

RAINBOW DAYCARE PARENT HANDBOOK



Updated August, 2012

WELCOME TO RAINBOW DAYCARE!

This handbook was developed for families of Rainbow Daycare to provide information about the policies and procedures governing the operation of Rainbow Daycare Center and Preschool. Each new family is asked to read the handbook in its entirety and submit an acknowledgement of receipt at the time of enrollment. Your family's involvement directly affects the success of the center. To demonstrate the importance of families, we share with you a brief history of the center. We hope your experience with the center will be rich and rewarding to both your child and your family. Welcome!

History of Rainbow Daycare

Rainbow Daycare, INC. ("RDC") opened its doors for business on September 9, 1986. The first person with a vision and determination to fulfill her dream (to our benefit) was Dorothy Benjamin, a new mother with a need for childcare. In 1981, she was ahead of her time in developing the first on-site infant daycare facility for State workers in California (Capital Infant/Toddler Center). For five years, Ms. Benjamin with the help of Tess Albin-Smith and several other parents fought to keep our lease, which was on State property scheduled for other state uses. Our troubles finally gained attention in 1984 when the State of California established a childcare fund to help state employees start their own centers. The parents organized as a non-profit corporation and with Ms. Benjamin's assistance, we were able to stay together another two years until we moved to our current site.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Dorothy Benjamin and Tess Albin-Smith, the center's founding president, as well as to the tireless efforts and determination not only of our parents, but our State officials, legislators, volunteer crews, and staff. Their willingness and determination gave life to RDC. Our parents, Board of Directors, and staff continue to work diligently to make RDC the best that it can be!

Let's keep the spirit alive!

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I. Introduction

Welcome!

Thank you for choosing Rainbow Daycare for your child! Rainbow Daycare is a parent- owned non-profit daycare, operated by a Board of Directors in collaboration with the Executive Director and Assistant Director. The Executive Director and Assistant Director hired by the Board of Directors, who are responsible for the staffing, curriculum, and overall management of the day-to-day operations of the center. The Board of Directors is comprised of other parents who, like you, choose Rainbow Daycare Center and Preschool (“RDC”) for their child. Having a parent run Board of Directors helps make the RDC experience a unique and rewarding one. Parents have a direct voice in the functioning and success of the center. It is our hope that each family will have a rich and rewarding experience with RDC and recommend our center to other families looking for care.

RDC Board of Directors

The Board of Directors’ primary goal is to ensure that RDC provides a safe, educational, nurturing environment for our children staffed by the most qualified and caring personnel. In addition, the Board must conduct, manage, and control the business operations of the center including establishing policy and ensuring compliance with State Licensing.

Elections

Each board member serves a term of one year. Board members may serve consecutive terms but must be re-elected. Elections are held on a rolling basis as board member terms expire or board members leave the board. When vacancies exist, the Executive Director will assist in soliciting for candidate statements from interested parents. When there are more candidates than open positions on the board, each candidate’s name and statement will become available to each family of RDC for a ballot and subsequent election.

Board Meetings

The Board of Directors meets monthly at the center at 5:45 p.m. and meetings typically last about 90 minutes. Board meetings are open to any RDC family or staff wishing to attend. Information regarding the schedule of board meetings and listing of your current board members is available on the Parent Board at the entrance of the center.

By-Laws

A set of by-laws governs the Board of Directors. A copy of the by-laws is available upon request from the Executive Director or Assistant Director of RDC.

Members and Officers

The Board of Directors is composed of a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 9 parent members and has four officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Each officer serves a one year term. Acting board members elect officers at the October board meeting each year.

Enrollment and Class Size

RDC enrollment is State licensed for 12 infants (under 2) and 48 preschool-aged children (over 2). We target ratios of 3:1 for infants, 6:1 for 2 year-olds and 8:1 for children 3 years and older.

Curriculum

RDC utilizes three different but complementary curriculum styles, Play-based, Thematic, and Emergent curriculum. RDC implements the three curriculum styles throughout our center in ways that are age appropriate for the children. RDC strives to create an atmosphere for the children that is mutually rewarding to both the staff and the children.

Each month the staff will post a curriculum schedule that identifies the theme and concepts the children are learning. Staff will post this schedule in the classroom. The schedule will detail specific activities planned for the children for that month that adhere to these three curriculum styles.

RDC believes that Play-based centers are the most developmentally appropriate for young children. Play-based curriculum is defined by teachers setting up an environment in which children can learn by open exploration. Play-based centers allow children to explore themes through self-directed activity that allows children to build confidence in their physical and social abilities.

Thematic curriculum is teacher-directed and used to introduce themes and concepts to young children. The Zoo Phonics (<http://www.zoo-phonics.com/>) program is an example of a thematic unit taught at RDC. Thematic curriculum helps children explore themes through song, reading, and other teacher directed activities.

Emergent curriculum arises naturally from adult-child interactions and situations that allow for "teachable moments." It connects learning with experience and prior learning. It includes all interests of children and responds to their interests rather than focusing on a narrow, individual, or calendar-driven topic. Typical implementation of emergent curriculum is after an idea or interest area emerges from a group of children. In emergent curriculum, both adults and children have initiative and make decisions. This power to impact curriculum decisions and directions means that sometimes curriculum is also negotiated between what interests children and what adults know is necessary for children's education and development.

