of allergies in your family, please inform the teachers and the Director.

If you need additional ideas for snacks or lunches the staff is more than willing to offer guidance in this area.

Please remember to pack an ice pack in your child's lunch box to keep any perishable items fresh. Label all the items in your child's lunch with their name or initials.

Please use re-sealable containers for foods that your child may not completely eat (i.e., yogurt, etc.) so that leftovers can be sent home. We will only heat items in glass containers. If your child's food arrives in a plastic container, we will serve it as is.

If seafood is sent for lunch, please note that it will be served cold to your child. Reheating seafood in the microwave leaves a lingering odor in the Center, so we will gladly serve it cold.

* Please see the section on Diapers & Bottles if these apply to your child.

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WATER BOTTLES

Please send a reusable water bottle with your child. The staff will fill this at the beginning of each day so your child can have access to water throughout the day, including on the playground. The water bottle will be sent home weekly. Please run the water bottle through a dishwasher and return it with your child the following week.

DIAPERS & BOTTLES

Infant formula, breast milk and baby food are provided by families. Bottles should be prepared at home in the morning and a one-day supply brought to school. Bottles should be prepared as individual servings for each feeding session during the day. All bottles should be labeled with the child's name. The infant/toddler teachers

will adhere as closely as possible to the child's individual feeding schedule that is provided by the family and posted on the child's individual clipboard in their classroom.

Bottles will only be offered to babies for up to one hour after heating. After this the contents will not be served. This applies to both formula and breast milk. Please keep this in mind when you are planning your baby's daily bottle supply.

We require a physician's written instructions to serve bottles containing anything other than breast milk or formula.

Families of children who wear diapers supply diapers and all diapering materials (creams, wipes, etc.). A small package of diapers should be brought to school and placed in the changing area. Diaper packages and all diapering items should be labeled with the child's name. Storage is a hot commodity at Applewood, so we appreciate smaller, more frequent replenishment of supplies, rather than a large number of diapers that we will need to store.

Applewood accommodates cloth diapers. Please speak with the Enrollment Coordinator or Director for more details.

PACIFIERS

Infants are welcome to use pacifiers at Applewood for soothing or during sleep. Infant use of pacifiers has been linked to a reduced risk of SIDS. Staff will work with the family to encourage children to "give up" the pacifier when the child is ready for this transition. Pacifiers will be washed with soap and water and sanitized in our dishwasher.

BREASTFEEDING

As a designated "Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care" Applewood fully supports ALL breastfeeding. We have a space for mothers who are nursing and pumping or for any family member who wants to come by during the day to feed or connect with their child in a quiet space. This room is a separate space that is quiet and equipped with all the items you may need to nurse or pump. This includes bibs, burp cloths, a Medela pump (you would need to provide the tubes and other pieces) and nursing pillow. This space is for all families to use, including those who are not enrolled in the Infant/Toddler rooms. We also encourage families to bring in a few extra feedings of frozen breast milk that may be stored in bags that are labeled with the child's full name and the date the milk was expressed. This should be stored in a covered, leak-proof container provided by the family, in our chest freezer. The staff has information on breastfeeding for interested families. For additional information and support or breastfeeding visit the following websites: www.usbreastfeeding.org, www.lli.org, and <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/childcare-parenting-childbirth/breastfeeding-promotion-support>.

Benefits of Breastfeeding:

A mother's breast milk is produced to meet the needs of the baby, which is different from formula as that constantly stays the same. Mother's milk contains hundreds of healthy components and can't be imitated.

Breast milk provides all the nourishment an infant needs for the first six months of life (except for vitamin D). It contains good bacteria for the gut, enzymes, antioxidants, and immune compounds that are ideal for growth and development. Breast milk is easily digested, and nutrients are more available to infants. Breastfed infants tend to feed more often because it's so easily digested.

The flavors from a mother's food choices transfer into her breast milk so breastfed babies become more adventurous eaters. Breastfed babies learn early on to enjoy new flavors depending on the mother's diet.

CLOTHING

Since many of the classroom activities involve paint, glue or water, every child should have at least one change of clothing at school. Please remember that active children are not always clean children, and that clothing can sometimes become stained. All children's clothing should be labeled with your child's name. The staff members do their best to keep track of everyone's belongings, but with 16 sets of clothes, it can be a challenge. Applewood is not responsible for damaged or lost clothing. Clothes should be comfortable, washable, and weather appropriate. Children should ALWAYS bring a sweater or jacket to school.

All children go outside each day, if only for a few minutes. During wet or cold weather, children should wear boots and bring a pair of shoes or slippers to wear indoors. Also, during the cold months, children should always come to school with snow pants, hats, mittens, and boots. Teachers will keep an eye on the temperature and wind chill to determine if it is safe to take the children outside.

Because young children are still developing their gross motor skills, it is strongly recommended that children wear close-toed shoes or sneakers. Sneakers are **required for children on the playground**. Sandals, Crocs, flip-flops, and "jellies" are not conducive to running and climbing and offer little protection. It hurts when a little toe is stubbed or stepped on!

Please bring in a plastic storage container to keep all of your child's spare clothing in. Please remember to refresh this supply occasionally for children's growth and seasonal changes.

We kindly ask that Halloween costumes be worn at home only. The hype around Halloween can create behavior concerns in the classroom and costumes contribute to that. We also do not want to put teachers in a position of having to judge which costumes are appropriate for ALC and which are not. Thank you for your cooperation in this.

NAPS & REST

A rest period is a component of the full day program at Applewood. Applewood will provide children who are in attendance for more than 5 hours with an opportunity for at least one hour of rest, relaxation, or sleep, depending on the needs of each child. The staff has found that most children are quite tired from the morning activities and enjoy rest time. If, however, your child's needs seem to differ, please speak with a teacher so that we can develop a solution.

Infants sleep as needed, according to their individual schedules in individual cribs or in a pack-n-play. In the warmer months, this sleep may take place outdoors as well. Infant families may send in a sleep sack for napping, and Applewood will provide a fitted crib sheet. Stuffed animals, sleep positioners, and pillows are not used. Based on the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we will place healthy infants to sleep on their backs, unless otherwise requested in writing by the parents/guardians and accompanied by a written order from the child's pediatrician. Applewood can provide you with information on the Safe to Sleep Campaign, sponsored by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Toddlers and Preschoolers generally begin napping at 12:45 - 1PM and end napping at 2:30 - 3PM. Applewood provides cots for the children at nap. We ask that all children who nap have a sheet under them and a sheet or blanket over them. Many families send in fitted crib sheets to cover the cots/mats. A small pillow, blanket and special stuffed animal may also be part of your child's nap gear (no action figures or toys, please). Please bring your child's nap gear home weekly for cleaning. Keep in mind that the classrooms have many children enrolled and space is limited. Please keep the amount of nap materials down to a minimum.

