

Parent Handbook

Academy for Kids

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I am pleased that you have chosen, this program for your childcare needs. We both have a great responsibility for the health, care and instruction of your child. You, of course are the primary focus for your child; but during the day and for many hours, I am the support to whom they come, look to, and depend upon. I take this role very seriously, both as a professional in childcare and as a way of life. I provide quality childcare in a loving home environment where children are allowed to be children and families are always a priority. I believe that family involvement is essential to any quality child care program and encourage parent participation.

This program is designed to meet the needs and abilities of each child's physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. The environment and curriculum are hands-on, educational, and of course, FUN. My desire is to assist and encourage each child's abilities and skills throughout every stage of their development. Children learn through play. I try to provide many opportunities for them to discover things about the world they live in. Children are really very bright and need to be treated as special little individuals with much to share. Each child brings a new and exciting personality to my child care. I try not to stifle their personality, but to nurture it and not only help them with socialization skills, but to guide them in areas where they need guidance. The following information has been compiled to familiarize you with the policies and procedures, daily routines, and educational activities of this program. Please read this handbook to ensure that you understand all items, and feel free to ask questions about any material that may be unclear to you.

Arrival and Departure

- Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before a mealtime.)
- It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents or cry when being dropped off. Please be very brief (no more than 5 minutes is sufficient) during drop off times; the longer you prolong it, the harder it becomes. A smile, a cheerful goodbye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back are all that are needed. In my experience, children are almost always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as the parents are gone.
- Please be very brief during departure times as well. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present and all the children will test to see if the rules still apply. I do expect you to back up my rules, but if you do not, I will remind your child that their behavior is inappropriate and take action to correct, if needed. Please be in control of your child during these times.
- I prefer that there are no drop offs or pick ups during the daily quiet time, but if this is necessary, please be as quiet and as brief as possible. Children who arrive during quiet time will be expected to remain quiet until quiet time is over, so that others will not be disrupted from their naps.
- All children must be brought into the center by an adult each day and will only be released to an adult.
- NO CHILD WILL EVER BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE CENTER WITH ANY PERSON NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE PARENT. A driver's license is required prior to any child being allowed to leave the center with anyone that I am unfamiliar with.
- You are required to notify me by 9:00 AM, but no earlier than 7:30 AM if your child will not be coming for the day or will be late arriving.
- Any person picking the child up in an impaired condition (inebriated or on drugs) will be encouraged to allow me to find alternate transportation. I cannot legally withhold a child from a legal guardian, but I will not hesitate to call the police if I feel the child is in jeopardy.

Changes

- Families frequently have changes, for example new homes, new jobs, and new telephone numbers. **Please keep me informed.** Accurate information is critical for efficient, professional handling of emergencies. You are required to inform me if you are at any other location than what is listed on your Enrollment form and to provide a telephone number for that place.

Child Abuse/Neglect

- I will notify Child Protective Services or the local law enforcement officials by telephone when it appears that a child is being seriously neglected or abused.

Children with Disabilities

- The child's special needs will be analyzed to be sure that the child can reasonably and comfortably participate in all activities at the center.

Children's Absences

- There will be no refunds or adjustments made to your childcare fee for your time missed due to illness, holidays, or days off. A place is reserved for your child and cannot be filled on a short term basis.

Closings

- I will be closed for 10 days (to be taken individually or all together) of paid vacation, 4 paid sick/personal days (if needed), and 2 professional training days. You will receive at least 30 days notice of my vacation. I will notify you as soon as possible if I will be closed due to illness. If it becomes necessary for me to be closed for family related reasons such as a death in my family, I will provide a list of alternate providers who may be able to provide care for you child. Parents may wish to secure their own back up provider for all of these situations. Although very rewarding, childcare is also a very high stress occupation. In order for me to be the best provider that I can be, I will need time to relax with my family, accomplish household or childcare projects, or attend training seminars/conferences.

Clothing

- This program is designed to keep children active, both indoors and out. Children should wear appropriate clothing to accommodate the activities they will be involved in. Please don't dress you child in his/her "Sunday clothes" and expect them to stay clean.
- I will take reasonable precautions not to allow children's clothing to become damaged during messy activities.
- An extra set of clothing must be left at the center at all times for all children.
- I am not responsible for lost or damaged clothing.

Communication

- Communication is very important to me. When I accept a new family into my business, I like to be sure that we can share openly any concerns or questions that may arise. It is important that there is a similar childcare philosophy between us.
- I welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that affect a positive outcome for the child. Sensitive issues will be discussed outside of regular hours either by phone or conference.
- You may call me between 7:30 AM and 9:00 PM. If you call during the day, please be aware that I may be busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you will leave a message on my voice mail, I will call you back as soon as possible.

Daily Schedule

- Young children enjoy a structured schedule that allows for flexibility. A schedule helps the day to flow more smoothly, allows the children to anticipate upcoming events, and aids in achieving a variety of goals. I will adhere to my written schedule to the best of my ability, keeping in mind that anything can happen when children are involved.

Damages

- If your child intentionally damages my property through destructive behavior or roughness, you will be liable for 100% of the damages.