Conflicts

Often in pre-school settings, conflicts will arise between children. RDC attempts to allow children to work out conflicts or frustrations with their peers and without immediate adult intervention. However, if a child is having difficulty, the staff will intervene by suggesting words or actions that the child can use to convey the message the child is trying to communicate. Extremely aggressive or hostile behavior, or repeated problems, may result in redirecting the

child or removing the child from the other children for a short time. We use these methods to help children resolve conflicts because we believe that if you give children the opportunity to be responsible for working out problems, they learn to accept the logical consequences of their behavior.

Environment

RDC strives to maintain a professional environment that treats all families in a fair and courteous manner. As such, RDC maintains a strict policy prohibiting sexual harassment and discrimination because of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, age (as defined in California Government Code section 12926 and/or referenced in California Labor section 1102.1) or any other basis made unlawful by applicable law. This policy applies to all persons involved in the operations of RDC and prohibits such discrimination by any employee of the school, including board members, administrative personnel, teachers, aides, or any other paid staff member.

II. General Procedures

Registration Requirements

State law and RDC policy requires that the parent complete and submit the following forms to RDC prior to your child's first day at the center.

1. Identification and Emergency Information
2. Physician's Report (child's pre-admission health evaluation)
3. Consent for Emergency Treatment
4. Parent's Report (child's pre-admission health history)
5. Immunization Record
6. Permission to Participate (in center activities)
7. Enrollment Contract

Failure to provide the required forms may result in delaying your child's participation in the program.

Hours and Tuition

RDC is open from 7:00 a.m. until 5:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. RDC does not allow parents and children into the center prior to 7:00 a.m. and parents must pick up children by 5:45 p.m. Failure to pick up your child by 5:45 p.m will result in a late charge at a rate of \$5.00 flat for the first five minutes and \$2.00 for each minute thereafter. Payment for late pick-ups will be due immediately with payment submitted before the child returns to care. Parents must notify staff if they expect to be late for pick-up. Failure to pick up your child by 6:30 p.m. without notification may result in staff calling Child Protective Services. Prior to such a call, RDC staff will attempt to contact parents or an emergency contact for the child.

The center closes for all recognized State holidays and teacher in-service days. The Board of Directors provides a schedule of all holidays and teacher in-service days. Teacher in-service days are mandated by State licensing and are utilized to provide scheduled training to the staff. The Executive Director will attempt to schedule in-service training on dates and times that will minimize inconvenience to families of RDC. If the center must close to provide training, the Executive Director will provide a 30-day advance notice to parents.

Tuition

Monthly tuition rates are posted near the tuition slot. Communication of any changes in tuition rates will be in writing at least 30 days in advance unless a financial emergency emerges. Tuition is payable in full without regard to the child's attendance (sick days, vacation, and holidays). Rainbow does not give discounts or credit for children who are absent on their regularly scheduled day. Families will be responsible for the full tuition rate if they fail to provide a 30 day written notice of withdrawal.

Tuition is due and payable on the first day of the month preferably by check or money order. Failure to submit payment by the end of the fifth day of the month will result in a late fee based on the current tuition rate schedule. Returned checks from the bank for insufficient funds or other reasons will result in a charge of tuition plus the applicable bank fees and a \$25 returned check fee to become immediately payable. After the second returned check, tuition will be due by cashier's check or money order by the fifth of every month thereafter.

Delinquent Tuition

Tuition is due on the first day of the month. There is a grace period before late charges are assessed. We must receive tuition by the 5th day of the month. If the 5th falls on a weekend or a closed holiday, the tuition must be paid the Friday before. If you have your tuition paid by a bank check, your bank should be instructed that we need payment by the 5th of the month. An automatic late fee of \$25 will be assessed after the 5th day of the month. A \$15.00 late fee will be added each additional day that we do not receive payment. If tuition and all late charges are not received by the 10th of the month, daycare services will be terminated. We are a non-profit organization and rely on tuition to cover all of our program and teacher expenses each month.

If enrollment terminates due to unpaid balances, RDC will make every effort to recover any unpaid tuition. This includes utilizing a collection agency or initializing the small claims court process.

Tuition Assistance

All parents are ultimately responsible for ensuring the center receives full payment for their child's tuition. If your family receives tuition assistance for payment of your child's tuition, and the organization facilitating payment fails to pay the full payment of the tuition due, the parent is responsible for submitting the tuition differential. RDC will notify the parent immediately following receipt of the organization's payment, of any tuition differential due in writing. Once notified, the parent is to submit payment no later than 15 days after notification is made of the amount due. Failure to submit any payment differential within 15 days of notification will cause the child's enrollment to terminate unless the Executive Director has received and the Board of

Directors has approved a written payment plan for the tuition due. If the parent fails to make payments according to the approved written payment plan, RDC shall terminate the child's enrollment.

Sign In / Sign Out

State law requires that a parent/guardian sign each child in and out of the center on the days of care. This procedure includes the parent/guardian clearly writing (signature must be legible) and noting the time the child enters and leaves RDC in the binders provided in the office. Each class has a separate binder with the children's names filed alphabetically by the last name of the child. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that any authorized person dropping off or picking up their child is adhering to this policy.