The Kindergarten Enrichment/School Age children have a quiet time for about one hour after lunch. Children who still nap are welcome to do so, but often children at the 5-year-old age are weaning off their nap. Families are

welcome to send a bag of quiet activities for their child during rest. These can be books, puzzles, or coloring for example. Handheld video games are not permitted at Applewood. The School Age program will rest on carpet squares. If a child in this program requires a nap, a cot or mat will be provided for them.

There may be rare circumstances when we reduce the staffing in the Preschool, KE and School Age rooms during nap according to the following:

For children 24 months through 5 years, during naptime, a center based program may have one less staff person in a classroom than required to meet ratios in accordance with He-C 4002.33 through He-C 4002.36 provided that:

- (1) The total number of child care personnel required to maintain all ratios are on the premises of the program;
- (2) The ratio of awake children to staff in the classroom shall be no more than half the number of children as stated in He-C 4002.33 through He-C 4002.36;
- (3) Rooms in which staff is reduced shall be equipped with a two-way communication system, such as an intercom, to allow for immediate contact for assistance and response; and
- (4) There is a safety plan on file for review by the department, child care personnel and parents which includes plans or procedures for the following:
 - a. Evacuation;
 - b. Supervision;
 - c. Environment;
 - d. Schedule;
 - e. Naptime policy; and
 - f. Staff training and support.

(p) Ratios for children under 24 months shall always be maintained, in accordance with He-C4002.33 and 4002.34, except as specified in (q) below.

(q) Ratios for children under 24 months in mixed age groups with children 24 months and older shall be based on the average age of the children in each group during naptime, in accordance with above.

(r) Programs shall base the staff to child ratio on the average age of the children in each group when there are mixed age groups in the same room in accordance with above.

(s) Programs that choose to reduce staff in accordance with (o) through (r) above shall:

- (1) Notify parents in writing of the reduction of staff; and
- (2) Maintain documentation of the written notice in (1) above for review by department staff.

Written notice may be in the form of a posted document, a policy statement that is individually signed by parents, or other method of documentation that is kept in the child's record.

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KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

SECURITY

The Applewood Learning Center utilizes an access control system that provides a component of security to our facility. When a family starts at Applewood, each parent and/or guardian will download the Brivo Mobile Pass onto their mobile device from the Google Play Store or the App Store. A mobile pass credential will be emailed to each parent/guardian, which must be activated via the mobile app within 72 hours of receipt. To gain access to Applewood during school hours, open the app, and as you arrive at the main entranceway, select “Front Door” from the app. Passes work at both the main entranceway and the East side entranceway. To enter through the East side door, select “Side Door”. Once you select the appropriate door, the light on the reader will turn from red to green, and the door will click and become unlocked for your access. Please listen for the click before pulling on the door. Should you not have your pass, please use the intercom. A staff member will ask your identity and unlock the door. Please do not “tail” another person into the building.

If you have an alternate pick up person who will be picking up or dropping off on a regular basis, please see the Director to request an additional mobile pass to allow them easy access to the building.

Mobile passes are activated to work Monday through Friday, 6:30AM - 6PM, when Applewood is open.

To maintain the integrity of the security system, please do NOT hold the door for anyone approaching the building. While we understand that this can feel unfriendly, it is to ensure that those who enter the building are supposed to be here. If there is someone who follows you in, kindly alert someone in the office or another staff member so that we can identify them and follow through with any necessary action.

PHOTOGRAPHS

We go to great lengths to ensure that only children who have permission to do so are photographed at the center. In keeping with this effort, we kindly request that you do not photograph your child, their peers, the staff, or the center. We generally take ample photographs at our events and throughout the day. Feel free to peruse them on Facebook or Instagram and share them with your friends and family as you see fit.

ALTERNATE PICK UP PEOPLE

Circumstances may occasionally arise when you have someone other than a parent or guardian pick up your child at the end of the day.

If a parent/guardian plans to have a friend or relative pick-up their child,

- The alternate pickup must be listed on the child's registration form.
- The family must inform us that the alternate is picking up on that date.
- The alternate pick up will be asked for a license or photo ID.
- If necessary, an age-appropriate car seat or booster seat will be labeled with the child's name and left in the lobby or classroom.

(If the individual is not listed on the registration form, and you want them to pick up just this once, please write a note with their name, the date of pick up, and then sign and date it.)

Some people are offended when asked for an ID. However, we feel that it is a necessary precaution to ensure safety. Please inform your alternate pick up person of this policy.

SAFETY SEAT BELT LAW

It is the law in the State of NH for children under the age of 18 years to be in an appropriate safety restraint when traveling in a moving vehicle. Please remember to use a car seat for your young child and a booster seat or seat belt for your older child. As an aside, the State imposes a fine for each offense. NH State Law now requires that children be in a car seat or booster seat until they are 7 years old or 57 inches tall, whichever is reached first. <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/xxi/265/265-107-a.htm>

If you need to leave your car seat here during the day, please label it with your child's name and leave it in the lobby.

CARS RUNNING IN THE PARKING LOT

In the state of NH, it is illegal to leave a vehicle running in a parking lot unattended. We ask all our families to abide by this important safety rule. It could quickly become a devastatingly dangerous situation if a child were in the parking lot with an unattended running car. Please be considerate of other families, the children's lungs, and the planet.

CHILDREN LEFT IN CARS

We understand the needs of families in a rush trying to drop off or pick up their child. It is sometimes very convenient to leave your other children in the vehicle while you run into Applewood to drop off or pick up your child. We encourage you to bring your children into the building to protect their safety. If you find that you must leave them in the car, please let someone in the office know of your plans and we will watch your child in the parking lot while you pick up/drop off the other child.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN IN PARKING LOT

We understand that children can move quickly, much to the surprise of the adults in their lives. We also know that vehicles often come into our parking lot, not expecting children to be here (despite our signage). As such, we ask that parents and guardians remain vigilant in supervising children in the parking lot. Insist on holding your child's hand so they cannot get away from you. When you're in the driver's seat, please remember to DRIVE SLOWLY! We want to do our best to avoid a tragedy!

ACCIDENTS

Although scrapes and bruises are a part of childhood, the staff at Applewood strives to minimize even minor injuries. When minor accidents happen, the teaching staff administers first aid while providing lots of TLC. Accident reports are completed by the teaching staff and given to parents/guardians at the end of the day. Please review and sign these forms and leave the form with your child's teacher before leaving the Center. At your request, a copy will be provided for you.

