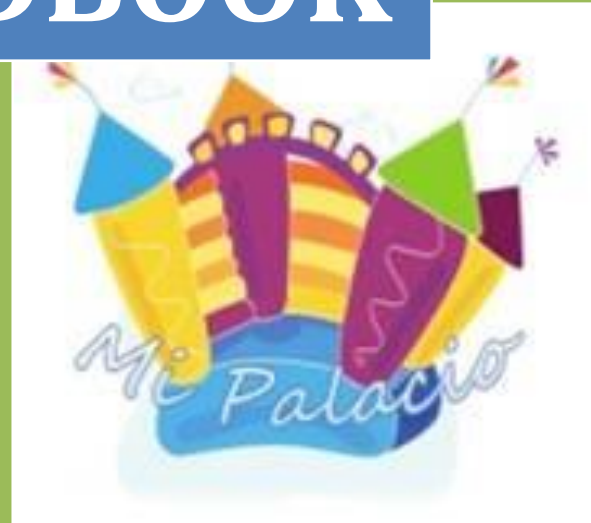


2015
2016

MI PALACIO PARENT HANDBOOK

*MI PALACIO CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
CENTER*

*SPANISH IMMERSION
PROGRAM*



7005 Piney Branch Road, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20012
(202) 723-0088
Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday 7:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

WE PROVIDE CARE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR INFANTS, TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS

PHILOSOPHY and MISSION

We have a strong belief that *all* children are naturally curious and unique individuals. Our program is designed to be inclusive and to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities or special learning needs. We embrace the diversity of children's experiences and we work to enhance their understanding of the world by sharing and working together. Children grow and learn best in a safe and structured environment that allows them to positively interact with their peers and adults. In order to foster individualized exploration, we provide an organized child-centered learning environment that emphasizes mutual respect, fun, discovery, and literacy through multisensory learning activities. We provide the conditions all children need to build knowledge, focusing on the learning process rather than the end product. We also value cultural differences and the importance of acquiring a second language early in childhood. We therefore provide a program of linguistic and cultural immersion through a team of native Spanish speakers who are dedicated to the development of the whole child.

To effectively implement our philosophy and mission, we strive to:

- Utilize knowledge of early childhood education to provide appropriate services for all children and meet each child at his or her developmental level
- Establish a fun and safe learning experience within a Spanish immersion environment
- Identify and utilize strengths to help overcome weaknesses
- Celebrate children's successes to foster self-esteem
- Enable children to make discoveries and realize their potential
- Provide play opportunities for all children
- Continue to grow professionally in order to better serve children and families
- Support and build a trusting relationship with parents, children, and other professionals in the community
- Provide support and help for families as they seek out resources to meet their child's needs

GOALS

Our goal is to provide a safe, secure environment for your child that fosters physical, social, emotional and cognitive development so your child can:

- Develop effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills in Spanish and English
- Respect and be aware of cultural differences
- Explore the environment through art, music, language development, pre-math skills, science and nature, and dramatic play
- Develop self-esteem, independence, and problem-solving skills through play-based activities
- Develop the ability make choices from age-appropriate activities
- Learn through self-initiated and teacher-facilitated activities
- Demonstrate an awareness of daily routine
- Develop a level of independence in self-care skills

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CURRICULUM

Mi Palacio implements the Creative Curriculum to support infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The curriculum encourages a nurturing, consistent, and loving environment for all age groups and it also prepares older children for school. We prepare age-appropriate activities in Spanish that are specifically designed to help children grow and develop based on their individual strengths and weaknesses. These lessons address the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive domains of development.

INCLUSION STATEMENT

Mi Palacio Child Development Center maintains a safe and secure environment for all children to explore and to achieve success through a variety of learning and recreational activities. We believe in providing a quality program for every child, whether typically developing or with special needs. We individualize activities, when needed, to ensure full and active participation for all children and their families.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Mi Palacio Child Development Center will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for children enrolled in the program. These accommodations include, but are not limited to, tailoring instruction, implementing individualized behavior support techniques, consulting with families and service providers, and taking other steps to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all students.