During drop off, the parent/guardian needs to contact a staff member to make them aware of the child's presence. This enables the staff member to greet the child, do a brief health check and find out any information needed for the child's day (e.g. when the child last ate, how the child slept the night before, medications, etc.). Obtaining this information is imperative for staff to assess the needs of your child for that day.

During pick up, the parent/guardian again needs to contact a staff member to make them aware of the child's departure. No child will leave RDC with someone other than the parent or guardian, unless there is written authorization, or that person's name is on the Emergency Information form under "Authorization for Pick-up." A phone call is not sufficient documentation for arrangement of pick up by someone not previously listed as authorized to pick up.

If parents fail to sign their child in, the Executive Director will notify the parent, and the parent will be required to come and sign their child in. Parents who routinely forget to sign their child in or out will receive a written notice, with a copy placed in their file. This notice will serve as documentation. Repeat offenders may be terminated from the program.

Parking and Drop-off

The white zone in front of the building is a 20-minute maximum pick-up and drop-off zone. Parking meters adjacent to the white zone have 12-minute limits and must be plugged as any other parking meter. RDC is not responsible for any fines received for parking in either the loading zone or metered parking.

Enrollment, Transitions, Withdrawal

Enrollment

RDC enrolls children in the program on a continuous basis as vacancies permit. Should a specific class become full, RDC will maintain a waiting list on a first-come, first-serve basis, however, RDC grants priority for enrollment to families as follows. First priority is to current RDC families with new children and part-time families who wish to increase the number of days

of enrollment. Priority is determined between these families by the date of notice of intent given to the Executive Director in writing. Second priority is to returning families who left on good terms. Third priority is to the children of Bonderson Building employees (building where RDC is located) and State employees.

As openings become available, the Executive Director will notify the appropriate families on the waiting list in order of priority. Once the Executive Director has notified a family that they have a space and the family accepts, they cannot lose their place to a family with a higher priority. Rainbow will hold a spot for a family for 30 days from the date of the spot becoming available for a holding fee of 30% of the total tuition that would have been due had the child been in care for the 30 days. **Full tuition** is required to hold this spot longer than 30 days.

A \$50 wait-list fee is payable upon placement on the waiting list. An additional \$50 registration fee is payable when your child is enrolled at Rainbow. At times, a space is available immediately and it is unnecessary to place your child on the waiting list. In this case, the \$50 wait-list fee will be waived, and only the \$50 registration fee is required upon enrollment.

Families with a child currently enrolled at RDC are exempt from wait-list and registration fees when they enroll additional children.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for RDC to provide enrollment to families with a lower priority in order to match up open vacancies with the needs of families on the waiting list. RDC will use its best efforts to secure spaces for interested families according to the priorities established; however, RDC reserves the right to fill vacancies according to the center's needs.

Class Transitions

RDC is comprised of four classes, the Green class (6 weeks – 2 yrs), the Yellow class (2yrs), and two Purple classes (ages 3-5). In general, children will transition to the next class by the end of the month of their birthday. However, the final decision as to the actual date for a child's transition will be at the discretion of the Executive Director who will consider the developmental readiness of the child and space availability. RDC staff will work closely with the parents during each transitional phase and provide written notice of transition date

Withdrawals

Parents may withdraw a child from the program at any time. Final tuition payment and payment for any parent hour balance are due at the beginning of the final month of care. A 30-day written notice is required prior to withdrawal. Parents wishing to withdraw their child, but who fail to provide a 30-day written notice, will be responsible for tuition for the remaining 30 days or any portion thereof. In addition, parents leaving on bad terms (such as not giving notice) will lose their priority status as "returning families" as described above.

Termination of Enrollment

RDC is committed to providing individualized attention and care to each child enrolled in the program. As a result, RDC may be unable to properly care for children with behavioral or other problems. If, in the opinion of the Executive Director, RDC is unable to properly care for a child due to behavioral or other problems, the Executive Director may either suspend the child or terminate enrollment depending upon the severity of the situation. If the child is suspended, the parents will not be entitled to any refund of tuition paid. Re-instatement of any suspended child will be at the discretion of the Executive Director of RDC and be subject to availability. If a family wishes to preserve their spot during the suspended period, the parent/guardian will need to continue paying tuition. If the Executive Director terminates enrollment for a child due to behavioral or other problems, the parent/guardians have the option of appealing the Executive Director's decision to the Board of Directors.

Health and Safety Procedures

Sick Policy

The primary aim of RDC is to protect your child to the greatest degree possible. Health checks are done every day as each child enters the center. The check consists of observing the child's general appearance, feeling body temperature, and observing the skin for rashes or obvious signs of illness. After this check, RDC staff may determine not to accept a child for that day. If a child should seem extremely fatigued or ill during the day, RDC will notify the parent to pick up the child. We are not equipped to care for sick children. If this is your child's first group experience, it is quite possible that he or she will have more illnesses than before. We are counting on the cooperation of parents in keeping children home who are ill, or who seem unusually fatigued, or show symptoms of possible illness.

