MICHELLY'S CHILDCARE CENTER

Parent Policy Handbook • 2026

21650 Chancellors Run Rd
Great Mills, MD 20634
Monday-Thursday 6:30 AM-5:30 PM • Friday 6:30 AM-5:00 PM

Building Bright Futures One Child at a Time

This handbook explains the policies and expectations of Michelly's Childcare Center. It should be read together with the signed Parent Enrollment & Tuition Agreement and all required enrollment forms.

Welcome to Michelly's

Welcome to Michelly's Childcare Center. Our goal is to provide a safe, loving, nurturing, inclusive, and educational environment where children can play, learn, grow, and belong. We believe families and the center are partners in supporting each child's development.

We strive to build warm relationships with children, communicate openly and respectfully with families, provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences, and create an environment where children of varying abilities and needs can participate successfully.

- Provide a stable, high-quality childcare environment.
- Make learning a fun part of the daily routine through indoor and outdoor play.
- Support social-emotional, language, cognitive, and physical development.
- Welcome children with disabilities and special health care needs when the program can safely meet their needs.
- Collaborate with families and, when authorized, outside professionals supporting a child.
- Use shared IFSP/IEP information to support the child's participation and development.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

1. Hours of Operation & Attendance

Michelly's Childcare Center is open Monday through Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM and every Friday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

- Children may not be dropped off before their contracted arrival time or picked up after their contracted pickup time without prior approval.
- Parents/guardians must notify the center when a child will be absent or arriving significantly later than usual.
- Parents/guardians must complete the center's sign-in and sign-out procedure every day.
- A child may be released only to a parent/guardian or an authorized pickup person. Photo identification may be required.

Late Pickup / Early Drop-Off: A fee of $15 per 15-minute period or portion thereof applies when a child is dropped off early without approval or picked up after the contracted time. This fee also applies after an announced early closing time.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

2. Tuition, Late Payments & Returned Payments

Tuition reserves your child's enrollment space and is due according to the payment schedule in the signed enrollment agreement. Payment is required whether or not the child attends, including illness, family vacation, parent/guardian days off, scheduled holidays, and announced paid center closures.

- $20 per day, per child, will be charged when tuition is not paid in full by the due date.
- The $20 daily late fee continues to accrue on calendar days, including Saturdays and Sundays, until the full balance is paid.
- A $40 returned-check/returned-payment fee applies. After two returned payments, Michelly's may require an approved guaranteed form of payment.
- Children may be refused care or enrollment may be terminated for unpaid tuition, unpaid fees, or repeated late payment.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

3. Required Enrollment Forms & Records

All required forms must be completed before a child begins care and must be kept current.

- Signed Parent Enrollment & Tuition Agreement
- Signed Parent Policy Handbook / Handbook Acknowledgment
- Health Inventory
- Immunization Certificate / shot records
- Emergency Information Card

- Lead screening / lead test documentation when required
- All About Me form
- Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care receipt
- Making a Difference information/booklet acknowledgment, when required by the Office of Child Care
- Medication, allergy, special health care, or emergency forms when applicable

Maryland Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care:
https://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/licensing_branch/parent_guide.html

Does your child have an IFSP or IEP? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, are you willing to share it with Michelly's Childcare Center to help support your child's care and educational needs? Yes _____ No _____

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

4. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Bring your child into the center and transfer responsibility directly to staff. Never drop a child off without confirming staff has received the child.
- Keep emergency contacts, phone numbers, email addresses, home/work information, authorized pickup persons, health information, and immunization records current.
- Notify the center when someone other than the usual parent/guardian will pick up, even if that person is already authorized.
- Use an age-appropriate child restraint/car seat as required by Maryland law when transporting your child.
- Treat staff, children, and other families respectfully and communicate concerns professionally.
- Dress children for active play and the weather. Children may paint, use markers, play outdoors, get muddy, and spill food.
- Maintain your child's personal hygiene and grooming and send the child in clean, appropriate clothing.
- Provide at least one complete change of clothing, labeled with the child's name, and replace it promptly when used.
- Do not send flip-flops or other footwear that creates a safety concern on playground equipment.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

5. Family Communication & Conferences

Michelly's values open communication with families. Program updates may be shared through conversation, written notices, calendars, newsletters, email, text, or the center's approved communication system.

Families may request a conference to discuss a child's strengths, development, behavior, adjustment, learning, or other concerns. The center may also request a conference when collaboration is needed.

