



Policies & Code of Conduct

Darling Dolphins Childcare

Our Commitment & Dedication

At the heart of our home childcare is a deep respect for the trust families place in us each day. We understand that choosing a caregiver is one of the most important decisions a parent can make, and we are honored to be a part of your child's life during these foundational years.

Providing care in our home is not just a job, it is a calling. It requires time, patience, flexibility, and at times, personal sacrifice. We open our hearts and our home to ensure children feel safe, loved, and nurtured, just as we would want for our own. This means early mornings, long days, constant learning, and a dedication that often extends far beyond typical working hours.

We strive to build a supportive and trusting relationship with every family we serve. Our goal is to work together as partners in your child's growth and development, offering not only a safe environment but also one filled with warmth, consistency, and learning.

Thank you for trusting us with your most precious gift. It is a privilege we never take lightly.

Expectations

Please remember this is also our home where our family lives. We want our home and business to be a safe and happy place for each child and family

enrolled. We want families who respect our rules and values, appreciate us, can communicate in a healthy and respectful way and will work together as a team to help their child thrive. Healthy relationships are built on trust, respect, honesty and empathy.

Biting Policy

Our Philosophy

Biting is common behavior among young children, especially toddlers. It can occur for many reasons, including teething, limited language skills, frustration, overstimulation, or seeking attention. While biting is developmentally typical, it is taken seriously in our daycare to ensure the safety and well-being of all children.

Our goal is to respond calmly, consistently, and appropriately while teaching children safer ways to express their needs.

Prevention Strategies

To reduce biting incidents, we:

- Maintain close supervision at all times.
- Keep group sizes small and developmentally appropriate.
- Provide engaging activities to reduce boredom.
- Follow consistent daily routines.
- Teach and model gentle touch and appropriate social interactions.
- Help children develop communication skills (using words, signs, or gestures).
- Identify patterns or triggers and adjust the environment as needed.

When a Bite Occurs

If biting happens:

Immediate Response

- The bitten child is comforted and cared for first.
- The bite area is cleaned with soap and water.
- Ice will be applied if necessary.
- The biter is calmly and firmly told, "No biting. Biting hurts."
- The child will be redirected to a more appropriate activity.

Documentation

- An incident report will be completed for both children.
- Parents of both children will be notified the same day.
- For confidentiality, the name of the other child will not be disclosed.

Follow-Up

- Staff will observe for patterns or triggers.
- Additional prevention strategies will be implemented as needed.

Ongoing Biting Behavior

If a child continues to bite:

- A meeting with parents may be requested to develop a consistent plan between home and daycare.
- We may implement behavior support strategies, including shadowing, teaching alternative communication, or adjusting the environment.

Parent Partnership

We ask parents to:

- Inform us of changes at home that may affect behavior.

- Work collaboratively with us on consistent strategies.
- Avoid punitive measures related to biting, as they are not developmentally appropriate.

Together, we can support children in learning safe and appropriate ways to interact with others.

Behavior Policy

Philosophy

We believe that all children are learning how to understand their emotions, communicate their needs, and interact respectfully with others. Our goal is to guide children using positive behavior support, patience, and consistency in a safe, nurturing home environment.

We focus on teaching appropriate behavior rather than simply correcting unwanted behavior.

Guiding Principles

- Children are treated with respect at all times.
- Behavior is viewed as communication.
- Positive reinforcement is more effective than punishment.
- Consistency between home and childcare is important.
- Social-emotional skills are taught daily.

Expected Behaviors

Children are encouraged and taught to:

- Use kind words and gentle hands
- Follow directions
- Take turns and share

- Use indoor voices inside
- Clean up after themselves
- Express feelings appropriately

These expectations are modeled and reinforced throughout the day.

Positive Guidance Strategies

We use developmentally appropriate techniques, including:

- Redirection to appropriate activities
- Positive reinforcement and praise
- Clear and simple reminders
- Modeling appropriate behavior
- Offering choices when appropriate
- Problem-solving with children
- Natural and logical consequences

Example: If a child throws a toy, the toy will be removed for a short time, and we will discuss safe ways to play.

Challenging Behaviors

Challenging behaviors may include:

- Hitting, biting, or kicking
- Repeated refusal to follow directions
- Destructive behavior
- Unsafe actions

When these occur:

Immediate safety of all children is ensured.