SERVICES RATES

SERVICE	PERIOD	RATE
Childcare	weekly	\$400.00
Childcare	daily	\$90.00

At the completion of one year of attendance a rate adjustment may take place. The new rate will be announced a month prior to taking effect.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Payments for full-time children may be made every four weeks or every two weeks – whichever you find more convenient. Payment must always be made in advance, and fees are based on enrollment, not attendance. Parents are required to pay the same weekly fee regardless of the days missed for illness, family vacations, national holidays, weather related closures, and the three weeks of break (Spring, Summer, Winter). There are no refunds for absence.

LATE PAYMENTS

A 20 dollars fee will apply if a payment is not made in advance.

If a payment is more than 15 days late, Mi Palacio Child Development Center has the right to withhold the services for the child and parent.

The tuition and any other costs that have not been paid are due immediately.

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SIBLING DISCOUNT

Siblings receive an enrollment preference but they are not guaranteed enrollment, which is subject to availability. If two (or more) siblings are simultaneously enrolled at Mi Palacio Child Development Center, the first child will be charged full tuition and each additional child will receive a 10% reduction in the tuition.

PART-TIME

Part-time enrollment is possible on a daily basis (though not on an hourly basis). Payments are made in advance based on the agreed upon days of the week the child will attend. Tuition will be charged for the full month for agreed upon days regardless of closings due to holidays, inclement weather, professional development days or student absences due to health, vacation, exclusion, or withdrawal. There will be no refund, credit, or remission of fees or tuition, or make-up days provided for holiday or inclement-weather based closings and/or absences for any reason that occur on a part-time student's scheduled day.

REGISTRATION

There is a *non-refundable* registration fee of \$150 for all new enrollees, including siblings. This is a per child fee, not a per family fee. The fee is the same for part-time and full-time attendees.

DEPOSIT

There is a *refundable* deposit of \$1600 for all new enrollees, including siblings. This is a per child fee, not a per family fee, and is for every child who attends Mi Palacio. For example, if two children from the same family attend Mi Palacio, then the \$1600.00 deposit is due for each child for a total of \$3200.00. This payment is required at the time of registration and is the same for both part-time and full-time students.

The deposit is *non-refundable* if a 60-day notice of withdrawal from Mi Palacio is not given to the Director in written form. If a 60-day notice is given, the deposit will be applied to the last month of tuition. **The deposit is non-refundable if parents fail to give written notice at least 60 days in advance of withdrawal from Mi Palacio Child Development Center.**

ENROLLMENT CONDITIONS AND NONDISCRIMINATION

No child will be denied enrollment on the basis of his or her race, ethnicity or religion. Mi Palacio retains the right to deny enrollment if all openings for a particular age group are filled (we accept students ages 3 months to 5 years). We do not make it a policy to deny enrollment on the basis of a child with special needs. If a child has special needs, we will meet with the parent(s) to ensure that we have the training, expertise and physical environment that is conducive to a positive experience for the child. However, if it is apparent that we do not have the training, equipment, facilities, etc. to work with the child, we will not accept the child. This is in the best interest of the student, since our goal is to meet the needs of every child to help her or him grow and achieve. If we are not sure whether we can meet the needs of a child, we will have him or her attend for a provisional period. During this period, we will work with the parents and any related service providers to foster success. An enrollment decision will be made at the end of the provisional period.

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When a child with a specific need or needs related to a medical condition is enrolled, we work with the parents and the health care provider to develop a special health care plan.

WAIT LIST

In the event that there is no space available for your child, a **Wait List Form** may be completed. Children will be placed on the waiting list and parents will be notified as space becomes available.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

During the interview a checklist was provided that covers the requirements for enrollment. This must be followed in order to enroll your child in the program. All paperwork must be received before your child may begin attending Mi Palacio.

Before your child starts the program, it is wise to make a visit with the child during our daycare hours (mornings are best, since the children sleep in the afternoons). This way your child gets to experience the general routine of the daycare. This also gives him or her a chance to meet the other children and the daycare providers. This visit is a good time to bring any items you need to leave at Mi Palacio (e.g., diapers, extra clothing, etc.). If you prefer, a second visit can be scheduled for after naptime.

