

Next Generation Learning Center



Parent Handbook

2011/2012



417 E. Broward Blvd
 Fort Lauderdale 33301
 (954) 713 – 7001
Emily.Meade@nextgencenter.com

We are so excited about having this opportunity to partner with you as we provide the best for you child. Our desire is that we will be an extension of your family and that you feel a part of our church family as a participant in our center. You and your child are important to us and we are here to serve you. Please do not hesitate to communicate your needs and suggestions to us. This will enable us to provide the best for your child.

Please take time to read the following information. The purpose of which is to keep you well informed of our policies and procedures.

Thank you for entrusting your child to us. We count it a privilege to serve you.

Table of Contents

Mission Statement	3
Philosophy and Goals	3
Non-Discrimination Policy	3
Hours of Operation	3
Our Programs	4
Classes and Age Classification	4
Curriculum	4
Our Staff	4
Tuition and Fees	5
Tuition Payments	5
Vacation Credit	5
School Closures	5
Withdrawal Policy	5
Receiving and Releasing Children	5
Meal Service	6
Behavior and Guidance	6
Biting Policy	7
Health and Safety	8
Uniform Policy	9
Children’s Personal Belongings	10
Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse	11
Communication and Parent Involvement	11
Parent Code of Conduct	11
Parent Complaint and Grievance Procedure	12

NEXT GENERATION LEARNING CENTER

Parent Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Next Generation Learning Center is to be the premier early childcare center in the Fort Lauderdale community providing a learning environment that is safe, healthy, nurturing, multi-cultural, creative and fun! Because we are a ministry of First Baptist Church of Ft. Lauderdale and biblically-based, we strive to exemplify the Christ-like qualities of love, joy, patience, kindness and self-control while laying a well balanced foundation for future learning.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Our approach involves educating the whole child physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.

Physical activity is important to a child's growth & development. Children are given free play on our playground to jump, run, climb and socialize with their friends. Nutritious meals and snacks, as well as age appropriate rest times will promote good physical health and motor development.

Each classroom is arranged in centers that provide for structured and self-directed learning. Our daily schedule includes a balance of active and quiet activities. Creativity is encouraged and our learning center experiences are a healthy mix of fun and challenge.

It is important for a child to feel successful, self-confident and have a sense of belonging. Through individual and group learning times children will make discoveries about themselves, others and the world we share. Each child will come to understand we are all special individuals with unique needs, talents, and be able to value the differences in others.

The Word of God is at the center of all we do. We will learn daily about God's love for us and His love through us to our classmates, teachers, families, and people in our community and around the world.

NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with the federal law and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. You may also write to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs Section, Room 310, 2500 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK, 73105-4599.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Next Generation opens at 7:00am and closes at 6:00pm, Monday through Friday of each week. In order to receive the full benefit of our Preschool program, children are strongly encouraged to be in attendance by 9:00am. This ensures:

1. Children will receive the full benefit of our educational program.
2. All children are included in the lunch count.
3. A predictable routine and environment for the children.
4. The proper Teacher to Child ratio.
5. Minimizes class disruption during learning times.

If an occasion arises when you will not be able to have your child/children at the NGLC please notify us by 9:00 am.

Late pick-up

If you are unable to pick your child/children up by 6:00pm please notify the NGLC as soon as possible. There will be a late charge of \$1.00 per minute starting promptly at 6:00pm. By 6:30 if we have not heard from you and you cannot be reached we will call the BSO to come and pick up your child/children.

OUR PROGRAMS

- Infant (6 weeks – walking and one year of age)
- One Year Olds (walking -24 months)
- Two Year Old (turning 2 on or before September 1)
- Three Year Old (3 years old on or before September 1)
- Four Year Old (4 years old on or before September 1)

Classes and ages classification

Snuggle Bugs.....	Infant
Sandy Shores.....	Infant
Turtle Creek.....	Infant
Puffy Point.....	One year old
Tidal Pool.....	One year old
Waver Runners.....	One year old
Coral Reef.....	Two year old
Lobster Harbor.....	Two year old
Corral Key.....	Two year old
Little Squirts.....	Three year old
Leap Frogs.....	Three year old
Crab Crossing.....	Four year old (VPK)
Dolphin Dive.....	Four year old (VPK)
Beluga Bay.....	Four year old (VPK)

CURRICULUM

Next Generation’s curriculum was selected to meet each child’s specific age appropriate developmental needs. Our curriculum is a multicultural, theme-based curriculum with an emphasis on emergent literacy skills. Our base curriculum is the WEE Learn curriculum and is Biblically-based.