Families are encouraged to share information that may affect the child's day, including changes at home, sleep, eating, toileting, health, or significant family events, while respecting the family's privacy.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

6. Infants & Personal Supplies

Families of infants are responsible for supplying the personal items requested for their child, which may include diapers, wipes, formula or breast milk, bottles, extra clothing, bibs, socks, and other individual care items. All items should be labeled.

Families must notify the center in writing of feeding instructions, allergies, dietary restrictions, medical needs, or changes to the child's routine.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

7. Toilet Learning

Toilet learning is a partnership between the family and the center. Children develop readiness at different ages, and staff will not punish, shame, or scold a child for toileting accidents.

- Families and staff should use consistent routines and communicate openly about progress.

- Pull-ups may be required until a child demonstrates consistent toileting success at the center, including during rest time, as appropriate to the child's development.
- Soiled clothing will be bagged and sent home. Families must return clean replacement clothing the next day.
- If a child is having frequent accidents, the family and center may agree to pause intensive toilet learning and try again when the child shows greater readiness.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

8. Positive Guidance & Children's Behavior

Michelly's uses developmentally appropriate positive guidance. Discipline will never include deliberate physical pain, humiliation, threats, or emotional harm.

- Model positive words and actions.
- Provide reminders and redirection.
- Praise and reinforce appropriate behavior.
- Help children identify and describe feelings.
- Use calm-down/reflection strategies and one-on-one guidance when appropriate.
- Collaborate with families on an action plan when behavior is persistent or concerning.

Children are taught to respect others and the environment. Behaviors such as biting, hitting, pushing, unsafe climbing, destructive behavior, and name-calling will be addressed promptly. When behavior presents a serious or continuing safety risk that cannot be safely managed after reasonable interventions, other placement may become necessary. Immediate termination may occur when required to protect children or staff.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

9. Meals, Snacks & Food Allergies

Michelly's Childcare Center provides meals and snacks according to the center's current meal schedule. Families will be informed of meal times and should ensure a child who arrives after a scheduled meal has eaten before arrival.

- Families must immediately report food allergies, intolerances, dietary restrictions, and medically required meal modifications.
- Required allergy or emergency action plans and medication must be supplied before care when applicable.
- The center provides nutritious meals and snacks and may offer occasional treats.
- Food brought from home must comply with center allergy and food-safety procedures.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

10. Holidays & Scheduled Closures

Full tuition remains due during the following paid holidays and scheduled closures:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving / Native American Heritage Day
- Christmas Day
- Day after Christmas

- LD Conference / professional conference day (TBD)

If a listed holiday falls on a Saturday, the center may observe it on the Friday before. If it falls on a Sunday, the center may observe it on the following Monday. Annual dates will be communicated to families and are subject to change.

Thanksgiving Early Closing: Michelly's will close at 12:00 PM on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Christmas / New Year Closure: Michelly's will close at 3:00 PM on Christmas Eve and remain closed through New Year's Day. The center will reopen the day after New Year's Day.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

11. Illness & Exclusion from Care

Children must be well enough to participate comfortably in normal childcare activities. Michelly's may refuse admission or require pickup when a child has symptoms that create a health or safety concern, requires more individual care than staff can provide without compromising the care of others, or meets an applicable communicable-disease exclusion requirement.

- Examples may include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained or concerning rash, severe pain, significant respiratory symptoms, pink eye when exclusion is indicated, impetigo, ringworm, head lice, scabies, hand-foot-and-mouth disease, chickenpox, whooping cough, or another communicable illness.
- This list is not all-inclusive. Each illness will be handled according to symptoms, applicable health requirements, and current public-health guidance.
- If a child becomes ill while in care, the parent/guardian or authorized emergency contact must arrange prompt pickup. Michelly's expectation is pickup within 30 minutes of notification whenever reasonably possible.
- A child who cannot participate in normal activities because of illness cannot remain in care.
- Families must promptly notify the center of a diagnosed communicable illness that could affect other children or staff.
- A healthcare provider's note does not automatically override center exclusion requirements if the child still meets exclusion criteria.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

COVID-19 & Other Respiratory Viruses

Michelly's follows current Maryland public-health guidance for COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses. Current Maryland guidance uses a symptom-based approach rather than the older automatic 10-day quarantine rules.

- A child with respiratory-virus symptoms should stay home when symptoms are not improving overall or the child is not well enough to participate.
- A child may generally return when symptoms are improving overall and the child has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, unless another diagnosis has a different exclusion requirement.
- For 5 days after returning to normal activities, families are encouraged to use added precautions when appropriate, such as good hand hygiene, cleaner air/ventilation, distancing when practical, testing, and a well-fitting mask when developmentally appropriate and tolerated.
- If symptoms worsen or fever returns, the child should remain home again until the return criteria are met.
- Michelly's may apply additional measures when directed by the Maryland Department of Health, local health department, licensing authority, or during an outbreak.