The following forms must be completed before your child starts the program (available at http://mipalaciodaycare.com/?page_id=148):

1. Child's Annual Health Certification with physical examination (**signed by a physician**)*
2. Immunization Record
3. Oral Health Assessment Form (**signed by a dentist**)* for children 3 years old and up
4. Authorization for Child's Emergency Medical Treatment
5. Permission for Medication
6. Registration Record for Child Receiving Care Away from Home
7. Emergency Information
8. Acknowledgment of Policies (Parent Handbook)
9. Tuition and Enrollment Agreement
10. Child's Historical Information
11. Getting to Know your Child
12. Authorizations: to Pick-up Child (Release Information), Field Trip Consent, Picture Consent, Food Consent.

*** The Annual Health Certificate and Oral Health Assessment Form can also be downloaded here: <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/enroll>**

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IMMUNIZATIONS

All children must be up to date with immunizations before enrolling in Mi Palacio. In compliance with the laws of the District of Columbia, it is the responsibility of parents to meet the immunization requirements and to bring the documentation to Mi Palacio. Mi Palacio must possess at all times the latest records of immunization for every child.

ATTENDANCE

It is very important for all children to attend the program regularly. If for any reason your child needs to miss a day, please call to inform us of the absence.

After two days of absence without notice, Mi Palacio will call the parent or guardian to verify the absence.

DAILY REPORT

Teachers keep daily records concerning your child's activities and behaviors during the day. Special needs will also be noted on the forms.

We ask that you share information concerning any event or happening that may affect your child's behavior during the day. Were they up late? Is a parent ill or at home? Is your child teething?

CALENDAR

The academic year runs from September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016. Mi Palacio Child Development Center remains open 12 months of the year with the following exceptions:

MONTH	DATE	HOLIDAYS AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
September	Monday 7, 2015	Labor Day
September	Friday 25, 2015 – field trip	D.C Zoo
October	Friday 9, 2015 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm	Hispanic Heritage Month Party
October	Monday 12, 2015	Columbus Day (C)
October	Friday 30, 2015 – field trip	Butler's Orchard
November	Wednesday 11, 2015	Veterans Day (C)
November	Friday 20, 2015 – field trip	National Air and Space Museum
November	Thursday 26, 2015	Thanksgiving (C)
November	Friday 27, 2015	Thanksgiving (C)
December	Friday 11, 2015 – field trip	Natural History Museum
December	Friday 18, 2015 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm	Christmas Party
December	Wednesday 23, 2015 to Thursday 31, 2015	Winter Break (C)
January	Friday 1, 2016	New Year's Day (C)
January	Monday 18, 2016	Martin Luther King Day (C)
January	Friday 29, 2016 - field trip	National Air and Space Museum
February	Monday 15, 2016	Presidents Day (C)
February	Tuesday 16 to Friday 19, 2016	Parent Conference Week
February	Friday 26, 2016 - field trip	Natural History Museum

March	Friday 18, 2016 - field trip	D.C Zoo
April	Friday 15, 2016	Emancipation Day
April	Monday 21 to Friday 25, 2016	Spring Break (C)
April	Friday 29, 2016 - field trip	U.S. Botanic Garden
May	Friday 27, 2016 - field trip	Clark's Elioak Farm
May	Monday 30, 2016	Memorial Day (C)
June	Friday 24, 2016 - field trip	Rock Creek Nature Center
July	Monday, July 4 to Friday, July 8, 2016	Summer Break (C)
July	Friday 29, 2016 - field trip	D.C National Aquarium
August	Friday 19, 2016 - field trip	Reston Zoo, VA
August	Monday 22 to Friday 26, 2015	Parent Conference Week

* All activities may be subject to change due to weather conditions or other circumstances

* Field trips are for children 2 years old and above

In addition, we follow the District of Columbia Public School system inclement weather and safety announcements. In these cases, parents may find the news on TV, radio or the internet at <http://www.dcps.dc.gov>.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival: Program opens at 7:00 AM

Departure: Program closes at 6:00 PM

It is important that children be picked up on time. If someone other than you, the parent, is going to pick up a child at the end of the day, we will require advance notification. A list of the names of persons that are authorized to pick up your child is kept in the child's file. Picture identification will be required before the child is released.