OUR STAFF

The Center Staff consists of a Director, an Assistant Director, an Office Manager, Lead Teachers, Teachers, Assistants, and Floats. We also have volunteers. All members of our staff are qualified and are experienced in child development. All Lead Teachers have their CDA. Every member of our staff receives the Florida State mandated 40 hours of childcare training with the first year of work. Pre-employment background checks are conducted by the Department of Families and Children on every member of our staff. In addition, they participate in various training opportunities each year in the areas of child development, nutrition, age appropriate activities and discipline. These qualifications enable us to offer the highest quality programs.

TUITION AND FEES

Please refer to our Tuition Fees and Policies form.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Please refer to our Tuition Fees and Policies form, as well as the Tuition & Enrollment Agreement in the enrollment packet.

VACATION CREDIT

Your child is allowed one (1) week of vacation credit after three (3) months of continuous enrollment. The vacation credit begins on the beginning of a new school year. Should your child be withdrawn for any reason and re-enrolled they will need to have another (3) months of continuous enrollment before they are eligible for vacation credit. The vacation credit allows you not to pay tuition for your child during an absence from the school. To make use of a vacation credit, you must notify the school in writing at least two weeks in advance of the first day of the absence. You may not carry over vacation credits from one year to the next. **Vacation credits must be taken in weekly increments (5days).** You may not use a vacation credit after you have notified the school of the withdrawal of your child.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Please refer to the 2011 -2012 school calendar available at the front desk

WITHDRAWAL

Next Generation requires a two-week written notice when withdrawing your child. If written notification is not provided, you agree to pay all fees for the program(s), in which your child was scheduled to attend. If your child is absent five (5) consecutive days without notification, your child will be automatically withdrawn and will be re-enrolled only if space is available. If you wish to re-enroll, a Registration Fee will be charged.

Next Generation reserves the right to dis-enroll a child for reasons of continued discipline confrontations, inability to adjust, lack of cooperation, jeopardizing the safety and well being of other children and/or staff, or delinquency in payment of fees.

RECEIVING AND RELEASING CHILDREN

All parents must sign children in upon arrival and out upon departure. Each parent will be assigned a code to be used to sign your child/children in and out. Parents are asked not to share the code with unauthorized users. Each child should be escorted to the appropriate class and dropped off with the teacher. The teacher needs to acknowledge you and the child upon entering the classroom. This ensures the safety of the child in our center.

Safety and Courtesy Tips during arrival and Departure

- Please drive slowly down the road in front of the NGLC and in the parking lot.
- Adhere to the correct direction of traffic in the parking lot.
- Do not leave your purse or laptop bag in your car as we have had cars broken into in the parking lot.
- Always make sure that the doors are closed once you enter the building. This helps prevent other children from running out the door.
- Never leave your child/children unattended. They need to be with you at all times, not running ahead of you or lagging behind you.

- Do not let your child walk to their classroom by themselves. The teacher needs to see that you have entered with your child and you personally drop them off in the classroom.

For the protection of your child, no information will be given over the phone unless the staff person on the phone can verify the identity of the caller. This can be done through a code word submitted to the office in advance. This includes verification of enrollment and attendance. Parent or legal guardian must alert the office in advance when anyone, such as a doctor, counselor, therapist, lawyer, etc., will need information over the phone regarding their child.

Next Generation Learning Center is required to follow the current laws regarding adult access to children in our care. The enrolling parent is required to identify on the enrollment card any adults with access privileges to their child/children in our facility. In addition, it is the parent's responsibility to identify any adults who legally should not have access to their child/children in our facility. The parent must provide legal documentation to substantiate those exceptions.

MEAL SERVICE: BREAKFAST/ LUNCH/ SNACK

- Breakfast is served daily between 8:00am and 8:30am. No breakfast will be served after 8:30. You are welcome to sit with your child if you arrive late and wish for them to eat.
- Lunch is served daily between 11:15am to 1:00pm.
- Snack supplements are served each day after 2:00pm.