When a child becomes ill with a communicable disease or anything the Centers for Disease Control deems contagious, the parent should notify the Executive Director immediately so that the center can notify other parents of their child's exposure. In many circumstances, illnesses are most contagious prior to the child exhibiting any signs. As such, RDC asks that parents notify the center regardless of when the child first became ill.

Conditions for Exclusion from RDC

The Executive Director will notify families of children exposed to contagious illness at RDC. Parents are required to notify RDC within 24 hours of any serious illness in the family, including diagnosis and cause of illness. This is required even if the child is kept at home or if it is a sibling or parent who is ill.

The following is a list of infectious diseases or symptoms that will require exclusion of a child from RDC:

- Fever greater than or equal to 100.2 degrees F
- Severe abdominal pain, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Skin rashes/blisters (until diagnosed and treated)
- Epiglottitis

- Hepatitis
- Chicken Pox
- Measles or Rubella
- Mumps
- Tuberculosis
- Whooping Cough
- Giardia
- Conjunctivitis
- Ringworm
- Lice or nits
- Strep Throat
- Influenza
- Norovirus

In addition to the above, if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, RDC asks that the child be kept at home.

- A painful, red throat, even if fever is not present
- A deep, hacking cough
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- Complaints of stiff neck and headache accompanied by other symptoms
- Yellow discharge from the eyes
- An unusual yellow coloring of the skin or eyes
- Cuts or openings on the skin that are pus-filled or oozing

Once a child is treated and is not contagious, assuming the child is feeling fit to participate in the daily activities, the child may return to care.

Picking up a sick child

If your child develops any of the listed symptoms after arriving at RDC, you will be called to pick up your child. In order to minimize the other children's exposure to illness, when you are notified to pick up your sick child, you must do so within 45 minutes. (Please note: sick children must be isolated from the other children and RDC staff is not staffed to provide sick childcare.) If your child is not picked up in the allocated 45 minutes after you or your office is notified, you will be charged according to the late pick up charges described above which will be payable immediately. Staff will make every effort to make your child comfortable until you arrive.

If staff is unable to reach a parent/guardian, the staff will contact those people authorized to pick up the child from RDC. Remember, it is always the parents' responsibility to be available or have someone available to care for their child should he or she become ill at daycare.

Return to the Center

Generally, a child who has been ill cannot return to RDC until 24-48 hours after initial treatment with medication, if appropriate. In addition, the child must be fever-free and no longer showing symptoms of illness. The Executive Director will consult with the County Health Department or a health consultant as needed. The final decision as to whether a child may return is at the discretion of the Executive Director. In certain situations of illness, the Executive Director may require a written note from a physician before allowing the child to return to care.

Medication Policy

RDC staff will not administer any medication (prescription or non-prescription) without a completed medication form signed by a parent/guardian. Prior to requesting RDC staff to administer medication, a parent or guardian must have administered the medication to the child for at least 24 hours to ensure no allergies exist to the medication. A physician's note must accompany all prescription and non-prescription medications and include in writing the dosage and times for each administration if parents request RDC staff to administer the medication.

Each medication must have the child's name on it and will be stored in a secure cupboard or in the refrigerator at the center while the child is in care. Medications are not to be stored in a child's cubby or diaper bag where a child may have access to them. Parents are required to adhere to our policy and keep any medications separate from the child's belongings left at RDC.

RDC does not allow the use of non-prescription medications on a child while the child is in the care unless a signed physician's note is on file. If a parent wishes to administer non-prescription medication to a child during the time that a child is in the care of RDC, the parent must provide a medication form detailing the name of the medication, the reason for the use of the medication, and the time and dosage the parent is administering to the child. In addition, the parent must allow the staff of RDC to take the child's temperature prior to administering any medication and must administer the medication with a staff member present. If in the opinion of RDC staff the child is unable to participate fully in the program, RDC will ask the parent to take the child home for the day and adhere to the 24-48 hour waiting period before returning to care. If a parent fails to adhere to the RDC medication policy, the parent will receive a written warning. Multiple violations of the medication policy may result in the termination of enrollment.

Parents are asked to provide sunscreen and any necessary ointments for their children. If these are prescription items, parents must provide RDC with instructions for their use. Parents should label with their child's name and must fill out a medication form that will remain on file at the center. RDC will apply non-prescription lotions or ointments, such as sunscreen or diaper cream to children as needed if they are not provided by the parent.

Note: Children coming to daycare immediately after receiving immunizations frequently run fevers and don't feel well. Please attempt to make doctor appointments at the end of the day so that children don't have to return to daycare after being immunized.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of an accident or medical emergency requiring immediate treatment, a staff member will perform first aid and/or CPR while another staff member calls 911 immediately. A third staff member will then contact the parents and the child's physician. In an urgent situation, RDC top priority is to ensure that the child's immediate medical needs are treated.

Immunization Records

As part of our State licensing requirements, we must have evidence that each child has received the standard childhood immunizations. This evidence is required prior to admission. Infants are likely to receive most of their immunizations during the period of time they attend the center. Failure to maintain current immunization records on all children is an infraction of State licensing requirements, which can result in penalties and fines against the center. For this reason, and to ensure the health and safety of our children, it is the center's policy that parents must provide evidence of immunizations at appropriate age intervals as recommended by the American Pediatric Association.