EARLY/LATE PICK-UP FEES

If you are late for pick-up, Mi Palacio Child Development Center will charge an additional expense for staff overtime. You will be charged a fee of \$3 per every minute past 6:00 p.m. This charge is due at the time your child is picked up to the teacher is taking care of your baby.

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DAILY SCHEDULE

Children develop differently and activities will be completed at their own pace. We will remain flexible throughout the day and adjust as the children's needs change.

DAILY SCHEDULE		
Schedule	Activities	Description
7:00 – 8:00 AM	Greeting Children/Parents	Welcome; put away personal items/free playing
8:00 – 8:30 AM	Breakfast/Snack	Clean-up, wash hands; set-up breakfast/snack
8:30 – 8:40 AM	Morning Meeting	Welcome; talking about weather; singing, reading, dancing
8:40 – 10:10 AM	Free Choice	Promoting milestone development; free playing
10:10 – 10:40 AM	Divide into Small Groups	Directed activities, learning activities according to ages
10:40 – 11:30 AM	Outdoor Activities	Library, neighborhood walks, water play, sand box, etc.
11:30 – 12:30 PM	Lunch (before and after Lunch)	Clean –up; bathroom; wash hands
12:30 – 1:00 PM	Transition to Rest Time	Reading story books, restroom; take a nap
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Nap Time/Rest	Supervision while sleeping; soft music
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Wake-up/Snack	Put cots away; diapering/restroom; snack; clean-up
3:30 – 4:30 PM	Divide into Small Groups	Directed activities, learning activities according to ages
4:30 – 5:30 PM	Outdoor Activities	Neighborhood walks, water play, sand box, etc.
5:30 – 6:00 PM	Reading/Games/Preparation to Go Home	Reading aloud/ social-emotional activities/prepare for home

SIGN-IN / SIGN-OUT

Parents are required to sign-in each child and note the arrival time. The same procedure is followed for sign-out. This gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours at the center, and a record of the person responsible for drop-off and pick-up.

RELEASING YOUR CHILD

Mi Palacio Child Development Center's normal procedure is to release the child only to the parents or designated individuals. If someone other than the parent is to pick the child up, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal or written notice is acceptable on the day of pick-up if the said person is on the list of authorized individuals. If the person is not on that list, we must have a written permission to release your child.

It is required that you designate an individual who can pick up your child if there is an emergency and you, the parent, cannot contact the center director. In the event that you cannot pick up your child, we will contact these individuals to coordinate the release of your child.

Please inform your emergency contact that it is mandatory that we ask for identification, unless we know them from previous releases.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Parents are expected to provide the following:

ITEMS	INFANTS	TODDLERS	PRESCHOOLERS
Plastic bottles or sippy cup	X	X	X
Disposable diapers, enough for 4 to 5 days	X	X	
Wipes as needed	X	X	X
Diaper Rash Ointment	X	X	
Two complete set of extra clothes	X	X	X
Bibs (several)	X	X	X
Blanket		X	X
Fitted sheets child size for crib or cot	X	X	X
Mobile or especial hanger for crib	X		
“Lovie” item if needed for sleeping	X	X	
Pull-ups		X	If they are still toilet training
Toothbrush		X	X
Sun Screen and Insect Repellant	X	X	X

Please provide a separate plastic bag to send home dirty or wet clothing.

All extra clothes must be kept in a plastic bag with zipper.

All items must be labeled in a visible place with a permanent marker. You will be notified when replacement items are needed.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Parents and caregivers play a key role in making healthy choices for children and in teaching children to make healthy choices for themselves. We ask that you support our philosophy that children be active, eat well, and stay healthy by sending them a balanced breakfast, a nutritious morning and afternoon snack, a well-rounded lunch and low- or no-sugar drinks.

Breakfast ends at 8:30 a.m. Children must arrive before 8:15 a.m. if they plan on eating breakfast at Mi Palacio. The teachers and children start the daily routine at 8:30 a.m.; therefore, breakfast for all students must be completed by this time. Parents are required to make sure their children have already eaten breakfast if they arrive after 8:15 a.m.

