

THE DOLPHIN CLUB FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Updated March 2010

The Dolphin Club
Child Care Center
At
Eastshore Elementary School

Policies and Procedures

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday
7:00am – 6:00 pm

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9:30-1:30

Federal TAX ID# 93-0870910
Facility License # 300-605-744

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Policy Changes: The Board of Directors reserves the right to change or modify Dolphin Club policies based on the needs of the business. No one individual, including the director, can change or modify policies without the Boards approval.

Revised March 2010

The Dolphin Club Philosophy

The Dolphin Club exists for the purpose of nurturing, supporting, promoting and enhancing All areas of your child's development. Our program serves as a bridge between home and school for the children in our community by providing a safe and structured environment that is home like and informal. The Dolphin Club will meet the needs of the whole child by establishing partnerships with the children, their families, and the community.

POLICIES

Enrollment: A child must be 4.9 years old in the fall in order to be enrolled. All children must be toilet trained. Parents or guardians are required to provide a copy of the child's immunizations unless the child is currently enrolled at an IUSD Elementary School. Children will not be refused admission because of race, religion, color or creed.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to *accurately complete and sign* all enrollment forms and keep the information updated as needed. By signing the enrollment forms, the enrolling parent/guardian is also certifying that they have legal authority for the child. California law is clear that parents who have joint legal custody have equal access to all information regarding the child including enrolling the child and making changes to the enrollment information. Court orders are required to prevent a parent or legal guardian from certain activities such as picking up the child or visiting the child at the center. We reserve the right, however, to prohibit individuals from being at the center if the health and safety of any child is threatened or compromised.

We do not allow the making of copies of forms, documents and we do not provide testimony, verbally or in writing, about any child unless subpoenaed by a court order.

ADMISSION AND ORIENTATION

Admission into The Dolphin Club program is open to children ages 4.9 thru 14 years of age. Students enrolled at Eastshore Elementary School have priority however we do accept children from any school. Registration appointments are required to complete appropriate forms, discuss policies and procedures of the center, tour the facility and answer any questions you may have about the program. This must be scheduled in advance with the administration.

As part of the orientation process, families are encouraged to bring their child to the center before the initial start date, to meet the center staff and other children, and become familiar with the facility. Most children feel more comfortable in the program having had this initial visit with a parent or guardian.

Children with special needs may be enrolled in the center upon the collaborative planning and agreement between the family and the center. Each child's individual needs will be considered on a child-by-child basis.

ANNUAL REGISTRATION

An initial registration fee is charged per family at the time of your enrollment. An annual re-registration fee will then be charged each year to re-enroll your family and to guarantee your family's continuing place in the program for the school year. *If your account remains inactive for over 12 months you will be required to enroll as a new family.* A new registration agreement must be signed any time there is a change in tuition (i.e., fall, summer, and change in schedule)

HOLIDAYS AND DC CLOSURES

FEBRUARY: President's Day

MAY: Memorial Day

JUNE: The day after the last day of school.

JULY: 4th of July

SEPTEMBER: Labor Day, 1 designated staff rest day and 1 designated staff work day

NOVEMBER: Thanksgiving and the day after.

DECEMBER/JANUARY: Winter Break, to be announced

One (1) Floating Staff Development Day / To be announced

OFFICE HOURS

The following office hours have been established to assist with questions in regards to tuition, schedules and other administrative issues.

Monday-Friday 9:30-1:30

SIGN IN AND OUT

It is a Licensing requirement that each child must be signed in and out by a parent or authorized person every day on the Attendance sheets located on the entry table. A full signature and the time are required. **Failure to do this will result in a fine of \$25.00. Continued failure may result in termination of services.**

For your protection, your child will only be released to authorized persons. The staff will question ANYONE who is unfamiliar to them and ask for identification for authorization. Anyone without proper identification will be stopped from taking a child. If anyone who is not authorized on the child's emergency card will be picking up your child, you must notify the center in writing, by phone or email.

Any restricted individuals must have a current restraining order or other court order on file.

If your child is to be involved in any after school on site activities, i.e. soccer, tutoring, dance, scouts, that are not part of our program, we will need a letter of permission from you and an authorized adult must sign the child in and out. Once your child is released from our program, we are no longer responsible until they return from the activity and are signed in.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

It is important that Dolphin Club maintain current and accurate records on each child so that parents/guardians can be notified in case of an emergency. It is required that each child has two yellow emergency cards on file. These must be completed prior to enrollment and need to be kept current at all times. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO INFORM THE CENTER OF ANY CHANGES.** Failure to do so may result in termination from the program.