In the event of a head injury - even a bump - parents/guardians will be contacted promptly by phone or the Remind app. With a more serious injury, a child will be brought via ambulance to Parkland Medical Center or to Elliot Urgent Care at Londonderry. The child's parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Whenever possible, the Director and classroom teacher will accompany the child to the medical facility. The child's medical records will also be brought to the medical facility. Applewood will hold no responsibility for the health care of the child once they are in the care of medical professionals.

Please note that Applewood's liability insurance does not provide compensation for injuries that require medical attention.

SAFETY ISSUES

Applewood strives to provide an environment that is safe, secure, and healthy for all children. Please consider the following:

- Upon arrival, please bring your child into their classroom. Check-in with your child's teacher before you leave, after dropping off your child, and before picking up at the end of the day. A teacher will sign your child in or out.
- Please keep your child with you when dropping off or picking up. Children are not permitted to wander around or be left unattended at any time. Please do not allow them to run to the door without you.
- If a custody dispute and/or domestic violence issues are a part of your child's life, it is **imperative** that you inform the Director immediately. Complete and up-to-date legal documentation must be provided so that we are able to comply with any court orders. Any information provided to the staff will be held in strict confidence.
- For Administrative ease, for the convenience of our teachers, and per the advice of our attorney, it is the policy of The Applewood Learning Center that any requests for information beyond that which is normally provided to families on a regular basis, be submitted to the Director.
- It is a law in the State of NH that all suspected cases of child abuse be reported to the Division of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). At Applewood, any staff member who suspects abuse must report this to the Director for further investigation. The Director, if circumstances warrant, will contact DCYF for advice and/or reporting. We will inform families in the event of a report being filed.
- Finally, if a parent, guardian or alternate pick-up person appears under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the staff at Applewood will notify the police, but will not prevent the individual from picking up the child.

KEEPING OUR CHILDREN HEALTHY

HEALTH POLICY

HEALTH POLICIES OF THE APPLEWOOD LEARNING CENTER

The Applewood Learning Center seeks to provide a healthy learning environment for young children. Understanding that mild illness is common among children, the Applewood staff makes every effort to reduce the spread of germs and to control the transmission of infectious disease using preventative measures, the adherence to recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the NH Department of Health, and clear communication with families.

Children attending any child care program are continuously exposed to each other's germs. Although the staff makes every effort to minimize the spread of germs, children do become ill. If a child becomes ill while at school, a teacher will take the child's temperature, separate the child from the group, and notify the family. Parents or Guardians will be asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. Your child may return to school when our policy states it is appropriate for your child to return. The staff will provide you with a Symptom Record to inform you of Applewood's exclusion policy. In some cases, a physician's note may be required to return to school.

In instances where a reportable illness is present in the Center, a Health Notice will be posted at the main

entranceway to Applewood. Additionally, when an illness poses an increased risk to a particular population, for example Fifth's Disease with pregnant women, a Health Notice will be provided to that particular population via the family mailbox or via email.

Although we do try to provide flexibility in our health policy, we have found that the best policy for all children is to reduce the spread of germs and the risk of infection through exclusion. In the past, we have found that pediatricians vary in the length of time they recommend a child to be excluded from the Center because of a contagious illness. Because of this, Applewood follows the guidelines of the NH Department of Health, the American Academy of Pediatrics and The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

If you suspect that your child may have a contagious illness, please seek medical advice before bringing your child to school. Please ask the medical professional to indicate in writing when it is safe for your child to return to Applewood.

Please note that the Bureau of Standards and Licensing for child care programs in the State of NH requires that children are observed daily for signs of illness and be isolated or excluded from the program when ill.

When your child is absent due to an illness, please let us know. It is in the best interests of all children if you keep us informed of your child's symptoms.

ALLERGIES/SPECIAL MEDICAL CONCERNS

If your child is allergic to anything (food, insect bites, medications, etc.), please let us know so that all staff members are informed. If your child has a life-threatening allergy or an allergy that causes a serious reaction, your child's physician must complete an Allergy Action Plan and an Authorization to Dispense Medication form which authorizes us to administer the provided medication. Children who are prescribed an Epi-Pen Jr. (or other injectable epinephrine) must have 2 doses/pens on site at all times, in addition to any other medication in the Plan. Updated copies of the Action Plan and Medication forms must be provided each year.

A written care plan that includes instructions regarding food(s) or other allergens to which the child is allergic and steps for child care staff to take to avoid the allergens; and (2) A written treatment plan, detailing the treatment to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, which shall include: a. The names, doses, and methods of prompt administration of any medications, where the medication needs to be stored in relation to the child, taking into consideration the storage requirements in He-C 4002.21(o)(2), and instructions on how to administer the prescribed medication; and b. Specific symptoms that would indicate the need to administer one or more medications. (h) At all times, at least one child care staff supervising a child with an allergy care plan shall have completed the training specified in He-C 4002.33(b)(5). (i) The program shall post each allergy care plan in accordance with the posting requirements in HeC 4002.14. (j) All child care staff responsible for food preparation and food service, and all child care staff responsible for supervising children with an allergy, including staff covering breaks, shall read and familiarize themselves with the care plans and treatment plans, to ensure that no child is accidentally exposed to an allergen.

If your child has a history of febrile seizures (seizures brought on by high fever), the doctor must indicate this in writing, and you must provide a fever reducing medication and complete an Authorization to Dispense Medication form which authorizes us to administer the provided medication. When a child with a history of febrile seizures develops a fever of a 100.4 or higher, with or without another symptom, the parent/guardian will be called to pick the child up.

Remember: **Children in all programs go outside for a period each day** unless the temperature or wind-chill is below 15 degrees. We will also remain indoors on certain Air Quality Action Days as determined by the NH Department of Environmental Services. Children who are well enough to attend Applewood must be well enough

to go outside.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Applewood's foundation is based upon the belief in a partnership between families and staff. The Health policy is dependent upon this same partnership. The Health Policy will be only as effective as is the open communication between families and staff. It is vital that families fully communicate to the staff all changes in a child's behavior, daily routines, and health. Please notify your child's classroom teacher if your child is ill and will not be attending. Equally important is your commitment to the Health Policy.

We request that families assist the staff in developing and maintaining a healthy environment by being responsible for the following:

- read, review and, if needed, question Applewood's Health Policy, so that you have a good understanding of it.
- adhere to the exclusion policy, as stated for specific illnesses or by additional recommendations of your child's physician.
- practice preventative measures, as they apply to Applewood; and
- communicate with your child's classroom teachers when you notice any changes in your child's behavior, daily routines, and health.