Parents/guardians are required to prepare meals at home and send them carefully packed in a clean bag or container appropriate for food. Food, milk and water must arrive ready to be served. We will keep all necessary food and beverages refrigerated to ensure freshness. The childcare does not have a kitchen facility or a space for preparing or reheating meals. Additionally, our staff has very limited time to prepare food, so we kindly request that parents send food ready to serve. Containers should be designed to preserve the desired food temperature.

All food, containers and bottles must be labeled in a visible place with a permanent marker. Fruits should be in plastic bag with the name of the child, and in certain cases (such as banana) the name can be written on the skin.

Water was tested to measure lead content (lead-based paint assessment) on February 22, 2012. The results showed that the water at Mi Palacio complies with DC regulations. The full report from Arc Environmental, Inc. is available to all parents upon request.

Mi Palacio does not offer purified or mineral water for drinking, but you are welcome to supply it for your child on a daily basis in a sippy cup.

NAP / REST/ SLEEPING TIME

We provide a safe, warm, and quiet place for your child to rest. Children rest in cribs or cots in a quiet room with soft music. Children who wake up before the other children will be guided in finding a quiet time activity to engage in that will not disturb any sleeping children.

INDOOR PLAY

Indoor play makes up the majority of our playtime. We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for your child to play with and we encourage imaginative play. Since the ages of the children we care for varies, all the toys we have are safe for even the youngest child. It is preferred that no toys are brought from home. We are not responsible for any toys from home that are broken or lost in our program.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Please dress your child appropriately for the current weather, and in play clothes (with shoes that protect the feet and are not slick-soled – *tennis shoes are the best choice*). We spend ample time outside, weather permitting, including walks, playground visits, and activities on the Mi Palacio grounds.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

We work to create an environment that allows children to explore and be active, without requiring numerous rules and restrictions. We use positive guidance, redirection, and setting of clear-cut boundaries to foster the child's ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to respect other people, be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible. We share daily progress, both positive and negative, with the parents.

Every child misbehaves in one way or another as they learn to gain self-control, and we handle each situation individually. Children are never spanked, humiliated, or embarrassed. We do not advocate "re-punishment" at home for a situation that happened hours earlier. Children respond positively if parents and providers work as a team, and parents may be asked to reinforce expectations at home.

In order to help protect all children in our care from physical and psychological harm, we have adopted the following guidelines:

- Educate all staff and parents about child development and encourage an appropriate understanding of toddler aggressiveness
- Recognize that toddlers have a very short attention span
- Be cautious and keep a record to help determine the cause of frustration that prompts the behavior
- Use observational information to decide upon appropriate interventions

The following is a step-by-step plan* for children who have chronic behavioral challenges:

- Parent-Provider conference
- Written plan for improving behavior
- Implementation of plan with revisions, as necessary
- Temporary removal from the program (this would require payment to reserve child's slot)

** The above plan is at the discretion of the provider and may be accelerated, if necessary.*

Discipline problems are avoided whenever possible by the following techniques:

- A well-organized room
- A well-organized routine
- Offering a wide variety of prepared activities
- Cooperation of parents to work together with to solve any problems
- Children are never spanked, humiliated, or embarrassed – all corporal punishment is prohibited

AFTER-HOURS BABYSITTING

Mi Palacio does not provide, or encourage, a service of babysitting from its caregivers. Even though this may be a private agreement, Mi Palacio does not foster such agreements. We hold no responsibility for after-hours babysitting and do not want to encourage a privileged relationship between a caregiver and a specific child.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION LEVEL OF CAREGIVERS

All the caregivers involved in the program, including administrative staff, meet the education requirements described in local regulations. Additionally, caregivers are involved in programs of professional development on a regular basis.

CRIMINAL AND BACKGROUND HISTORY CHECKS

All the caregivers involved in the program, including administrative staff, have passed criminal and background history checks, as required by local regulations.

CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CAREGIVERS

Mi Palacio hires caregivers with an appropriate level of experience and preparation as outlined by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) in the District of Columbia. The relationship between Mi Palacio and the caregivers is regulated by a contract, and rests ultimately on mutual trust. Consequently, this contractual relationship can be terminated by any of the parties, without consultation to a third party. Starting from this premise, Mi Palacio understands that it is in everyone's best interest to build a lasting relationship with caregivers, as pedagogical experience and meaningful involvement with children is at the core of our service.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Mi Palacio Child Development Center will make regular communication with parents and welcomes parent involvement in all aspects of the program. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's daily routine. Please let us know when you would like to join the group, observe and/or help. If you would like to participate in an activity, such as reading a story or taking part in a field trip, please let us know in advance so we can schedule accordingly.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Mi Palacio will hold two parent conferences a year. These conferences will take approximately 15 minutes and parents will receive information about the progress of their child from the teacher and the director.

PROBLEMS / COMPLAINTS

We put great effort into maintaining quality service. If a parent or guardian has any concerns, we ask that the issue be brought to our attention so we can discuss the concern and come to a solution. We always keep an open mind and are willing to make changes to suit the parent's expectations, if possible and reasonable.

If there is a problem or complaint, we request that you complete the **Complaint Intake Form** that is included in your child's initial enrollment package.

If we do not resolve the complaint, parents can contact the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Early Care and Education at (202) 727-1839.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS ON OPERATIONS

Mi Palacio Child Development Center will maintain all required licenses and permits. These will be visibly posted in the daycare.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS ON CHILDREN

Mi Palacio Child Development Center will maintain a record of your child's information and forms, and will retain these records for three (3) years following the termination of your child's enrollment.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be kept confidential and we respect your privacy at all times. Before any information is shared outside of the facility, you, as the parent/guardian, will be notified in advance. This policy will be followed at all times, unless disclosure is necessary in an emergency situation – in which case parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

REPORTING UNUSUAL INCIDENTS

We are required to report unusual incidents to the Director, Department of Human Services and to the Child Care Subsidy Program. This incident will also be reported to the parent(s) of the affected child. An unusual incident is any incident that may adversely affect the health, safety or well-being of any child or children in the facility. I will submit a written report of the unusual incident to the Department of Human Services, and file the **Unusual Incident Report Form** within twenty-four hours of the incident.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Any staff member of the facility who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that an enrolled child is, or has been, in immediate danger of being an abused or neglected will, as required by the District of Columbia Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Act, make an immediate oral report and contact the appropriate authorities.

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It is important to understand that this regulation (DCMR 29 Public Affair – Chapter 3) requires caregivers to protect the health, safety and well-being of children in licensed child development facilities. Mi Palacio staff is trained in the policies and procedures regarding child abuse, neglect, and the risks to a child’s health or safety, including how to report suspected abuse, neglect, or risk.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Mi Palacio Child Development Center follows the same rules and weather closings as the District of Columbia Public School system. Listen to the radio or watch the news for weather related announcements (e.g., snow, heat advisory, other emergency situation). If DCPS is closed for students, Mi Palacio will also close. **Likewise, if there is a two-hour delay in school openings, we will be open two hours late at 9:00 a.m.** School closing announcements and delays can be accessed at the [DCPS](#) website.

FIELD TRIPS

Walking field trips are made to special places in the neighborhood throughout the year. Field trips involving transportation, such as trips to a farm or the zoo, are also scheduled. A notice will be sent home in advance informing parents of the destination, time, and date. Occasionally, a fee will be requested to help cover the cost of activities at the destination. **A permission slip will also be included and must be signed and returned in order for your child to participate.** Parents are always welcome to accompany us.

HEALTH/ILLNESS POLICIES

The health services guidelines developed by the Office of the State Superintendent for Education will be used to determine the “exclusion for ill children”. The regulations state: If a child becomes ill during the day, the child will be separated from the group and the parent will be called to pick the child up immediately. The parents are expected to make arrangements for their child to be picked up within a maximum of one hour of being contacted. Remember, the child may not return to the program the following day and must be fever / symptom-free for at least 24 hours before returning.

EXCLUDING AND RE-ADMITTING CHILDREN WHO ARE ILL

A child who exhibits one or more symptoms of illness identified in the following list of symptoms shall not attend the program. When we observe one or more symptoms of illness, the child's parent(s) will be notified immediately. I require that the parent(s) remove the child from the program within a maximum of one hour after being contacted.

We will provide a comfortable place to isolate the child who becomes ill or is suspected of being ill. The child will remain within sight and hearing of a staff member.