The Executive Director is required to keep current immunization records. Parents must provide a written notice of any temporary delays in receiving immunizations. The Executive Director will audit immunization records periodically and may request updated records. If requested to provide updated immunization records, parents will have one week to comply with the request. Failure to comply may cause a temporary suspension from care. Once the parent provides the information to the Executive Director, the child may return to the center.

RDC understands that some families have religious or personal beliefs that prevent them from giving their child the recommended immunizations. While we respect the beliefs of those families who choose not to immunize their children, RDC must take every precaution to protect the health and safety of all enrolled children. For this reason, RDC will require a signed statement from the family detailing why they have not immunized their child prior to enrollment. This statement will remain on file at RDC and must identify which immunizations the child has not received.

III. Parent Hours

Parent Involvement

Rainbow Daycare is a parent governed non-profit organization that relies heavily on parent participation. Parent involvement in the administration of, fundraising for, and maintenance of Rainbow Daycare is a unique and essential part of the success of our center. Parents provide RDC with invaluable labor and resources and help defray operating expenses. Parents, through their participation, also have the opportunity to influence the direction and purpose of RDC. Completion of parent participation hours is a term and condition of each enrollment contract.

Hours

Thirty-six parent hours are required each year (April 1 – March 31) for all two-parent families who have a child enrolled full time. Parent hours are pro-rated for families who are here less than a full year based on the month of enrollment. The following time commitment is required of every RDC parent:

PARENT HOUR REQUIREMENTS

	TWO PARENTS	ONE PARENT
FT (4-5 days)	36	24
PT (2-3 days)	18	12

Recording

Parents are responsible for recording parent hours. Parent Hour cards are located in a binder on the front counter and will remain at RDC at all times. When parent(s) complete time on a volunteer activity, the parent(s) fill out the Parent Hour card indicating the activity with the amount of time worked or amount of money spent. All recorded parent hours require RDC administrative staff approval in order to be valid. The purpose of the Parent Hour card is to keep an accurate record of hours for that year. Each family will receive a new Parent Hour card each April. Any parent hours earned in excess of what is required may carry over into the next year. Parents are responsible for ensuring their new Parent Hour card reflects any carried over balances. The Executive Director will audit these cards in the beginning of December and the beginning of February and will notify parents of any parent hours owed.

Qualifying Activities

The Executive Director will approve all qualifying parent hour activities. RDC will schedule parent workdays on weekends periodically throughout the year to do extra cleaning, maintaining, and improvements to RDC – inside and out. Volunteering for parent workdays is one way to earn parent hours. The Executive Director and RDC staff will post on-going projects for which parents can earn parent hours. Examples may include purchasing/donating materials, repair of classroom items, making copies or typing forms, maintaining the yard, chaperoning field trips, attending Parent or Board meetings, or participation in fundraisers. All donations of supplies require pre-approval by the Executive Director of RDC and convert into parent hours at a rate of 1 hour for every \$15 spent or fundraised. The parent must provide receipts for newly purchased supplies. For donated supplies second hand, the Executive Director will make the determination of how many parent hours to credit. RDC is committed to assisting parents in completing their parent hours. Parents may contact the Executive Director for help in finding ways to complete their requirement.

Enforcement and Payment

Beginning in February, the Executive Director will notify parents of deficient parent hours. Parents who do not complete the required parent hours by the last business day in March will be required to buy their remaining hours out at a rate of \$15 per hour. Parents must submit payment

for deficient parent hours no later than the last business day in April. Failure to pay for parent hours owed will result in the termination of enrollment on May 1 and loss of their priority as a “returning family.” If your child leaves RDC prior to March 31, any unfulfilled hours will be pro-rated and billed to you at a rate of \$15 per hour and are due with final tuition payment. Failure to pay for parent hour balance with final tuition payment will result in denial of care.

2012 Board policy change

Due to a change in Board policy, the parent hour billing cycle for the 2012/2013 school year will begin July 1, 2012 and end March 31, 2013. This will make for a 9-month billing cycle. Annual parent hour requirements (as listed on page 14) will be reduced by 25% to remain consistent with the change.

The parent hour billing cycle for the 2013/2014 school year and each year thereafter will begin on April 1 and end on March 31 of the following year.

IV. Complaint Process

Purpose

The purpose of the complaint process is to identify the means for stating and resolving the complaints of families of RDC. RDC expects that all parents and guardians will strictly adhere to the complaint process of RDC. Failure to adhere to the complaint process may result in termination of enrollment. The design of the complaint process is to:

1. Provide all parents/guardians of RDC with a uniform method of voicing concerns and/or complaints involving the functions, directions, processes, and performance of staff.
2. Assure that allegations/concerns/complaints receive prompt and impartial consideration to bring about satisfactory resolution for all concerned.
3. To provide a ready means for resolving individual or group problems of a sensitive nature quickly, informally, and at the lowest level possible.
4. To provide RDC with a forum of open communication which leads to the highest possible quality of care for the children and an exemplary working environment for staff.