HEALTH STANDARDS

Symptoms and Illnesses that Require Exclusion

as defined by the Red Book by the American Academy of Pediatrics, The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education and the NH Department of Health

- **Temperature:** oral 101 or higher (100 or higher in armpit), accompanied by changes in activity level, changes in behavior, or other signs/symptoms of illness.
 - Exclusion: until 24 hours after the fever has subsided (if this is prior to 11:30, the child may attend school that day, after 11:30, please kindly wait until the following day) without the use of acetaminophen or ibuprofen, provided that the child is able to participate comfortably in the daily activities of the program.
 - Fever, with a history of febrile seizures, of 100.4 or higher with or without other symptoms will result in exclusion until 24 hours after the fever has subsided without the use of fever reducing medication.
- According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, “Teething *occasionally* may cause mild irritability, crying, a low-grade temperature (but not over 101 degrees Fahrenheit or 38.3 degrees Celsius)”.
- **Signs of possible severe illness:** including unusual lethargy, difficult breathing, uncontrolled coughing, persistent crying with other symptoms.
 - Exclusion: until the condition has been diagnosed by the child’s physician and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.
- **Diarrhea:** defined by:
 - Decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet
 - Increased frequency of passing stool.
 - Exclusion: until 24 hours (if this is prior to 11:30am, the child may attend school that day, after 11:30 am, please kindly wait until the following day) after diarrhea has subsided. Exceptions:
 - Children with diarrhea caused by Salmonella TYPHI must stay at home until 3 stool

cultures test negative and the health department clears the child's return in writing.

- Children with diarrhea caused by Shigella or E. coli 0157 must stay home until 2 stool cultures test negative, and the health department approves the child's return in writing.

➤ **Vomiting:** Two or more times in the previous 24 hours.

- Exclusion: until the condition has been diagnosed by the child's physician and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious **or** until 24 hours (if this is prior to 11:30am, the child may attend school that day, after 11:30, please kindly wait until the following day) after the vomiting has subsided.

➤ **Rash:** with fever or behavior change.

- Exclusion: until a physician has determined the illness not to be a communicable disease and has provided written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Head Lice:** (Pediculosis) until the child is lice and nit-free and has been treated with an over the counter pediculicide medication containing 1% permethrin or pyrethrins.

➤ **Scabies:** until after treatment has been completed and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Pinworms:** until after treatment has been completed and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Tuberculosis:** until a health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and has provided written authorization that the child can attend child care and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Impetigo**

- Exclusion: for 24 hours after the first treatment and sores must be covered or crusted over.

➤ **Streptococcal infections,** including strep throat, scarlet fever, and rheumatic fever.

- Exclusion: for at least until the morning after 24 hours after treatment has begun **and** the child is fever-free until the morning after 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. (If the 24 hours is prior to 11:30, the child may attend school that day, after 11:30, please kindly wait until the following day)

➤ **Chicken Pox**

- Exclusion: until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).

➤ **Shingles**

- Exclusion: until all lesions have dried and crusted if the rash cannot be covered.

➤ **Pertussis**

- Exclusion: until 5 days of appropriate medical treatment has been given and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Mumps**

- Exclusion: until 5 days after the onset of the parotid gland swelling

➤ **Hepatitis A**

- Exclusion: until 1 week after beginning of illness, jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis (currently, immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff members.

➤ **Measles**

- Exclusion: until 4 days after rash appears

➤ **Rubella**

- Exclusion: until 6 days after the rash appears

➤ **Blood in stools** not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.

- Exclusion: until the condition has been diagnosed by the child's physician and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Persistent Abdominal Pain (2 hours or more) or Intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration or other signs and symptoms**

- Exclusion: until the condition has been diagnosed by the child's physician and the physician has given written authorization for inclusion and indication that the child is not contagious.

➤ **Oral/lip lesions (such as cold sores),** exclusion until child's or staff member's lesions are crusted and dry

➤ **Staph Aureus (MRSA) skin infections:** exclusion only if lesions are draining and cannot be covered with a watertight dressing.

Please be aware that there are illnesses that are contagious but are non-exclusionary. These include:

- Bacteria or viruses in urine or feces in the absence of illness symptoms.
- CMV (Cytomegalovirus) infection.
- Common colds, runny noses, and coughs.
- Fifth disease (parvovirus B19 infection) in a person with a normal immune system.
- Hepatitis B virus carrier state, provided that children who carry HBV have no behavioral or medical risk factors, such as unusually aggressive behavior (biting, frequent scratching), generalized dermatitis, or bleeding problems.
- HIV infection, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the child's health care team.
- Mild fever without behavior changes.
- Pink eye (Conjunctivitis)
- Rash without fever and without behavior changes.
- Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease

MEDICATIONS

Judicious use of medications is practiced at The Applewood Learning Center. Based on the most current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the following plan for administering medications has been adopted. All medications brought into the building should be handed directly to the Classroom Teacher, so that they may safely store it out of the children's reach. Never send your child's medication in their lunch bag or backpack.

Prescription Medication

In recognizing the parent/guardian as the child's primary caregiver and the one to whom the child is closest, Applewood will administer prescription medication at midday only, when a child requires 3 doses of the medication daily. The Applewood staff will administer prescription medication mid-morning and mid-afternoon when a child requires 4 doses. Medications that require 2 doses daily will only be administered at home.

All prescription medication must be brought to Applewood in its original container with the child's name, current date, dosage information, appropriate measuring device, and length of treatment. Families must complete an "Authorization to Dispense Medication" form for each prescription medication.

If your child suffers from a chronic illness, such as asthma, diabetes, etc. and requires medication on a regular basis, please see the classroom Head Teacher or your child's Primary Teacher.

Non-Prescription Medication

Current research has shown that non-prescription cough and cold medications are not consistently effective for children under the age of 6 years and may be dangerous for children under the age of 2 years. Fever and pain reducing medication is generally considered necessary for fevers over 101.0 degrees, the point at which the Child Care Licensing Unit indicates exclusion. As such, Applewood will only administer non-prescription medications in the event of an emergency as determined by a child's physician in the form of an "Action Plan" and an "Authorization to Dispense Medication" form. Action Plans are in place for children with life-threatening emergency medical issues (allergies, epilepsy, etc.).

If your child is allergic to anything (food, insect bites, medications, etc.) please let us know so that all staff members are informed. If your child has a life-threatening allergy or an allergy that results in a serious reaction, your child's physician must complete an Allergy Action Plan and an Authorization to Dispense Medication form which authorizes us to administer the provided medication. Children who are prescribed an Epi-Pen Jr. (or other injectable epinephrine) must always have 2 doses/pens on site, in addition to any prescribed antihistamine. Updated copies of the Action Plan and Medication forms must be provided each year.

Applewood will administer non-prescription medication to children with action plans provided they have the medication in the building, and it is not expired.

In the event of a fever, the staff will make every effort to make the child comfortable until their parent/guardian or their designated emergency or alternate pick-up person can arrive to pick them up.

PREVENTION MEASURES: These are things we are doing at Applewood to prevent the spread of illness and we encourage you all to do them as well.