SCHEDULE CHANGES AND WITHDRAWALS

If you choose to withdraw your child from the program or change your child's schedule, **you are required to notify the center in writing at least two weeks in advance** of your child's intended withdrawal or schedule change.

After your withdrawal notice is given, you are responsible for payment of full tuition through the final date.

TUITION

- ◆ A current Tuition Schedule is available upon request and is posted on the Program Information wall.
- ◆ TUITION IS DUE BY THE 5th, A \$25.00 LATE FEE WILL APPLY ON THE 6th.
- ◆ School year tuition is calculated on a 10 month school year basis, **there is no pro rating.**
- ◆ There is a 10% Sibling discount for 2nd child/15% Sibling discount for 3rd child.
- ◆ Tuition/Billing is established according to your child's schedule stated on the Registration Agreement.
- ◆ The Dolphin Club is not responsible for billing; you will receive a receipt after your tuition is posted.
- ◆ **If a written two week notice is not given, you will still be responsible for tuition.**

FORMS OF PAYMENT ACCEPTED:

- ◆ **Cash will not be accepted for any reason.**
- ◆ VISA/MASTER CARD on our website: thedolphinclubirvine.org
- ◆ CHECK OR MONEY ORDER: payable to The Dolphin Club, deposit into the Tuition Box. The TUITION BOX is located in the DC Foyer.

PLACE CHECKS DIRECTLY INTO THE TUITION BOX. DO NOT HAND TUITION CHECKS TO STAFF OR CHILDREN.

Failure to pay fees by the 5th of each month will result in a late charge of \$25.00 and must be paid within 48 hours unless arrangements have been made with administration. Three (3) occurrences of delinquency in a school year will result in a Board review, which could lead to termination from the program. Special financial needs may be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors.

RETURNED CHECKS

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for each returned check. If two checks are returned from the bank, cashier's check or money orders will be required for a period of one year following the last returned check. If a check is returned due to bank error, a letter of explanation from the bank and the service charge will be waived.

REFUNDS, DISCOUNTS AND CREDITS

When your child is enrolled at The Dolphin Club it is equated to renting a space. Since costs remain constant regardless of a child's attendance, *no refunds, discounts or credits* will be given for missed days due to illness, vacation, holidays, etc.

LATE PICK UP

Dolphin Club childcare ends at 6:00p.m and our staff are scheduled to leave. However, if you anticipate being late you must notify Dolphin Club staff immediately.

***Beginning at 6:00 pm, there will be a late fee of \$15.00 for every 5 minute increment that you are late. (EX: If you are 15 minutes late your late fee will be \$45.00). This will be charged to your account.**

Failure to pay the late fee could result in direct action from the Board of Directors. Phone calls are appreciated however they do not release families from paying late fees.

Two (2) Late Pick up occurrences can result in suspension or termination from the program.

Children are not allowed to sign themselves out and wait in the parking lot for their parent/guardian to pick them up.

WINTER, SPRING AND SUMMER BREAK

You must pre register for these programs separately from the school year in order to attend. You will be financially responsible for all registered days regardless of your child's attendance. **You may not register for Camp Programs with any account balance.**

NO SCHOOL/DC FULL DAYS

On days that school is closed and Dolphin Club is open, you will be required to sign up your child for them to attend. We staff our program according to how many children are signed up and when children arrive who are not expected, it can affect the ratios. **Failure to sign up for DC Full Days will result in a \$25.00 penalty fee.**

Some Full Day activities and field trip fees are included in the cost of tuition, however occasionally extra fees are required.

ABSENCES

Please **notify the center by phone, email or in writing as early as possible regarding your child's absence.** Tuition guarantees your child's place; therefore, no tuition credits or make up days will be given for any reason (vacation, illness, etc...) **Tuition remains the same whether or not the child attends.**

AFTERNOON SIGN IN AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Signing in is done as soon as school is dismissed. If your child has not been accounted for the following steps will be taken:

1. Classroom check.
2. Phone call to authorized parent or guardian's work phone number on file.
3. Phone call to authorized parent or guardian's cell phone on file.

*** It is not the responsibility or policy of Eastshore Elementary to notify Dolphin Club of your child's absence.**

*** Families....Please keep the Dolphin Club staff informed to simplify this process.
Our staff can spend up to an hour searching for missing children.**

Due to the legal ratios we must maintain it is impossible for Dolphin Club staff to walk children to and from their classroom. It is the responsibility of each Dolphin Club child to come directly to the center with all their belongings as soon as class is dismissed for the day.