We will carefully observe the child in isolation for the presence of, or change in, symptoms.

We will ensure that a child who is ill or suspected of being ill does not share any personal hygiene or grooming items.

Symptoms of illness requiring exclusion from the program include, but are not limited to, the following:

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- a) diarrhea, i.e., runny, watery or bloody stools;
- b) vomiting two (2) or more times in a twenty-four (24) hour period;
- c) body rash with fever;
- d) sore throat with fever or swollen glands;
- e) eye drainage with thick mucus or pus draining from the eye;
- f) pink eye, i.e., colored drainage, eye pain and/or redness of the eye;
- g) yellowish skin or eyes;
- h) fever accompanied by rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability or confusion;
- i) continuous irritable crying that requires more attention than the facility can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children; or
- j) any other symptom indicative of a reportable communicable disease, as such is defined in chapter 2 of title 22 of the District of Columbia municipal regulations or in any superseding document.

We observe each child for the presence of symptoms that may indicate a medical problem that could require exclusion from the program, isolation from other children, and/or consultation with the child's parent(s) or licensed health care practitioner. The following are examples of conditions that may indicate the existence of a medical problem:

- a) fever;
- b) lethargy or inability to walk;
- c) respiratory problems, including: increased respiratory rate; retractions in the chest; excessive nasal flaring; audible persistent wheezing; persistent coughing, either productive or nonproductive; severe coughing causing redness or blueness in the face; or difficulty in breathing;
- d) abdominal and urinary system problems including: intestinal parasites, dark urine, white spots in the stool, increased urgency or frequency of urination, or no urination for an entire day;
- e) cardiac problems, including: choking, change in color of the skin, chest pain, or persistent sweating;
- f) ear problems, including discharge from the ear and/or ear pain;
- g) throat and mouth problems, including: sores on the lips or in the mouth, white patches in the mouth, throat pain, or a dental problem that needs immediate attention; and
- h) injuries, including: persistent bleeding, oozing wounds, apparent fracture, complaint of persistent bone pain or stiffness, or difficulty with the movement of any extremity.

A child who exhibits one or more symptoms of illness identified above and has been treated for a specific symptom by a licensed health care practitioner MUST bring a notification from the doctor in order to be re-admitted to the program.

The child may return 24 hours after a temperature has returned to normal, after the child is no longer vomiting, or 24-48 hours (depending on the illness) after the first dose of an antibiotic. If a child receives an antibiotic for an ear infection he/she may return to the facility immediately if he/she has been free of other symptoms mentioned for at least 24 hours.

The child is welcome when s/he has only a mild cold (e.g. runny nose or mild cough) and is able to participate in daily activities.

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HEAD LICE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that "Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice". The good news is that lice are not dangerous, however, Mi Palacio adheres to a no-nit policy.

DCPS has a no-nit policy and children may not return to the classroom until they have been deemed nit-free. Mi Palacio follows this same policy. If we discover lice on your child, we will call you to have your child taken home so you may treat them for lice. Upon return, we will examine your child for lice and will only readmit them if they are lice free. We also ask that you send your child in with a bandana or head covering during treatment.

MEDICATION

If your child is prescribed medication that must be administered while he/she is under our care, the medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, dosage, and dosage directions. A signed form is required giving Mi Palacio permission to administer the medication. Medication will be administered at the time or with the meal you specify and a written record will be kept.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The emergency care card containing parent directions and permissions is required for enrollment. In the event of an emergency, the parents will be notified immediately and the emergency care card instructions will be followed. If the emergency requires immediate action, we will call the ambulance, doctor, poison control center, etc. first, and then contact the parent. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital via ambulance, in which case we will notify you immediately to provide you with details and the name of the hospital so you can meet us there. If neither parent can be reached and the emergency contact number in the child's folder is non-responsive, we will keep trying until we have made contact with a designated responsible adult. When you sign your child's emergency care card you are authorizing us to implement the plan described above.

INJURIES AND NON-MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the facility will receive proper care – specifically, they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged. Treatment will be logged and we will tell you how and when the injury occurred. We are also required to log any injuries we observe on your child which have occurred outside of our care, and we are required by law to report any possible situations of abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

The safety of children and personnel in the program is our highest priority. The purpose of the provisions of the **Emergency Preparedness Plan** is to provide procedures to ensure the safety of the children and staff.