Steps in the Process

1. Parents who believe that a problem exists should first discuss the issue(s) with the Executive Director. This action is encouraged within 30 days of the incident that gave rise to the complaint.
2. The Executive Director will hear the complaint and perform whatever investigation deemed necessary to provide the complainant with an informal assessment of the matter. The Executive Director’s informal assessment shall be concluded within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint. A written determination will be given to the parent at that time.
3. If resolution with the Executive Director is not satisfactory, the parent may file a formal written complaint with the Board of Directors. A formal complaint must be filed within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the Executive Director’s recommendation for resolution.

The Board shall act to resolve the problem at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Attendance by parents at the meeting is encouraged.

The Board may deliberate on complaints in closed and provide disposition of the complaint in open session. Such disposition will be noted in the meeting's minutes. The Board of Directors will notify the parents of the decision in writing within one week of making a decision.

V. Family Removal Process

The following policy and procedure shall be used to resolve problems resulting from a parent who has engaged in conduct abusive to the staff, or who has otherwise disrupted the program. These procedures are designed to provide prompt and early resolution of this type of problem in an atmosphere of confidentiality to protect all parties involved. All written records shall be kept in a separate confidential file maintained by the Executive Director.

As a rule, the Executive Director shall meet with a parent who has engaged in conduct abusive to staff or who has otherwise disrupted the program. If, after the meeting, the Executive Director is satisfied that the parent will conform his or her actions to the best interest of the program, no further action will be taken. The Executive Director shall record the meeting in writing and file accordingly.

If the Executive Director is not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting for any reason he or she may take any of the following actions:

1. Issue a written warning to the parent that such continued conduct or disruption will result in termination of the family from the program.
2. Request the parent to attend a conference with the Executive Director and a Board Member. During the conference, the Executive Director and the parent shall agree on a specific plan of action as to how the parent will modify his or her behavior. A period of time shall be agreed upon, after which the parent's behavior shall be reevaluated by the Executive Director and the Board Member. The Executive Director shall make a written record of the conference.
3. Recommend termination of the family to the Board of Directors. The child shall remain in the program until the Board makes its determination. The Board shall take prompt action on the Executive Director's recommendation after reviewing all relevant information, testimony, and written records, including any written statements by the family. Any determination by the Board on the Executive's recommendation shall be recorded in writing.
4. Immediately terminate the family from the program in instances where the Executive Director determined that the health, safety, or welfare of the program is threatened by the continued presence of the family. Upon taking this action, the Executive Director shall request a special board meeting as soon as possible to discuss the action, or the President of the Board shall otherwise inform each member of the Board of the action.

If the Executive Director takes any of the actions described in one through four, inclusive, the President of the Board shall be immediately notified, and a written record shall be prepared detailing the reasons for the action.

If the Board of Directors, pursuant to subdivision 3, or the Executive Director, pursuant to subdivision 4, terminates a family from the program, the family shall immediately be notified in writing of the decision by certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice shall inform the family of their appeal rights as provided herein.

A family that is terminated from the program may appeal the decision within seven (7) days of the receipt of the written notice. A written statement must be submitted to the Board of Directors requesting the Board to reconsider the decision and detail the reasons why the decision should be reversed or modified. In considering the request, the Board shall review all relevant records, including the written statement by the family and any written response from the Executive Director. The Board may meet individually with the Executive Director and parent to hear oral statements. The Board shall promptly mail a final decision, the family shall be notified in writing by first class mail and return receipt requested, and the final decision shall be recorded in writing.

VI. General Information

Nutrition

RDC provides breakfast (until 8:30 a.m. daily), morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Menus are prepared and posted weekly, but may be subject to change. RDC is a participant in the State of California Department of Education food program. All meals are prepared in accordance to the nutritional guidelines of the program. RDC strives to serve meals and snacks that are low in sugar and uses lean white meat and whole grains whenever possible. RDC allows parents to provide alternatives to the food provided by the center for their child at their own expense. Please see RDC administrative staff for exceptions to allowable food.

Birthday Snacks

You may bring a special birthday snack to share with the other children in celebration of your child's birthday. Please inform the Executive Director or RDC staff about the birthday at least one week in advance of when you would like to have the celebration and what you intend to bring. Please note that all birthday snacks must be appropriate for pre-school aged children and approved by the Executive Director or RDC staff prior to the date of the celebration. Snacks should be in individual servings and parents are always welcome to join in on the celebration.

Special Diets

Parents must inform the Executive Director if your child has a food allergy or requires any special diet at the time of enrollment. A signed physician's note must accompany all food allergy notifications and proper medications must accompany the child to school in case of

accidental exposure. In general, RDC does not accommodate special diets beyond elimination of certain foods. Parents of infants are required to provide updated information to the Executive Director and RDC staff when adding new foods to their infant's diet. Introduction of new food must be at home and at least 24 hours before informing the Executive Director or infant teachers to add a food to an infant's diet. RDC will post all food allergy and dietary restriction notifications in public view in the classrooms and kitchen.