Everyone can protect themselves, and others, through a multi-layered approach. Children will be taught, encouraged, and reminded to:

1. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or inside of the elbow then throw the tissue away, and wash hands.
3. Avoid touching one's eyes, nose, mouth, and face covering.
4. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
5. Stay home when sick.
6. Get age-appropriate vaccinations.

By signing the handbook signature page, you are indicating that you understand the inherent risk in your child attending group child care. You are agreeing that you will not hold Applewood responsible for any illness or death that may occur because of your child's attendance.

COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES AND PEDIATRICIANS

When children are sent home after exhibiting symptoms of illness, the Applewood staff will provide the family with documentation of the symptoms and the circumstances surrounding the child's early release from the program.

If there is a reportable illness present in the Center, a Health Notice will be posted at the main entrance to Applewood. Additionally, when an illness poses an increased risk to a particular population, for example Fifth's Disease with pregnant women, a Health Notice will be provided to that particular population via the family mailbox or via email.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Applewood utilizes the following practices as means of reducing the spread of infection:

Handwashing

The most effective means of reducing the spread of germs is through handwashing with soap and running water. We ask that all families encourage their children to wash their hands upon arrival at the Center. The Applewood staff will work to promote an awareness of effective handwashing techniques with children and will encourage frequent handwashing in the classroom. Handwashing posters will be visible at all sinks used by children.

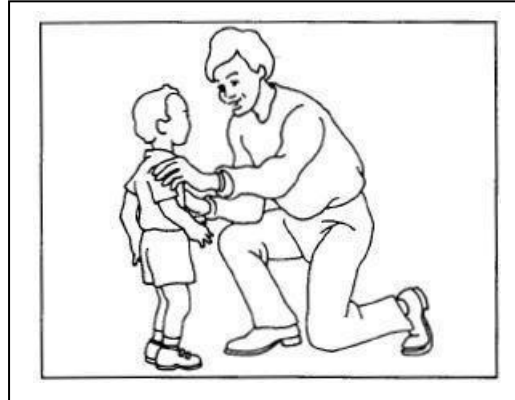
Daily Health and Wellness Check

Upon each child's arrival, the staff will conduct a daily health and wellness check. The following outlines what they'll be looking for:

Daily Health Check:

Check for:

- ☐ Activity level
- ☐ Severe sneezing or coughing
- ☐ Discharge from nose, eyes, or ears
- ☐ Breathing difficulties
- ☐ Sores
- ☐ Swelling or bruises
- ☐ Rashes or unusual spots
- ☐ General mood and behavior
- ☐ Skin color (pale or flushed)
- ☐ Itching/scratching of skin or scalp



You will be asked:

- ☐ How did the child seem to feel or act at home
 - _ sleeping normally?
 - _ eating/drinking normally? When was the last time the child ate or drank?
- ☐ Any unusual events?
- ☐ Bowels and urine normal? When was the last time the child used the toilet or was changed?
- ☐ Any evidence of illness or injury since the child was last at Applewood?

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Disinfecting

Throughout the day, the staff disinfects areas and materials used by children, regardless of the level of illness in the classroom. Tables are washed and disinfected before and after each use; toys and equipment are disinfected daily; and toys that are mouthed are removed from use until they have been sanitized. Additionally, Applewood employs a janitorial service that cleans the center nightly. This cleaning includes the sanitization of the bathrooms.

Vaccination

Full vaccination of the entire Applewood community is another important means of preventing the spread of communicable disease. It is required that all children enrolled in the center meet the minimum vaccination requirements for their age as determined by the N.H. Department of Health and Human Services. Per state regulations, the only allowable exemptions are:

Medical Exemption: A licensed physician or authorized health care provider must certify, in writing, that immunization against a particular disease may be detrimental to the child's health.

Religious Exemption: The parent or legal guardian shall sign a form stating that the child has not been immunized because of religious beliefs.

In the event of an outbreak, non-vaccinated children will be excluded from care for their own protection per recommendation of the NH Public Health Department.

Annual vaccination against influenza and vaccination against Covid-19 for children 6 months and older is also STRONGLY RECOMMENDED for all eligible children and staff.

Each time your child receives a vaccination or a well-child visit, ask their pediatrician for a print-out of their vaccination record and current Health Form. This should be given to the Director.

MEDICAL PROCEDURES

If your child requires a medical procedure, please bring a note from the child's physician indicating when the child can return to school and fully participate in the program.

SUNSCREEN/INSECT REPELLANT

During summer months, we encourage you to use Applewood's sunscreen (please refer to the Authorization and Consent Form). If your child is unable to use our sunscreen, you can provide your own sunscreen (with a minimum SPF of 30) labeled with your child's name. Please send in a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and a water bottle. Children without a hat will be encouraged to play in the shade.

In NH we have ticks and mosquitoes in addition to a variety of other insects. You are welcome to provide an insect repellent for your child, labeled with their name. The staff will apply this only once/day (prior to time outdoors in the afternoon). If you want your child to have it before their morning time outdoors, please apply it at home.

Sunscreen/bug spray combinations are discouraged as these combo lotions can reduce the SPF effectiveness by 1/3.

PEST CONTROL

Applewood has pest control done on the property to manage insects and rodents. This is not applied where children are actively playing. Periodically, the use of insecticide will be used in the classroom. This will be applied after the children have left for the day with a priority being placed on applying this on a Friday night.

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN

Assessment of children in the Infant/Toddler and Preschool programs occurs on an on-going basis at Applewood. Through observation, conversation, and documentation we can get a comprehensive picture of where a child is at developmentally. We use this information to inform our teaching practice and our curriculum. The teachers also use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire - 3 and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – SE (Social/Emotional) as tools for formal screening. There is a family component to these questionnaires that you will be asked to complete on your child. We welcome your on-going input into your child's assessment. If there are developmental milestones that have occurred in your child's life, please share them with your child's teacher so that we may accurately document your

child's growth.

We document children's growth and development using a portfolio system that is created in Google Slides and will be shared with you via a link. This portfolio is created by your child's primary caregiving teacher. You can use this link to access your child's online portfolio at any time. As always, we welcome your input into your child's assessment and encourage you to share notable photographs, artwork, or anecdotes with the teachers to include in the portfolio.

TRANSITIONING TO A NEW CLASSROOM

Children transition to new classroom programs throughout the year. A child's readiness, as well as program availability, is considered in determining a transition schedule. A child's readiness is assessed through continual observation and anecdotal notes that detail cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development. Chronological age is also a consideration. It is important to note, however, that when a child is ready to transition but there is no availability in the next program, curriculum plans will be modified within the child's classroom to meet their developmental needs.

Each classroom provides families with a transition guide that explains the differences between programs. It is also helpful for families to observe and visit the program into which their child is transitioning. As always, please feel free to arrange an appointment with the staff to discuss your child's transition.