The child is calmly sat down away from others for an appropriate time. (Age 2 ~ 2 minutes, etc.)

We discuss feelings and appropriate choices.

Parents will be informed if behavior is ongoing or serious.

Discipline Policy

The following are never used:

- Physical punishment
- Yelling or shaming
- Withholding food or basic needs
- Humiliation or threats

We follow all state childcare licensing regulations regarding discipline and supervision.

Communication with Parents

- Parents will be informed of persistent or serious behavioral concerns.
- We will work together to create a consistent plan if needed.
- If outside support is recommended (early intervention, pediatric guidance, etc.), we will discuss this respectfully and collaboratively.

Suspension or Termination of Care

In rare cases, care may be terminated if:

- A child's behavior poses ongoing safety risks.
- Parents are unwilling to collaborate on a behavior plan and disrespectful/inappropriate communication occurs
- The program cannot meet the child's needs.

A written notice period will be provided according to the childcare contract.

Illness Policy

Purpose

To maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children by preventing the spread of illness in the childcare setting.

When to Keep Your Child Home

Please do not bring your child to childcare if they have:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- Vomiting (2 or more times in 24 hours)
- Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools in 24 hours)
- Persistent cough that interferes with activities
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing
- Unexplained rash
- Pink eye (red eyes with discharge)
- Sore throat with fever
- Head lice (until treated)
- Any contagious illness (see below)

Contagious Illnesses

Children diagnosed with the following must remain home for the recommended exclusion period:

- COVID-19 - Follow current public health guidance.
- Influenza - 24 hours fever-free without medication.

- Respiratory syncytial virus - When fever-free and well enough to participate.
- Strep throat - After 24 hours of antibiotics.
- Hand, foot, and mouth disease - When fever-free and sores are dry.
- Pink eye - 24 hours after treatment begins (if bacterial).
- Chickenpox - After all lesions have crusted over.
- Norovirus - 48 hours after last vomiting/diarrhea.
- Head lice - After treatment and no live lice present.

A doctor's note may be required for return in certain cases.

If a Child Becomes Ill During Care

- The child will be separated from the group.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
- The child must be picked up within 1 hour of notification.
- The child may return once symptoms meet the return criteria listed above.

Medication Policy

- Medication will not be administered (This does not include teething relief such as tablets and oils)
- Families are welcome to give their child medication at the childcare facility with communication
- No fever-reducing medication may be given to mask symptoms to attend childcare.

Cleaning & Sanitizing Practices

- Toys and high-touch surfaces are cleaned daily.
- Bedding is washed weekly (or immediately if soiled).

- Frequent handwashing is practiced by children and caregiver.

Tuition & Sick Days

- Tuition is due regardless of illness-related absences.
- No refunds or credits for sick days.
- Provider sick days will follow the terms outlined in the parent handbook.

Communication

- Parents will be notified if their child has been exposed to a contagious illness while maintaining confidentiality.

Confidentiality Policy

Policy Statement

I am committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all children and families attending my home childcare setting. All personal information will be treated with respect, kept secure, and only shared when necessary and appropriate.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Safeguard children and families' personal information
- Ensure compliance with data protection laws
- Promote trust between the childcare provider and families
- Outline when information may be shared

Information Kept on Record

The following information may be collected and stored:

- Child's full name, address, and date of birth
- Parent/guardian contact details

- Emergency contact information
- Medical information (allergies, conditions, medication)
- Developmental records and observations
- Attendance records
- Accident and incident reports

Storage of Information

- Paper records are kept in a locked cabinet.
- Digital records are password protected.
- Information is only accessible to the childcare provider.
- Records are retained according to legal requirements and then securely destroyed.

Sharing Information

Confidential information will not be shared with other parents, visitors, or unauthorized individuals.

Information may be shared only:

- With written parental consent
- With health professionals or schools (with consent)
- If required by law
- If there are safeguarding concerns about a child's welfare

Only relevant information will be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Safeguarding Exception

Confidentiality may be breached if there is reasonable cause to believe a child is at risk of harm. In such cases, information will be shared with appropriate child protection authorities in line with safeguarding procedures.

Parents will normally be informed unless doing so would place the child at further risk.

Use of Photographs and Social Media

- Photographs will only be taken with written parental permission.
- Images will not be shared on social media without explicit consent.