BEHAVIOR AND GUIDANCE

As parents, you want the best for your children and we share that desire. One of our roles as teachers is to model and teach your child how to become self-disciplined and assist in guiding your child toward making good choices and decisions. Through clear expectations, positive example, and appropriate, consistent consequences, children learn respect for themselves and others. The goal of our corrective discipline process is that through loving guidance and mutual respect, self-discipline and godly character will develop in your child. With that in mind, teachers' responses to negative or inappropriate behaviors may include the following elements as necessary and appropriate:

Positive Reinforcement - One of the best ways to discourage inappropriate behavior is by encouraging positive behaviors and reinforcing this positive behavior through praise and recognition. This promotes a positive classroom environment and encourages the children to gain recognition through positive participation. School rules and behavioral expectations will be thoroughly explained to you and your child at the beginning of the year and reviewed with your child frequently throughout the year. Consistency in routines and rules will help your child know what is expected. This will give them confidence in making good choices.

Redirection - When the behavior of a child disrupts the goals of the teacher and the classroom, we will redirect the child towards a more positive behavior (i.e. presenting a different toy, suggesting a new activity). In most cases, this is all that is necessary

Conferencing - The particular behavior is discussed between the teacher and the child. The teacher explains why such behavior is unacceptable in terms of its effect on self and others. Ways are explored in which the child may appropriately handle the situation in the future. The child is encouraged to assume responsibility as needed. Teacher and student discuss simple Biblical principles related to the incident and pray. The teacher will also look for an opportunity to praise the child soon afterward to reinforce positive behavior.

Quiet Area/Loss of Privilege - It may be necessary to remove the child from the group to another area within the classroom. The purpose of this quiet area is for the child to think and reflect on their behavior, regain control of themselves, and redirect their energy to a more appropriate activity. The child rejoins peers after an appropriate period of silent time and following a conference with the teacher. In some cases, a child might repeat the behavior

that caused them to be placed in the quiet area. There may be a loss of privilege associated with persistent inappropriate behavior.

Parent Communication — The teacher will communicate informally and formally (verbal, note or conference) with parents any persistent inappropriate behavior and discuss specific goals for improvement in the child's behavior to ensure cooperation and consistency between home and school.

Behavior Modification Plan - Behavior that is chronic in nature will be formally discussed with the parents so that we can work together in creating a behavior modification plan that can be used in the school, as well as in the home. Should the behavior of a child become severe or endanger the welfare and safety of the other children and/or staff, the director may advise the parents that their child's enrollment will be terminated. This action will be the last resort when all other attempts to correct this behavior have been attempted.

Next Generation Learning Center does not allow the following responses to inappropriate behavior: withholding food, light, warmth, clothing or medical care; ridicule embarrassment, humiliation or physical restraint other than restraint necessary to protect the child or others from harm.

We believe that corrective discipline is an essential element of education at home, as well as school. With that in mind, it is vital that as teachers and parents we strive to communicate and cooperate with each other concerning consistency of corrective discipline. Sometimes changes in the home or in routine can affect your child's behavior. If there are circumstances that you are aware of that may affect your child please share this information with the director or teacher so that they can be sensitive to the needs of your child.

BITING POLICY

We want to insure that every child is safe while in our care. Our center provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect and love for others, and non-aggressive problem solving between the children. Biting is a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and are still developing their language skills. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age.

The Department of Social Services Child Care licensing Division requires that our center maintains a safe and healthy environment for all children in our care. Therefore, we take biting seriously. When it happens, it's very scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it. Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, a lack of language, teething, seeking to be noticed, or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, attention. Knowing that the effect of their biting will hurt another person is not yet a part of a child of this ages' mindset, so the "cause-effect" relationship is not internalized. Our teachers plan activities and supervise carefully in order for biting not to happen. There are times, however, when everyone cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

Our policy for handling a biting incident is the following:

- The biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm NO. The bitten child is consoled and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that he/she can understand, then redirected.
- A written incident report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked up that day. The name of a biting child is not released because it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation more difficult.

- The biter is shadowed by a teacher to ensure the safety of the other children in the classroom and also to help redirect the child when he/she first starts the action of biting.
- We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
- We make special efforts to protect potential victims.

We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health

Parents must submit a statement certifying the date of the last physical examination of the child, an immunization record, and a list of any special health needs and details of any medications. The Center will also maintain an information file with the name, address and telephone number of the child's physician.

Immunizations

Children admitted to the Center must be up to date on their immunization schedule. Parents must submit the required form that stipulates that their child's shot records are current. Periodic checks are made to insure that all children's records are current.

The NGLC has the right to not provide care for those who are not in compliance with the health forms and regulations.

Medications

No medication shall be given by child care personnel without the signed permission of the parent or legal guardian. A medication permission form must be fully completed and signed prior to any medication being dispensed. Medications may be administered at the school for the length of time indicated by the physician. All medication must be in the original container with the child's name, name of the physician, medication name, and medication directions written on the label.