Clothing

Your child's clothing should be weather appropriate, washable and suitable for ACTIVE play. Clothing may become stained by paint, markers, dirt, etc so please do not send your child in any clothing that is unsuitable for pre-school activities. LABEL ALL CLOTHING! THERE SHOULD BE AT LEAST ONE SET OF SPARE CLOTHES IN CASE OF ACCIDENTS OR SPILLS FOR ALL CHILDREN, INFANTS SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST TWO SETS OF SPARE CLOTHES. Clothing needs to be easily accessible in the cubby. For the pre-school children, RDC staff may request the child to retrieve their own clothing. As such, if clothing is stored in a bag, the child should be able to access the bag without assistance. RDC staff will bag all wet or soiled clothing and place in your child's cubby to go home. RDC staff requests that parents check their child's cubby daily for any soiled clothing.

Shoes

RDC does not allow open toed shoes such as Thongs or "Jelly shoes," ballet slippers or slick bottomed party shoes on the play yard. These types of shoes are not safe in the play yard and can create a danger to the child. RDC recommends sneakers or closed toed shoes as they are the most comfortable and safe, and allow for uninhibited outdoor active play. If your child cannot tie shoes, it is recommended that they wear sneakers with Velcro or slip on shoes (slip on shoes must have a full back).

Toys

It is quite natural for young children to want to bring toys to school. A child may bring a special comfort toy and/or blanket from home for naptime. In the Purple class, the children have Sharing Day. On these days children are encouraged to bring items to share that relate to the curriculum theme. This is the only day your child should bring a play item from home. Parents are encouraged to allow their child to choose the item to share, even if it is the same item every week! Sharing items can be any safe, fairly unbreakable toy, nature item, picture, etc. RDC asks parents to keep fragile items, and items that do not keep with the non-violent philosophy of RDC at home. Parents are responsible for labeling all items and RDC is not responsible for any soiling, breakage or losses that might occur. Please check with your classroom teacher for the appropriate time to bring a share item.

Naps

Infants are on their own schedules and may nap as frequently as they need. Pre-school children nap or rest together after lunch. All children will rest during this time. If your child does not

regularly nap, staff will provide your child with a quiet independent activity to do while the other children nap. When children enroll, they must bring a small blanket and crib sheet used for naps. Parents must launder these and return them at least weekly. Children may bring a special blanket, pillow, and/or sleep toy from home. Parents are responsible for upkeep on these special items. **PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL ALL BLANKETS, SHEETS, AND PILLOWS WITH THE CHILD'S NAME.** Any pillows should be in a pillowcase and be able to fit inside the child's cubby. ***Cubbies for Children and Parents***

Each child will have one "cubby" that is assigned to them and that contain their personal items, extra clothes and bedding. Parents are encouraged to pack these items in a drawstring bag, tote, or backpack that fits within their assigned space and is easily accessible to the staff and child. Occasionally RDC staff may place memos or other communications in the child's cubby, in or around the sign in books, or posted on the Parent Board. Please check these locations daily. Parents are responsible for all such information. Any unlabeled items may be placed in the lost and found.

Bottles, Diapers, Pacifiers and Toilet Training

Infant bottles and pacifiers will be given as prescribed by the parents. Your child will not be allowed to carry a bottle around RDC or sleep with a bottle in the crib. Children will be either sitting or held when drinking a bottle. RDC does not provide formula, bottles, bottle liners, and/or pacifiers; these must be brought from home. Please label these items clearly with your child's name. Each infant will have a designated area in the refrigerator for bottles. Bottles must be pre-prepared by the parents with either formula or breast milk. Disposable diapers and wipes are included in the cost of tuition. Parents are welcome to provide pull-ups or organic diapers at their own expense if they prefer.

Children are offered the use of the toilet when they show interest. Parents are encouraged to talk with the Executive Director and RDC staff about their toilet training plans for their child. Our trained staff is available to assist children and parents with the potty training process; however, in order to be effective, parents must be committed to being consistent with toilet training at home and at school. RDC believes that each child adheres to their own schedule of when they are ready to toilet train. The expectation is that the child will be fully toilet trained prior to transitioning to the Purple class (3 year olds). If a child is not fully toilet trained by the time they are three years old, the parents will continue to pay the Yellow room tuition rate until they are fully toilet trained. The child may remain in the Yellow class if they are not developmentally ready to transition to the Purple class.

Communication with Teachers

Parents are encouraged to maintain open communication with their child's teacher. While teachers are always accessible to parents during drop off and pick up times, this is not the time to initiate in-depth conversation with your child's teacher about any behavior concerns. We ask that parents request a meeting with the Executive Director and the teacher to discuss their concerns.

It is important for parents to communicate with their teacher whenever there is something going on with their child that may affect their behavior at school. Examples may include a recent death in the family, a divorce, loss of a family pet, a parent out of town, or anything that the parent feels could potentially influence the child's behavior while at school. Parents are encouraged to keep staff informed in order to provide the best possible care for the child.

Rainbow has a Parent Line which is only for enrolled parents. It can be used to speak directly to your child's teacher or leave a message regarding the child's attendance, absence, or any concern. The center's phone number is (916)448-5252.

Parent Concerns

RDC asks that parents discuss any concerns they have with other enrolled children with the Executive Director. It is inappropriate for parents to involve themselves with the discipline of another enrolled child. It is natural for children this age to experience some disagreement with other children. RDC expects that families will have confidence in the ability of staff to resolve any issues that may develop between children.