Parental Access to Records

Parents have the right to:

- Access their child's records upon request
- Request corrections to inaccurate information

Code of Conduct

Purpose

This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for children, parents/guardians, and the provider to ensure a safe, respectful, and nurturing home childcare environment.

Provider Responsibilities

The childcare provider agrees to:

- Provide a safe, clean, and developmentally appropriate environment
- Treat each child with dignity, respect, and fairness
- Use positive guidance and redirection strategies
- Maintain confidentiality of family information
- Comply with all state licensing regulations
- Communicate openly with parents regarding their child's progress, behavior, and well-being
- Report suspected abuse or neglect as required by law

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians agree to:

- Treat the provider, family members, and other enrolled families with respect
- Maintain confidentiality and communicate without blame for illnesses and/ or behaviors
- Pay tuition and fees on time as outlined in the contract
- Provide updated emergency contact information
- Keep children home when ill (per illness policy)
- Notify the provider of absences or schedule changes
- Provide required supplies
- Support the provider's behavior guidance policies
- Respect the owner's boundaries, rules and policies and role as a business owner and teacher

Failure to meet these responsibilities may result in termination of care.

Child Expectations

Children are expected to:

- Use respectful language and safe behavior
- Follow appropriate age rules
- Keep hands and feet to themselves
- Participate in clean-up routines
- Treat materials and others with care

Zero Tolerance

Darling Dolphins Childcare has a zero tolerance for emotional, verbal, digital or physical abuse of any kind from families or children. They also have a

zero-blame policy for illnesses and behaviors since we provide care to very young children.

Behavior Guidance Policy

The provider uses positive reinforcement, redirection, modeling, and age-appropriate consequences.

The following are not permitted:

- Corporal punishment
- Humiliation or verbal abuse
- Withholding food, rest, or toileting

If serious behavioral concerns arise, the provider will:

1. Document concerns
2. Communicate with parents
3. Develop a behavior support plan
4. Refer to outside resources if necessary

If behavior poses a safety risk and does not improve, care may be terminated.

Termination Policy

Two-Week Notice (Standard Termination)

Either party may terminate care with two weeks' written notice. Payment is required during the notice period whether or not the child attends.

Immediate Termination (Without Notice)

The provider reserves the right to terminate care immediately for:

- Non-payment of fees
- Repeated late pickups
- Failure to follow policies

- Disrespectful, threatening, or aggressive behavior by a parent or guardian
- Child behavior that endangers others
- Failure to provide required documentation
- False information provided at enrollment
- Parent / guardian is under the influence of drugs and/ or alcohol during drop offs and/ pick ups

Provider-Initiated Termination

The provider may terminate care due to:

- Inability to meet the child's needs
- Ongoing policy violations
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Changes in business operations
- Personal or family emergencies

Parent-Initiated Termination

Parents must:

- Submit written 2 weeks' notice
- Pay tuition through the final contracted date
- Ensure all balances are paid in full

Abandonment of Care

If a child is absent for 3 consecutive days without communication and payment, care may be terminated and the space filled.

Right to Terminate Care

This decision is never taken lightly. In California, home childcare providers may legally set boundaries, enforce their policies, protect their home, family and children in their care and terminate a childcare arrangement at any time for any reason outlined in their policies without retaliation, cruelty, false accusations, insults, malicious intent, personal attacks, hatred or harassment. When opinions and assumptions are hurtful, cruel and not factual, it is defamation and slander.

Trial Period

Each child will have a 90-day (3 months from first day of attendance) trial period to determine if it will be a good fit for our program. Families and the teacher should communicate concerns and behaviors in person. This will allow each infant and toddler to bond and get to know the teacher and their other friends enrolled and build collaborative relationships with each family. If at any time during these 90 days either the teacher or family feels it is not working out, we can part ways with no hard feelings. We will try to help each child adjust and work with them as much as possible and communicate how the child is doing daily. Please be mindful we are not a center. This is also our home. We have created policies from our education an experience.

The enrollment fee covering the last two weeks is non-refundable. If it is determined by the provider not to be a good fit at any time, the following week's tuition that is paid on the Friday before care will be refunded.

Acknowledgment of Agreement

I have read and understand the policies and agree to comply with its terms.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____