Current Maryland respiratory-virus information: https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OIDEOR/CIDSOR/Pages/COVID-19.aspx

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

12. Medication & Topical Products

Medication will be administered only when the required written parent/guardian and health practitioner permissions, instructions, forms, and documentation are provided in accordance with applicable requirements and center procedures.

- Michelly's will not administer the first dose of a medication.
- Written permission may also be required for topical preventive products such as diaper ointment, sunscreen, and insect repellent.
- Medication must be properly labeled and supplied as required by center policy and applicable regulations.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

13. Inclement Weather & Emergency Closures

Michelly's may close, delay opening, or dismiss early because of snow, ice, hurricane conditions, flooding, utility interruption, building emergencies, public safety conditions, or other circumstances that make operation unsafe.

The center will consider local government, St. Mary's County, NAS Patuxent River, emergency management, road conditions, and other relevant information when making closure decisions. Michelly's retains final responsibility for determining whether the center can operate safely.

Full tuition remains due for weather-related or emergency closures as provided in the enrollment agreement.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

14. Emergency & Evacuation Procedures

- The safety and well-being of children and staff are the immediate priority.
- Emergency services (911) will be contacted when appropriate, followed by parent/guardian notification as soon as safely possible.
- If evacuation is required before families can arrive, staff will evacuate children according to the center's emergency plan and licensing requirements.
- Families must maintain current emergency contacts, including an alternate contact who can be reached if the parent/guardian is unavailable.
- Staff will provide first aid/CPR or other assistance only within the scope of their training while awaiting professional medical help when needed.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

15. Head Lice

If live lice are observed, the family will be notified. Return to care will follow the center's current health procedure and applicable public-health recommendations. Treatment should be started promptly, and the center may check the child's hair upon return when appropriate.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

16. Screen Time

Michelly's prioritizes hands-on learning, active play, books, music, art, movement, and social interaction. Passive screen time will be limited and used only when developmentally appropriate and consistent with applicable childcare requirements.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

17. Everyday Bumps, Bruises & Messy Learning

Minor bumps, bruises, scrapes, and scratches can occur during normal childhood play. Staff will comfort the child, provide appropriate first aid, document incidents when required, and notify families according to center procedures.

Children at Michelly's paint, use markers, explore sensory materials, eat independently, and play outdoors. Please send children in clothing and shoes suitable for active and sometimes messy learning.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

18. Authorized Pickup, Custody & Release

Children will be released only to a parent/guardian or an authorized individual. The center may require a valid driver's license, state identification card, military identification, or other acceptable photo ID before releasing a child.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing current court orders or legal documents that restrict or affect custody or pickup. Without appropriate documentation, Michelly's must follow the legal rights of the child's parents/guardians.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

19. Termination of Services

Parents/guardians must provide at least three (3) weeks' written notice to withdraw a child. Tuition for the entire three-week notice period remains due whether or not the child attends.

Michelly's may terminate care for reasons including:

- Nonpayment of tuition or fees, repeated late payment, or returned payments.
- Repeated unauthorized early drop-off or late pickup.
- Breach of the enrollment agreement or handbook policies.
- Abusive, threatening, destructive, or unsafe conduct by a child, parent/guardian, or associated adult.
- Failure to provide required records or follow health and safety requirements.
- A child's needs or behavior creating a serious safety concern that cannot be safely managed within the program after reasonable efforts to collaborate with the family.

Immediate termination may occur when necessary to protect the health or safety of children or staff, for serious policy violations, or for nonpayment as allowed by the enrollment agreement.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

20. Fee & Policy Changes

Michelly's Childcare Center may revise tuition, fees, operating procedures, or handbook policies when necessary. Families will receive written notice before changes take effect whenever practicable. A policy not enforced on one occasion is not permanently waived and may be enforced later.

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

I/We acknowledge that I/we have received and reviewed the Michelly's Childcare Center Parent Policy Handbook. I/We understand that this handbook works together with the Parent Enrollment & Tuition Agreement and required enrollment forms. I/We agree to follow the center's policies and understand that policies may be updated when needed to comply with licensing, health, safety, or program requirements.

Parent/Guardian 1	Signature: _____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian 2	Signature: _____ Date: _____
Child(ren)	_____ _____
Center Representative	Signature: _____ Date: _____