- If your child will not be attending Dolphin Club in the afternoon PLEASE let us know ASAP. This will save our staff members valuable time searching the school for unaccounted children.
- If your child has alternate plans after school, families must inform the center by phone, email or in writing. No child will be released from The Dolphin Club without permission from an authorized parent or guardian.
- All after school plans and play dates should be made before school. No child will be allowed to use the centers phone to make last minute plans and arrangements.

FUNDRAISING

Since Dolphin Club is a non-profit organization, we are required to host fundraisers throughout the year to raise additional money for our program. We do this with weekly bake sales, our Annual Fall Cookie Dough Sales, and our end of the year Talent Show. We encourage all families to participate in fundraising activities throughout the year.

COMMUNICATION

Open communication is essential to your child's successful experience at our center. We welcome your comments, suggestions and concerns. We have established several communication channels and encourage you to take advantage of these.

If an issue arises that remains unsolved or requires urgent attention the Program Director can be contacted during program hours. In the event that the Director is unavailable or the issue remains unsolved please contact the Board of Directors. (A current listing is available upon request)

CONFIDENTIALITY

The disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and the child's family shall be restricted to purposes directly connected with the administration of the program.

PHOTOS

Dolphin Club occasionally uses photographs taken at the center for promotional purposes. These photos may be used in our advertising publications and on our website.

* If you do not want your child's photo to be used, please fill out the Photo Release Form.

The Dolphin Club has a password protected Photo Album on our website, thedolphinclubirvine.org. The password can be obtained from the Program Director. Please keep the password confidential.

FAMILY INFORMATION AREA

This area is used for the Sign in and Out Area; we also post announcements regarding Full Days, field trips, activities and general announcements. Please be sure to check this area daily for important notices.

WEEKLY EMAILS

The Dolphin Club sends regular emails to keep families up to date on all events, activities and announcements. Please be sure to provide DC with your current email and be sure to notify us of any email changes.

FAMILY FILES

The Family Files are located in the DC Family Information area. Each family has a designated folder, which should be checked on a regular basis for important announcements, receipts and general communication.

NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are published on a quarterly basis. (Fall/Winter/Spring/End of Summer)

CONFERENCES

Conferences are available upon request.

BOARD MEETINGS

Board Meetings are held once a month, families are welcome to attend with prior notification to center director. A current Board meeting listing and schedule is available upon request.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Dolphin Club has several policies and procedures that are followed for the health and well-being of each child in our program. Please read these carefully and talk to the Director if you have any questions or concerns.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Children enrolled at Eastshore Elementary School will not be required to show proof of immunizations. Children not enrolled at Eastshore Elementary School will be required to show proof of immunizations.

DAILY HEALTH CHECK

Your child's health status will be checked each day upon arrival. If the child appears to be showing signs of illness, they may not be admitted to the program.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill during program hours, he/she will be isolated and the parent/guardian will be contacted and required to pick the child up within 1 hour. If the child is sent home with a fever, they will not be allowed to return to the program for 24 hours.

If your child is sent home from school for illness, they may not attend Dolphin Club the same day. If you pick up your child from school for illness, you must contact The Dolphin Club and inform the center that your child will not be attending.

ALL CHILDREN IN ATTENDANCE MUST BE HEALTHY ENOUGH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM'S DAILY ACTIVITIES.

INJURIES

If your child is involved in a minor accident at the center, an Accident report will be completed and given to the parent/guardian. Appropriate first aid will be given immediately. If it is determined that a physician's care is needed, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. If the parent/guardian or other designated persons on the emergency card are unavailable, 911 will be contacted and the child will be taken to the nearest hospital.

Any injury to the face or head no matter how small will result in a phone call to the parent/guardian.

MEDICATION

Any medication, which needs to be administered during program hours must:

- Be accompanied by a "permission to medicate" form, available upon request.
- Be brought directly to the administration in its original container with the child's name, physician's name and drug clearly labeled on the container and have specific written instructions for dosage and time given.
- **Medication cannot be sent with a child or in a child's backpack**, it must be given directly to an administrator.

No over the counter medication, including cough medicine, children's aspirin etc., will be given without a doctor's note.

SUNSCREEN

The Department of Social Services Child Care Licensing considers sunscreen to be a non prescription medication and therefore the following procedures will be followed;

- ❖ A Sunscreen Consent Form must be completed and in the child's file.
- ❖ If providing *individual sunscreen* for your child it must be labeled with your child's name/date.
- ❖ **Children may not carry sunscreen or store it in their backpacks, tote bags, purses etc...**
- ❖ All sunscreen will be secured in a locked area.
- ❖ DC Staff will document each time sunscreen is administered to your child and this documentation will be kept in the SUNSCREEN BINDER.