A child who has other life transitions (divorce, moving to a new program, new sibling), may not be a good candidate for a transition to a new classroom. We will do our best to minimize the number of transitions a child is coping with at any given time. Consistency in their lives is of utmost importance.

TOILET LEARNING

The teachers will work in conjunction with families in the toilet learning process. Encouragement and support are always offered during the learning process. The bathrooms at Applewood have child-size toilets. When your child begins toilet learning, please bring in plenty of changes of clothes including socks and shoes. Accidents do happen!! We do not allow the use of "pull ups" for toilet learning. Please speak to a teacher for further details.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL

Should you or the teaching staff have concerns about your child needing an evaluation for special services for a learning disability or any other disability the teaching staff will discuss this with you at length. We have several resources to contact for evaluation and services, but they will never be contacted without your prior knowledge. Please feel free to speak to the teaching staff if you have concerns about your child's learning.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANS

When a child and/or family has an Individual Education Plan or Individual Family Service Plan, the staff of The Applewood Learning Center will work in partnership with the family and the Special Education Team to implement the recommendations on the plan. Families should provide a current copy of the plan to be kept on file in the office. Families with children receiving services through early intervention or receiving care from any specialist should provide the office with copies of any plans they have in place as well.

CONFERENCES

Family-Teacher conferences are held annually for each child in the Infant/Toddler and Preschool programs. The conference consists of discussion around the ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE developmental screenings that you and the staff will have completed on your child. **Additional conferences may be scheduled at any time during the year at the request of the family or teacher.** If families wish to discuss at length any issue or concern, please make an appointment with the teacher or Director. These conferences will be held in person or via Zoom/Google Meets based on a mutual decision between the family and the teachers. Please note that we recommend that children do not attend these conferences. In the past, both families and staff have found that conversation can be disrupted when children are present.

PLAY

Play is THE major component of your child's day at Applewood. The benefits include:

- Improved cognitive skills and problem-solving abilities
- Physical capabilities are enhanced
- More in-depth vocabulary
- Enhanced social skills
- Stress reduction
- Health benefits

A big part of our play occurs outdoors as time with nature has proven health benefits as well. These include increased ability to attend to tasks, ability to take reasonable risks, physical exercise, as well as reduced levels of anxiety. When children can explore the outdoors, they're in their zone and fully empowered. With this comes DIRT! Active explorers who are learning about their world will be dirty. Be prepared for nightly baths and lots of exciting learning!

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APPLEWOOD POLICIES

DISCIPLINE

Applewood adheres to the following guidelines for discipline, behavior guidance and treatment of children:

Interactions Between and Among Adults and Children.

(a) Child care staff shall nurture and encourage each child in care by providing each child with a variety of developmentally appropriate learning and social experiences and establishing and maintaining a learning environment that provides for the emotional well-being of each child.

(b) When a child is engaging in unacceptable behavior, child care staff shall:

- (1) Redirect a child's attention to a desirable activity by providing positive guidance, positively worded directions, and developmentally appropriate explanations for limits and rules;**
- (2) Establish developmentally appropriate rules or limits for acceptable behavior, which are equitable, consistently applied, and developmentally appropriate;**
- (3) Demonstrate desired behavior and problem-solving skills and then redirect children to acceptable behavior;**
- (4) Arrange equipment, materials, activities, and schedules in a way that promotes desirable behavior; and (5) Implement safe, logical, and natural consequences related to the misbehavior and enforce those consequences as soon as possible after the misbehavior has occurred.**

(c) Child care staff shall use separation, or time out only as a method to enable a child to regain control of themselves, and not as a punitive disciplinary technique.

(d) When a child is separated from the group, the child shall be able to see and hear the other children and be within hearing and vision of child care staff, except when child care staff remove a child from the classroom to a quieter area which is visible by other child care staff, to provide one-on-one attention.

(e) Child care staff and household members shall not:

- (1) Abuse or neglect children;**
- (2) Use rough handling on children;**
- (3) Use corporal punishment on children;**
- (4) Require children to stand or sit facing walls or corners;**
- (5) Shame, humiliate, threaten, or frighten children;**
- (6) Confine infants or toddlers in high chairs or other seating devices or equipment, which restricts their movement, as a disciplinary technique;**
- (7) Place or confine children in equipment that is not appropriate for their age, including but not limited to cribs, playpens, or highchairs;**
- (8) Withhold food from children, forcibly feed children, or discipline children for not eating;**
- (9) Discipline any child for toileting accidents, lapses in toileting habits, or prohibiting children from using the toilet as a form of discipline;**

- (10) Use isolation as a form of discipline;**
- (11) Require children to rest, sleep, or go to their mat, crib, or rest area as a means of discipline, or discipline children for not sleeping or resting during naptime;**
- (12) Yell in anger or frustration at or with children; or**
- (13) Use profanity or obscene language with children or among themselves where children can hear them**

The center director and all other child care personnel shall take prompt action to protect children from abuse, neglect, corporal punishment, or other mistreatment by any individual.

BITING

According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, Wounds from human bites – especially by young children – don't usually become infected with bacteria. Serious bites by children are unusual in child care centers.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2532918/>

Children bite for a variety of reasons, but it is not because they are violent. Often, children bite to explore, because of teething, seeking attention, limited verbal ability and just to see what will happen. When a child at Applewood is biting, the staff conducts careful observations to identify patterns in the behavior and then take steps necessary to reduce the need for biting. If it becomes necessary, we will have another staff member "shadow" the child. This usually decreases the need for the behavior.

Biting is a very difficult issue for both the family of the child who has been bitten and the family of the child who is biting. We try to be sensitive to both families as we work with the child to find alternative behaviors. We do not exclude children for age-appropriate biting.

Biting can be an emotional issue and while we know that this behavior can be developmentally appropriate for children in the Infant and Toddler classrooms, it is our goal to take pro-active measures to create an environment that promotes self-regulation in alternative ways. Teachers in the Infant and Toddler programs, together with the Administrative Team, have developed a policy that fits best with our philosophy in respect to working with all our families and supporting children's individual differences, while at the same time ensuring the safety of every child. Children are never excluded from the Infant and Toddler classrooms based solely on biting. Even with all of these measures in place, it is impossible to ensure that children will not be bitten. We begin by creating an environment that will reduce the possibility that a child will choose to bite.