Parents will receive a copy of the **Emergency Preparedness Plan** as soon as they sign the parent's contract.

Initial Here _____

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

Mi Palacio Child Development Center has an Emergency Evacuation Plan that is displayed in visible areas for children and parents.

FIRE DRILL

We perform a fire drill once a month, at different times of the day, to ensure that the children and staff are prepared for an emergency. Mi Palacio Child Development Center will keep a record of all the executed fire drills (Fire Drill Log).

TOYS AND MOVIES

Children are not allowed to bring toys or movies to the program except for show and tell days or as directed by the teachers. No toy guns, swords, or any other toy or movie with violent content will be permitted at any time. Books may be brought for story time if approved by the teacher. Personal belongings associated with violence, such as Power Rangers, X-men, Ninja Turtles, etc. are not permitted. Please remember to label all personal items with your child's name.

LOST AND FOUND

All children's belongings must be labeled. We keep a specific place for lost and found items. Please be aware that Mi Palacio is not responsible for the loss of items that **are not labeled in a visible place with a permanent marker.**

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

We believe birthdays are very special for every child. Mi Palacio celebrates birthdays with a single party every month in order to develop camaraderie and good feelings among the children. Celebrations will be for all children who have a birthday that month.

Parents who want to hold an individual celebration for their own child should coordinate with the teachers at least one week in advance to set a date and time. Parents are responsible for providing the necessary items and arriving fully prepared and ready to start. We can deliver invitations for a birthday party, but we can only deliver them to the children who are present.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

We believe that parents should undertake religious teaching at home. If you have any restrictions or concerns, please feel free to address them with the director.

We have parties at Christmas, Easter and Halloween and we study other belief systems, such as Hanukkah and Kwanza. If you do not wish to have your child participating in these parties, please let the director know and we will coordinate and alternative plan for your child.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mi Palacio honors its Hispanic culture with a celebration of our traditions in October. All children and parents are invited. You will receive a notification in advance with the details.

Initial Here _____

TOILET TRAINING

We ask that you begin toilet training at home. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore, we will continue to use diapers or pull-ups until your child can and will announce that s/he must use the bathroom and can control his or her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement. When the child has reached this point, training pants (5-ply, not plain terry cloth) with plastic pants may be used.

When accidents are only happening once every other week, 5-ply training pants will be used without plastic pants. Please do not bring your child in panties or underwear until he or she has naptime and bedtime control established.

Please dress your child in "user-friendly" clothing. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists, or dresses for girls. Try to avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, and overalls as much as possible. Your child will want to help pull clothing up and down; plus, clothing with too many "gadgets" makes it more difficult to get the child onto the potty in time.

ANIMALS / PETS

Parents are welcome to meet any pet we may have at Mi Palacio. You can also check his or her veterinary records and vaccination certificates any time. We will ensure that the pet is always clean, in good health and is not dangerous or aggressive. We will keep the pet under our strict supervision and will not allow children to handle or touch the pet.

TRANSPORTATION

Mi Palacio Child Development Center does not own, operate, maintain, or use any motor vehicles for transporting children to and from the center. We do not provide transportation unless indicated for a field trip. In this instance, you will be provided a permission slip with details to sign and approve.

TERMINATION OF CARE

If you decide to terminate childcare for any reason, Mi Palacio Child Development Center requires a written notice 60 days in advance in order for your deposit to be reimbursed. If the center can no longer attend to your child for any reason we will give you a two-week notice, if possible. There may be a time when immediate termination is warranted. It is important for policies to be understood and followed. Examples of why Mi Palacio Child Development Center would terminate your child's care with or without notice include (but may not be limited to):

- Failure to complete legally required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the facility after a reasonable amount of time
- Inability of Mi Palacio to meet the child's needs without additional staff
- Lack of payment

Initial Here _____

I have read and understand the program guidelines as outlined in the Parent Handbook, and I agree to abide by the policies as stated.

Parent/Legal Guardian
Signature

Printed Name

Date

Mi Palacio Director
Signature

Printed Name

Date