The NGLC staff are not allowed to give non-prescription medication brought in by the parent or legal guardian with the exception of diaper cream and sunscreen. Your signature gives NGLC permission to apply any non-medicated physical barriers such as diaper cream or sunscreen that you supply.

Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered shall be returned to the parent or legal guardian. All medications will be placed in the designated medication cabinet. For medications that require refrigeration, the medicine will be placed in a separate container in the kitchen refrigerator.

Daily rest periods

Provisions will be made each day for each child to rest. A minimum of 2 hours per day and maximum of 2 ½ hours rest time will be available for each child. Please provide a standard size crib sheet and a small blanket to cover mats at nap-time. The linen will be sent home every Friday to be laundered and brought back to the center on Monday mornings.

Injuries and Illness

It is our goal to provide a clean, healthy and safe environment for your child. You play a vital role in helping us accomplish this goal. Please inform us of any illness or injury your child may have sustained prior to arriving at the center. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify us at once. A doctor's note clearing the child from

being contagious is required in order to accept him/her back to school.

Please keep your child at home if they:

- run a fever of 100°F or above
- have any discharge from the nose, eyes or ears
- have diarrhea/vomiting
- have symptoms of possible communicable disease

While at school, if the child becomes ill with one of the following he/she will be isolated and the parent will be contacted to pick up the child immediately:

- fever of 100°F or above
- 2 diarrheas within the day
- rash
- vomiting
- suspected pink eye*
- lice*
- discharge from the nose, eyes or ears
- any other sign or symptoms of illness

*A doctor's note is required to come back to the NGLC.

Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

No discounts are given for days missed due to illness.

In the case of medical emergencies, where medical symptoms indicate that emergency care is needed, 911 will be called. For bumps, scratches, scrapes, bruises, etc., the parent/guardian will be notified through a written form that will be signed by a staff member and a parent/guardian. In the case of a head injury, parents will be contacted by phone immediately and asked to come visually check the child and make the decision concerning medical treatment. Due to the possibility of an allergic reaction, only soap and water will be used for cleaning minor wounds.

Most Staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid.

The NGLC is professionally cleaned each night to ensure a safe and healthy environment for your children.

Uniform Policy

Children who are in a two year old class and above are required to wear the NGLC uniform. The uniform is a navy blue polo with the NGLC logo on it. The polo is to be worn with khaki trousers, skirts, or shorts. The shirts are available to purchase at EmbroidMe. Their contact information is available at the front desk. Uniforms can take up to two weeks to receive after you order them so please plan accordingly.

For the safety of your child, every student that is in a class that goes to the playground will need to wear closed toe rubber soled shoes to school. If your child comes to school in anything else the NGLC has the permission to not allow the child to stay.

CHILDREN'S PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All children are given a special place for their belongings. Preschool children are encouraged to be responsible for their personal belongings. If, however, your child does bring personal belongings, Next Generation cannot take responsibility for loss of, or damage to, any personal items. We encourage children not to bring personal belongings, such as toys, to the center unless directed to do so by their teacher.

All parents are asked to bring an extra set of seasonal clothing for your child to be left in the cubby. The extra clothes should include shirt, trousers, socks, and underwear. (Note: When a child is being potty trained, several pairs of training pants should be brought to the center on a daily basis. Please be considerate of the type of bottoms your child wears during training. Clothes should be easy to remove by the child & the teacher.)

Please label all clothing and personal belongings. Here are two websites that you may purchase labels from if you choose:

- Oliverlabels.com
- Inchbug.com

ITEMS NEED BY PARENTS TO ENSURE QUALITY CARE

We want to assure your child is properly cared for while in our center. Parents are responsible for providing the following items:

Infants: Snuggle Bugs, Sandy Shores, and Turtle Creek

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Breast milk or formula - All bottles must be made before coming to the center, except for frozen breast milk
- 2 complete changes of clothes– at all times (please check the sizes frequently to make sure it's the correct size as your baby grows)
- Small Blanket
- Plastic Folder for daily reports

Ones: Puffy Point, Tidal Pool, Wave Runners

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Change of clothes– at all times
- One standard size crib sheet for the mat your child will rest on
- Small Blanket
- Small Pillow (optional) – no Pillow Pets please
- Sippy cups- sent home and cleaned at home daily
- Plastic Folder for daily reports

Twos: Coral Reef, Lobster Harbor, and Corral Key

- Diapers/Training Underwear (if child isn't potty trained)
- Change of clothes – at all times
- One standard size crib sheet for the mat your child will rest on
- Small Blanket
- Small Pillow (optional) – no Pillow Pets please
- Uniform must be worn daily.
- No Sippy cups
- No Pacifiers
- Plastic Folder for daily reports

Note: When potty training begins, please dress children in clothes that will help increase independence of this new skill.