Proactive Strategies to prevent biting:

- Provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Teachers are responsive to children's individual communication patterns and needs
- Using Sign Language to improve communication
- Supporting children to work through conflicts with various strategies
- Teachers being physically close to children when they may experience frustration to "talk them through" the interaction

When a bite has occurred:

- We will work to ensure that the child who has been hurt is immediately cared for first and that the child who has done the biting is addressed soon afterwards in keeping with a time frame that is developmentally appropriate.
- When it is developmentally appropriate, we will have children who have been bitten use words or signs to communicate the discomfort of the bite. Children who have done the biting will "check in" with the hurt child to see if they are alright.
- We will wash the bite area with soap and water (to clean it) and apply ice (to reduce swelling) with all bites.

- We will fill out an accident report for parents/guardians to sign. This report is also signed by the Director and placed in the child's file.
- We will always keep the identity of the child who has done the biting and the child who was bit confidential. When it becomes a pattern for a child to bite:
- We will observe this child in play to determine what, if any "triggers" can be determined and find strategies to alleviate the occurrence of biting.
- We will work to develop an action plan to support that child through dialogue with parents/guardians.
- Action plans may include strategies such as shadowing, smaller group sizes, changes to the classroom environment, etc.

When it becomes a pattern for a child to be bitten:

- We will give children signs/words to help them empower themselves, as we don't want children to feel helpless or without a voice.
- Sharing action plans that we have developed with families.
- Keeping the lines of communication open between home and school.

There is no quick fix to biting predicament. Sometimes nothing works, and children grow out of it. Doing all of the above should help alleviate the urgency. Maintaining good relationships with parents during a biting epidemic requires all the trust and goodwill built up by good program practice before biting ever occurs. Because biting is a natural and inevitable occurrence in group situations for toddlers, the most teachers can do is prepare for biting, maintain perspective while it is happening, and do all they can to minimize the occurrence.

DIVERSE CULTURE RECOGNITION

As educators, it is our responsibility to provide developmentally appropriate, meaningful activities for young children. Our teachers are skilled at creating such activities. It is important to create celebratory activities that remain developmentally appropriate for each age group. **Families, in partnership with the teachers**, may develop celebrations to recognize the holidays that are important in the lives of their children. Applewood respects and values diversity and we invite families to share customs and holiday traditions that are celebrated at home.

As a staff we work hard to meet your needs as families while still maintaining a developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum. As such the children do not create gifts for holidays (Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas).

BIRTHDAYS

A child's birthday is a special day, and each room is happy to hold a celebration. If you would like to bring in a special food for a snack time party, please let the classroom teacher know at least one day in advance. Please see the classroom teacher for suggestions of appropriate snacks. We do not encourage children to bring gifts for the party, nor do we encourage families to bring favors. Latex balloons are not permitted at Applewood.

As a consideration to others, we respectfully ask that invitations to birthday parties be mailed to the homes of children unless all the children in the class are invited. Birthday parties are important social events for children. An uninvited child is needlessly hurt when many of their classmates are invited to a party and sharing invitations within the classroom.

POSITION ON DIVERSITY WITHIN THE CENTER

The Applewood Learning Center's goal is to support families of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We will

provide experiences to children that respect and value their cultural differences and the children's home language while we encourage the acquisition of English. We actively encourage families to share their cultural and linguistic traditions or backgrounds in the classroom in whatever way they feel comfortable. Applewood values families of all types including gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans families and we are committed to building an inclusive environment for all families. We also provide staff members with training in providing anti-bias curriculum and embracing diversity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The staff of The Applewood Learning Center maintains the confidentiality of all information regarding a child and/or family. Communication regarding a child or family will remain between the appropriate staff and that family only. We take the necessary steps to ensure that all information remains confidential amongst those professionals who need the information. If special education referrals or transitions to other programs require that we share information, we will not do so until we have written authorization from the parents/guardians of the child.

To maintain each family's preferences for confidentiality we kindly ask you not to take photographs at Applewood.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

If a disagreement occurs between the teaching staff and a family, the family should approach the Head or Lead Teacher of the classroom first and attempt to resolve the issue at that level. If there is still no resolution, the family or Head/Lead Teacher should then approach the Director. If a reasonable solution is unattainable at this level, the President of the Board of Directors may be contacted. The President will, in conjunction with the other Board members, evaluate the information and make a final decision in the best interest of the center.

NO SMOKING

There is absolutely NO SMOKING anywhere on Applewood's premises.

SCREEN TIME & COMMERCIALISM

We make a concerted effort to avoid screen time exposure to children at Applewood. Unless there is a very specific educational reason why, we will not use screen time in the classroom. We also will not use materials with a commercial tie in (Disney, Nickelodeon, sports teams, etc.).

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

GUEST SPEAKERS

Due to the logistics and cost of arranging a field trip, we do not participate in field trips, but instead enjoy occasional guest visitors to Applewood. We make every effort to bring in low cost (or free) guests to speak with the children about topics of their interest. In the past, these have included visiting animal shows, magicians, singers, authors, etc. If you have a skill that you think would be of interest to the children and you're willing to share your craft with the children, we strongly encourage you to speak with a teacher about setting up a visit!

THE PYRAMID MODEL

The Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development. Applewood is a Pyramid Model Implementation Site for the state of NH meaning the PM is a significant component of our work and the primary focus of what we're doing with children. Children's social and emotional development is the foundation for all other aspects of development. If we can support this area of development for children during their early childhood years, we have built a strong foundation on which their cognitive, language, physical, and creative development can successfully grow.

BI-WEEKLY UPDATE

Bi-Weekly, Applewood will send home an update on the work each classroom, and the center, have been doing around the Pyramid Model.

REMIND APP

Applewood utilizes the "Remind" app for communication. For those of you who prefer to receive information via a notification on your phone, this is a good option. You can set it up to receive notifications every time we send a message using the app. We encourage all of you to download the app. The classroom codes to enter when you sign up are:

IT I: @kk6cf7 IT II: @e69fhdc IT III: @8agd9b PS I: @2273fg PS II: @38d36b2 SA: @e68h3b

WWW.APPLEWOODLC.ORG

Our website is our main tool in attracting new families and staff to our program. Please refer your friends to the site to gather information about us. Information about the happenings at Applewood is posted on the site. Please check it frequently to stay up to date. In the "Core Connections" section, you will find various forms that are downloadable. If you have ideas for additional information that you would like to see on the site, please speak to us about it.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Applewood has a page on Facebook and on Instagram. You can be kept up to date with community events, Applewood news, photos of our children, and read discussion blogs, reviews and links on parenting. Our goal is to offer this as a means for communication with our families and amongst our families on topics related to parenting and childhood. Feel free to share this page with your friends and family!! We also offer a private Facebook group called "Applewood Families". This is for current families only and is an opportunity for you all to connect with one another and build relationships outside of the center. This is a tool that you can use to get to know other families, share stories, celebrate parenting successes or vent about parenting frustrations! We encourage our families to connect with one another using this tool.

FUNDRAISING

As a non-profit organization, Applewood relies on fundraising income to supplement the income from tuition to meet our budgetary requirements. Applewood sponsors certain fundraising activities throughout the year.