Dolphin Club will be exclusively using *Rocky Mountain Sunscreen* for all children, unless specified by the parent/guardian. For more information on *Rocky Mountain Sunscreen* you can go to www.rmsunscreen.com.

EMERGENCY PLAN

In the event of an emergency or disaster, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. Please do not telephone the center. The telephone will be used for outgoing emergency calls only.
2. Children will remain with center staff members on the premises or at the designated emergency evacuation site for 72 hours unless an injury requires release to an emergency medical facility.
3. A sign will be posted at The Dolphin Club giving the destination of evacuated children.
4. There will be a specific area for claiming and signing out children at the evacuation site. Only adults previously authorized on the emergency cards will be able to sign out children.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Dolphin Club conducts regular drills during program hours and we also participate in all Eastshore Drills. We keep the required amount of Emergency Supplies on site (stored in our outside shed).

FIRST AID/CPR AND UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

All DC staff is required to complete First Aid/CPR upon hiring. All staff is also required to complete Universal Precaution training within three (3) months of hiring.

LIFEGUARD AND WATER SAFETY

The Dolphin Club has a minimum of one (1) lifeguard on staff for all water activities.

NUTRITION

Balanced meals including a variety of well prepared and served foods provide a foundation for developing positive attitudes toward food, understanding good nutrition and forming good eating habits.

Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack supply the combinations of food in the amounts children will eat and enjoy.

We encourage fruit juices that are 100% juice with *no sugar added*. Organic Milk is provided for breakfast lunch and snack. Water is always an advisable beverage.

We do not permit sodas of any kind.

We do not permit candy of any kind.

We do not permit Lunchables as an adequate source of nutrition.

Your child may be away from home for up to 10 hours during the day, and it is extremely important that the food, which he or she consumes, foster excellent growth and development. Although we realize that it is difficult to avoid sugar in many typical foods, we ask you to make this added effort for the sake of your child's growth and development.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Foods purchased and served at the center will promote the reduction of salt, sugar, and fats and the increase of grains, fruits and vegetables.

Family style meals service is part of our food program. Children are encouraged to serve themselves and to try all foods, but are never forced to eat. Active involvement in food preparation, table set up and clean up is encouraged.

Menus are posted in the kitchen area and are available upon request.

Children with food allergies or special nutritional needs should notify the Director.

Breakfast is served before school each day from 7:00 until 8:00.

During Summer Camp from 7:00 – 8:30 am

Lunch is provided for our Kindergarteners' each day except for the following:

- ❖ Wednesdays
- ❖ Minimum days
- ❖ Alternate schedule days
- ❖ Winter, Spring and Summer Camp days
- ❖ DC Full Days (school is closed, we are open)

Snack is provided in the afternoon.

DC Full Days, Winter, Spring and Summer breaks all children are required to bring a lunch.

Soft drinks and candy are prohibited at Dolphin Club

Parent/guardians whose children have food allergies or special nutritional needs should notify the center. If your child is unable to eat the food on the menu, you may be required to send food with them.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Dolphin Club strives to maintain a positive approach to managing children's behavior at all times. "Discipline" is the process of teaching self-control and the ability to live within limitations and agreed upon guidelines. The staff and children of Dolphin Club establish expected behavior guidelines together. Positive behavior is self-rewarding and allows for program activities to occur. When children choose to behave outside the established guidelines, consequences may occur to prevent future problems.

The safety of all children in our program is our highest priority.

The following behaviors are unacceptable:

1. Disrupting the program.
2. Endangering the health or safety of children, staff, animals or other adults.
3. Continuous refusal to follow acceptable rules of behavior.
4. Use of profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, verbal harassment or racist comments.
5. Possession or use of illegal substances, medication, or possession of drug paraphernalia.
6. Theft or damage of school or center.
7. Leaving the premises without permission.
8. Inappropriate sexual conduct.
9. Possession of any weapons.

If a child is suspended from school for any reason, he /she will also be suspended from The Dolphin Club for the same period of time.