VII. Other - Parent Interests

Newsletter and Parent Board

Parents, board members, and staff contribute to a quarterly newsletter, which includes information about events at RDC, curriculum the children are learning, upcoming holidays, and other news. Contributing to the development of the newsletter is a great way to earn parent hours. In addition, RDC maintains a Parent Board at the entrance of the center. Here you will find important communication items such as recent memos, the schedule of Board of Director meetings, the names of board members, and other community news that may be of interest. Parents are responsible for reading the announcements posted on the Parent Board and are encouraged to offer suggestions on items they would like to see on the Parent Board. Parents are encouraged to check the Parent Board for updates daily. The center also maintains a website, www.rainbowdaycareinc.com that provides additional information and resources for parents. In addition, the center also has an email distribution list that is used to share important information with parents.

Parent Conferences

Either RDC staff or the parent may request a parent conference at any time. Parents are encouraged to maintain open communication with RDC staff. Occasionally, there may be a need to hold a conference to ensure the parents and staff are clear on the objectives for the child. In addition, RDC suggests that parents request a conference with a new teacher or whenever the child transitions into a new class.

RDC is not equipped to accommodate children with severe handicaps or aggressive behavior. RDC will counsel children with aggressive behavior, and will work with the parents on

controlling this behavior. RDC will terminate enrollment for children that are a danger to themselves and others if significant improvement is not apparent after counseling.

Requests for Changes to Schedule

Enrollment in each classroom is typically at or near capacity. Changes or additions to the days that a child receives care must be approved by the Executive Director and will be accommodated as space is available. All requests for changes to the child's schedule must be made in writing to the Executive Director. The parent or guardian should submit schedule changes as much time prior to the change taking effect as possible to improve the chances of having the change approved.

Drop In Care

RDC provides prior approved drop in care to enrolled children of the center subject to availability. RDC does not provide drop in care for children not currently enrolled in the center. Students who have left RDC for the summer prior to entering kindergarten are also eligible for drop in care, subject to availability. Parents should submit all requests for drop in care in writing to the Executive Director as much time prior to the needed drop in care. Fees for drop in care are separate from regular monthly tuition fees and are based on the current tuition rate schedule. RDC will collect drop in care fees on the day care is provided. RDC will not provide drop in care without payment.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Parents who wish to arrange for special classes, such as gymnastics, dance, computers, music, etc., are invited to coordinate with the Executive Director. Extra-curricular classes are voluntary and subject to a fee.

Child Care at Home

RDC strives to create an atmosphere that maintains the integrity of the teacher-child relationship. As such, RDC staff cannot provide childcare to your child outside of the center.

Security

Rainbow Daycare utilizes secured doors on all entrances into the center and classrooms. At the time of enrollment, RDC will provide parents with the codes to access the center. The door codes are confidential. RDC asks that parents do not share with anyone who is not a current family or an authorized person to pick up a child of Rainbow Daycare. Maintaining the integrity of the door codes is essential to the health and safety of the children, as such, the door codes may change periodically.

Emergency Plan

RDC posts the emergency plan in each classroom and in the office of the center. RDC staff trains continuously on the evacuation procedures of the center and the children participate in regular evacuation drills. Each classroom is equipped with an emergency backpack that includes a First Aid kit and other items that would be essential in an emergency. In the case of an emergency, the staff's first priority is to ensure the health and safety of every child and staff member. Following, staff will begin to contact each family and arrange for pick up of the child. The current evacuation plan calls for the center personnel to evacuate to Roosevelt Park.

Changes in Information

It is extremely important for parents to update their child's file with any changes in information such as phone numbers, home address, employer, medical history, etc. RDC asks that families notify the Executive Director or Assistant Director whenever there is a change in information that is relevant to the care of your child. If RDC attempts to contact the family of a child and discovers that the information on file is not current, RDC will ask the parent to provide updated information prior to the child returning to care.

Donations

As a small non-profit we rely heavily on donations to assist with our program. RDC is grateful to all who graciously give to our program. If at any time your family generously donates funds to our program, we ask that you do so by depositing all payments into the tuition slot. We ask that you notify the Executive Director of any donations. If you would like to direct your donation for a specific purpose, please notify the Executive Director or the Board.

Suggestions for Improvement

RDC always accepts suggestion on ways to improve the program we provide. We ask families to discuss suggestions for improvement with the Executive Director or the Board of Directors.

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I received a copy of the Parent Handbook for RAINBOW DAYCARE on _____ (date).

I understand that I am being asked to review the information contained within, and that I may raise any questions that I have about the stated policies with the Executive Director of Rainbow Daycare or the Rainbow Daycare Board of Directors.

I understand and agree to follow the policies and procedures as stated in this Parent Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for ensuring that any person authorized to act on my behalf for my child understands the policies and procedures stated in this Parent Handbook. I understand that failure to adhere to the policies of the Parent Handbook may result in my child's enrollment being terminated by Rainbow Daycare.

Parent Signature

Date

Print Parent Name

Print Child's Name

Print Child's Name

Signature
Executive Director, Rainbow Daycare

Date