While we are always open to new ideas for fundraising, there are certain guidelines that we try to adhere to when selecting/approving a fundraising activity. For reasons of propriety, Applewood does not promote businesses at any time other than at some of our fundraisers. Tax deductible contributions are welcome year-round. Note of monetary, product or service contributions are made on our social media platforms.

SOCIALS AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Several times during the year, The Applewood Learning Center will schedule social events for families, children, and staff. Potluck dinners, the "Back to School Picnic", lunches, and special entertainment will be periodically planned. Families are encouraged to participate in planning and preparations.

Evening meetings with guest speakers will occasionally be scheduled for parents/guardians and staff. We kindly request that children not be present at these times unless we have noted otherwise. If you have a suggestion for a speaker that you think would be of interest to the other families, please see the Director.

Families are encouraged to visit, to come for lunch, and to assist in the preparation of activities. If you have a special talent, an interesting hobby, or a particular skill that you would like to share with the children, your participation will always be welcome!

We occasionally ask families to help us with sewing, painting, etc. This helps defray costs and thus helps to keep tuition competitive. If you are interested in helping us, please let a teacher know. Your assistance is appreciated!

COMMUNITY REFERRALS

Should you need a referral for various resources in the community, please contact your child's teacher or an administrator. We have knowledge and resources in the community for any number of needs related to child-rearing or parenting. Likewise, if you have information about happenings in the community that you think would be of interest to other Applewood families, please let us know and we can include it on the Facebook Page.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Each year, Applewood sponsors several community outreach events. Annually, we sponsor a food drive and Mitten Tree. Other ways of reaching out to the community are undertaken at the suggestion of families, children, and staff. We welcome your suggestions and participation in these worthy events.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Directors of The Applewood Learning Center is composed of parents/guardians at the Center, or parents/guardians of recent alumni. These parents/guardians are elected by the Applewood community to the positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Member(s) at Large. Terms of office are 2 years. The Board of Directors is responsible for the overall governing of the corporation.

The Board of Directors meets monthly during the year to discuss issues involving the operation of the Center. Each fall, a Family Meeting with the Board of Directors is held. **One adult from each family is expected to attend this meeting.** Please see the calendar for the dates of scheduled meetings.

Families are encouraged to participate in the various projects and committees sponsored by the Board. Upcoming projects are posted on Facebook. Committees to the Board are assigned based on the needs of the center. Please see

the Director or any Board member for more information.

We strongly urge each of you to attend The Annual Family Meeting and to participate in an activity or a specific project. Applewood relies on you and your input - family participation is what makes Applewood!!

ANNUAL EVALUATION

Each year, we will request your input in the form of a questionnaire. It is of utmost importance to us that we are successfully meeting the needs of our families. Please take time to complete this questionnaire, as it is the impetus for change and improvement at Applewood.

YOUR INPUT

As mentioned throughout this Handbook, your input is important to us. We appreciate and expect that you will inform us of things that are troublesome to you. We also would appreciate feedback on those things that you find meaningful. Please feel free to email or call the office. Thank you in advance for your input!

THE GIFT OF SANITY

Each year, our children grow and change, move from classroom to classroom. It is one of the most precious aspects of teaching. Less precious is getting to know new lunchboxes, new clothes, new jackets, etc. Please give us the gift of sanity - use a permanent black marker to label all your child's belongings. Thank you!

We also have an ongoing fundraiser with Mabel's Labels. These are high quality labels that can go through the dishwasher or washing machine and can be personalized with your child's name. You can visit them at https://mabelslabels.com/en_US/fundraising/support/ and enter in *Applewood Learning Center* and we'll receive a portion of their profits!

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APPENDIX

TUITION SCHEDULE

Half day program hours are (8:30AM - 12:30PM), a four-hour time period. Extended day program is (8:30AM - 2:30PM) a six hour time period.

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>FULL DAY</u> (6+ hours)	<u>HALF DAY</u> (4 hours)	<u>EXTENDED DAY</u> (4-6 hours)
Infant (<18 mos)			
5 Days/week	\$436.00	\$308.00	\$381.00
Daily	\$ 96.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 89.00
Toddlers (18 mos-PS)			
5 Days/week	\$409.00	\$283.00	\$359.00
Daily	\$ 92.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 86.00
Preschool			
5 Days/week	\$383.00	\$266.00	\$339.00
Daily	\$ 88.00	\$67.00	\$ 79.00
KEnrichment/SA 11:30-6:00	\$265.00		
Daily	\$ 54.00		

K Enrichment rate doesn't change for days when public school is closed and Kindergarteners are at ALC for a full day.

A non-refundable Registration Fee is assessed annually in September.

Non-refundable, non-transferable two-week deposit is required at the time of enrollment and will be credited toward the last two weeks of the child's enrollment after a minimum of 90 days of regular attendance have occurred. Prior to 90 days of attendance, the deposit is not credited to the account and will not be refunded or transferred.

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COMPENSATING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

A POSITION STATEMENT OF THE APPLEWOOD LEARNING CENTER

The Applewood Learning Center prides itself on the high-quality programs it provides to the children and families it serves. Applewood recognizes that the foundation upon which these programs grow is the staff. As such, Applewood has a vested interest in attracting and retaining the most highly qualified and dedicated staff.

Nationally, compensation in most early care and education programs is inadequate and inequitable. Early childhood educators typically earn low level wages. This is supported in numerous studies, including the 1995 Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study. In the 401 centers participating in the study, it was found that 93% of the staff earned less than their similarly trained counterparts employed in other fields. Low wages lead to a high staff turnover rate. The end result of high staff turnover is low quality programs, which places children at high risk. “What we call turnover, children experience as loss”. It is a loss of consistency, a loss of security, a loss of a trusting and nurturing relationship. This loss impacts social, emotional, and cognitive development during a child’s critical years of growth.

To avoid these outcomes, The Applewood Learning Center strives to maintain high quality programs through staff development and retention. It is the goal of Applewood to develop and continually review the compensation package it offers to staff. It strives to provide a planned compensation program that is internally equitable, externally competitive, and personally and professionally motivating. Every effort is made to offer the best compensation and benefits package within the means available.

As it is Applewood’s goal to attract, develop and retain outstanding educators, compensation is based on performance and mastery. All compensation packages are built to reflect this philosophy. Applewood’s compensation package includes Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Short Term Disability Insurance, Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance, Supplemental Insurance, 401K match, Professional Development, Planning Time, Paid Lunch Breaks, Employee Discount, Paid Holidays, Paid Earned Time Off, and Membership in NAEYC.

The Applewood Learning Center does not discriminate based on gender, race, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, citizenship status, veteran status, handicap status, or age.

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