Discipline Process: When positive behavior is displayed, the result, outcome, or reward is participation in the programs activities and experiences. In cases of negative or inappropriate behavior, the following process will be followed:

1. **Reasoning:** Every attempt will be made to help the child understand the inappropriateness of his/her action and alternate positive behaviors will be discussed. When the conflict is with another child, both children will be brought together to discuss the incident and reason together with a staff member to facilitate.
2. **Removal:** When reasoning has been pursued and behavior has not changed, the child will not be allowed to participate in specific activities and experiences.
3. **Child/Director Conference:** When staff is not successful in correcting behavior the child will be brought to the director/assistant director for further discussion and stricter consequences if necessary.
4. **Family/Child/Director Conference:** If the parent/guardian needs to be formally involved in the process, specific behavior changes will be requested with specific consequences clearly outlined. This is usually accomplished with the use of a behavior contract. When possible the child should be present and heard at these conferences.

If the process does not result in a corrected behavior, the family will be required to remove the child from the program for a period of 1 to 5 days to be determined by The Dolphin Club administration.

In addition, the Board of Directors reserves the right to dismiss any child who fails to cooperate with the staff and other children. If a child is terminated for disciplinary reasons, there will be no reimbursement of tuition. Any damages incurred by the child will be billed to the parents account and the parent will be notified.

Although DC strives to respond to the needs of each individual child, this program is a group program. All participants must be able to function within the limits of the group. The decision to terminate a child from the program is made when all other options have been exhausted. How long we wait to terminate can only be defined by the specific situation. An indicator could be when children are leaving the program specifically because of this child. When a child's behavior is so disruptive, the staff uses all their time and energy towards the disruptive child, thus compromising the quality of group care, it is probably time to terminate the child from the program.

ADULT RULES OF CONDUCT

We consider the following adult behaviors to be unacceptable. Any parent/guardian or family representative who displays any one of the following behaviors may be prohibited from participation in the center or any center related activity.

1. No child or adult will be physically abused, including shaking, grabbing, hitting, pushing, etc., at the center or any center related activity.
2. No child or adult will be verbally abused or harassed and no adult will use profane or obscene language at the center or at any center related activity.
3. No alcoholic beverages will be allowed at the center or at any center related activity. No child will be released to anyone who appears to be intoxicated.
4. No illegal drugs will be allowed at the center or any center related activity. No child will be released to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs.
5. Smoking is prohibited on the center premises or at any center related activity.
6. Theft or damage of school, center or private property is prohibited.
7. Failure to follow the Adult Rules of Conduct will result in termination from the program.
8. No adult will address concerns with children not related to them; this is the job of the Dolphin Club staff.

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOMEWORK

The Dolphin Club will provide a quiet Homework Club time for children who work on homework. Staff members are available to encourage children and answer questions, but they are not responsible for the completion and review of each child's work.

Homework Club is not available for Kindergarten children.

We encourage you to take the time to review your child's homework each day to be sure it's being completed properly.

Individual tutoring is not available on site. Please inquire with the center for local tutoring services. Children doing Homework at Dolphin Club must be prepared with all necessary supplies including paper and books. Dolphin Club will take pencil and paper donations each year for Homework Club.

AT NO TIME IS A STUDENT ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THEIR CLASSROOM AFTER SCHOOL TO RETRIEVE FORGOTEN ITEMS.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

- Items from home such as purses, stuffed animals, money, make up, etc; are not allowed
- Items that encourage violence such as guns, knives, swords, or weapons of any kind are not allowed.
- Electronic devices, such as MP3 Players, CD Players, Video games, cell phones, even toy ones, etc.....are not allowed.

The Dolphin Club is not responsible for any personal items brought to the center.

PERSONAL CELL PHONES (ELECTRONIC RECORDING DEVICES)

The Irvine Unified School District and Dolphin Club acknowledges the importance of electronic communication between students and families, particularly in school-wide emergency situations.

Therefore, students shall be permitted to have in their possession a privately owned cell phone on campus during their day, while attending Dolphin Club activities, or while under the supervision of a Dolphin Club employee. **Such devices shall be deactivated and remain out of sight.** Their use shall be strictly prohibited on campus during the Dolphin Club day, except:

- During a emergency affecting Dolphin Club or the community
- Upon direction from a licensed physician and surgeon, if carrying such a device is essential to, and the use is limited specifically to, the health of the student

In permitting student possession of such devices, The Dolphin Club assumes no liability for the loss of the device or its misuse by another person. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action. Unauthorized use will result in confiscation. Device must be claimed by a parent/guardian.

CLOTHING AND LUNCHBOXES

Please mark all lunchboxes and clothing items (jackets, sweatshirts, etc...) with your child's name.

LOST AND FOUND

Dolphin Club Lost and Found is located under the Sign in and Out Table. Items left at the end of each month will be given to Eastshore School.