Threes and Fours: Little Squirts, Leap Frogs, Crab Crossing, Beluga Bay, Dolphin Dive

- Change of clothes – at all times
- One standard size crib sheet for the mat your child will rest on
- Small Blanket

- Small Pillow (optional) – no Pillow Pets please
- Uniform must be worn daily
- Plastic Folder for daily reports
-

MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

It is state law that child care staff report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. If your child has had an accident away from our program, please report this to your child's teacher upon arrival at Next Generation.

COMMUNICATION AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

An Open Invitation

We encourage you to stop by Next Generation anytime. Our doors and phone lines are open to you. We welcome your questions and comments.

Daily Reports for Infants

You will receive a Daily Report from your child's teacher that outlines your child's activities and routines for that day. This report includes observations of which foods were eaten, length of naps taken, diaper changes, and a comment on general mood and disposition. A weekly lesson plan is posted on the Parent Information Board to keep you informed of the current curriculum themes and lessons. A daily schedule is posted in the infant rooms.

We encourage communication between parents and teachers. Each morning please give your child's teacher any information she needs to provide for your child's needs. You will be asked to fill out a daily feeding schedule for your child. Please fill out the form each day to ensure that if the teacher is absent the substitute will be able to adequately care for your child.

Ones – Preschool

A weekly lesson plan is posted on the Parent Information Board to keep you informed of the current curriculum themes and lessons. A daily schedule is posted in each room.

We encourage communication between parents and teachers. Each morning please give your child's teacher any information she needs to provide for your child's needs. If you enter the classroom after 9:00am or during a learning time please be respectful and do not engage the teacher in a conversation. If you have a comment or a concern please write it down and leave it on the counter. If the teacher has questions she will be able to call you at an appropriate time in the schedule.

Conferences

Parent conferences will be scheduled twice a year. These conferences help the parents and teacher work together. If you would like an individual conference with your child's teacher, please speak with the teacher, who will schedule a convenient time.

Parent Action Team

A focus group of parents are asked each year to serve on our Parent Action Team (PAT). This is a group of parents who the director meets with monthly to ensure good communication between the parents and the NGLC.

We also have monthly parent meetings. They are held on the fourth Thursday of each month. These meetings are very relaxed and provide an open forum for parents to come and discuss with the director any questions or concerns they may have. NGLC announcements will also be made in these meetings if needed.

Room Parent

If you are interested in being a room parent please see your teacher. One of the best ways you can support your child's class is to volunteer to be the room parent. The room parent serves as a liaison between the teacher and the students' parents. Common responsibilities of a room parent include planning holiday celebrations and seeking volunteers to help with different events or provide support to the teacher in other areas.

Parent Code of Conduct

Next Generation Learning Center has established the Parent Code of Conduct to ensure that you, your child, our staff and all that enter our facility have a safe, welcoming and respectful environment. Actions that demonstrate respect for others are expected in our facility. Behavior that is inappropriate, illegal, threatening or disrespectful in nature or language that is abusive or instigative is not acceptable.

Next Generation Learning Center reserves the right to refuse service, without warning, to anyone who violates the Parent Code of Conduct, including refusing access to our facility.

Parent Complaint and Grievance Procedure

Parents have the right to:

- Be treated with respect by teacher, staff, and administration,
- Have personal records kept private and made available only to authorized users
- Have questions and/or concerns addressed promptly.

Should a parent have a complaint, grievance, or question, the parent should first bring the complaint, grievance, or question to the teacher's attention. If the teacher is not able to provide a solution, or if the parent is dissatisfied with the teacher's solution, the parent may contact the Director.

If you have concerns relating to the care of your children and you are not satisfied with Next Generation's response, please feel free to contact Rev. Terry Scalzitti, Discipleship Pastor and Team Leader for Growing Avenue Educational Ministries at First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale, (954)831-1151.

Receipt of NGLC Parent Handbook

I have received the Next Generation Learning Center 2011 – 2012 handbook. I understand the policies and procedures of the NGLC and agree to comply with the rules set forth in the handbook.

Child's Name _____

Parent' Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Parent's Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____