Days and Hours

- Normal hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Your specific hours will be outlined in your childcare contract. I require two weeks notice if you need to change your contracted hours. I also reserve the right to terminate care if the new hours will not work well for my childcare business.
- Please understand that the hours your child is in care are strictly “childcare hours” and do not reflect all of the additional hours necessary to provide quality childcare.
- Children may be allowed to arrive earlier or stay later if prior arrangements have been made.
- In cases of emergencies or other problems, which may hinder you from picking up your child in time, I would appreciate a phone call.

Emergency Drills

- Emergency drills will be held periodically to acquaint the children with evacuation procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is held, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Fire drills will be practiced each month; severe weather drills will be practiced at least every six months. Our meeting place outside for fire drills is on the sidewalk by the mailbox. Our meeting place inside for tornado drills is the shoe closet.
- In the event of a gas leak or similar situation, where we are required to evacuate the area, we will go to the McDonalds on Denton Highway (377) at the intersection of Hightower.

Enrollment Requirements

- Before any child may participate in this program the parent must complete and return the following forms. I must have these forms fully completed and in my possession before I can accept the responsibility of caring for your child. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** The forms are as follows:
 - Enrollment Information Form
 - Childcare Contract
 - Child Profile Form
 - Discipline and Guidance Form
 - USDA Food Program Enrollment
 - Emergency Medical Authorization Form
 - Medication Authorization
 - Immunization Records
 - Health Statement from a Physician
 - Vision and Hearing Screening Records
 - Permission to Video/Photograph
 - Parent’s Handbook Acknowledgment Form
- **It is very important that you complete these forms thoroughly to help me meet your child’s needs.**

Equal Opportunity Provider

- Academy for Kids is an equal opportunity provider. Applications for enrollment are accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, or national origin.

Extended Absence

- In cases of potential absence due to maternity or extended leave from your job, I will require ½ of your regular weekly tuition for the entire time of your absence to hold your child's position.

Field Trips

- Children may participate in an occasional field trip. Parent approval must be given on the child's enrollment form. Parent volunteers are always welcome and appreciated. Notice of field trips will be given at least one week prior. Occasionally, there may be fees related to the trips to cover entry fees, or on-site refreshments.

Food from Home

- I prefer that no food and especially candy be brought from home unless the child brings enough to share with the whole group. Do not bring any fast food into the center for your child to eat. **NO GUM IS ALLOWED AT ANY TIME!**
- Children may bring breakfast if their arrival time is before 8:30 AM and they are unable to eat breakfast at home.

Guidance and Discipline

- The program's goals are to promote independence, autonomy, self-esteem, and caring toward others and the physical environment.
- Redirection and intervention are the most commonly used methods of promoting acceptable behavior.
- Positive guidance using a reward system and/or aiding the child in problem solving discussions are also effective methods of teaching.
- Time-out is used when a child is losing control and refuses redirection. For example, acting aggressively, throwing a tantrum, or complete defiance.
- **NO ONE** is allowed to spank, hit, bite, shake, or cause any physical or emotional harm to any child while on these premises.

Health Requirements

- Within one week of admission, I must have your child's immunization record, vision and hearing screening, and a health statement from a physician on file. It is important to keep in mind that, in compliance with state laws, these forms must be updated from time to time.

Holidays

- The center will be closed the following **paid** holidays: 2 days at New Year's, Thanksgiving, and Christmas; and 1 day for Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. Parents are responsible for payment of these holidays.

Illness

- I reserve the right to temporarily deny any child admittance or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day, for reasons of obvious illness, including but not limited to:
- A temperature of 100.2 degrees or greater accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of illness;
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness.
- If your child is sent home due to illness, he/she must meet the criteria listed below before returning to the center:
 - Fever – fever free (without Tylenol or Ibuprofen) for at least 24 hours or a doctor's note stating that child is not contagious and may return to the center.
 - Upper Respiratory Infection – must be seen by a doctor and return with a doctor's note stating that child is not contagious and may return to the center.
 - Diarrhea – no diarrhea for 24 hours or doctor's note stating that child is not contagious and may return to the center.
 - Vomiting – no vomiting for 24 hours or doctor's note stating that child is not contagious and may return to the center.
 - Inflamed Eye – must be seen by a doctor and return with a doctor's note stating that child is not contagious and may return to the center.
 - Skin Infection (of unknown origin) – must be seen by a doctor and return with a doctor's note stating that child is not contagious and may return to the center.

Injuries

- I will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in my care. Unfortunately, minor accidents may occur. Parents are responsible for medical bills, which may arise from a minor accident.
- I will notify you immediately of any illness or accident which requires first aid treatment.
- In case of serious accident of injury, I will make every attempt to contact you immediately. If I cannot reach either parent, I will call the emergency contacts listed on the enrollment form to make the medical decisions for your child.
- If I feel the injury is life threatening, I will call 911 and then notify you as soon as possible.

Late Fees

- You are scheduled for child care for the hours listed in your Childcare Contract. If you drop off earlier or later than your contracted times, you will be charged an early/late fee. This fee must be paid on the same day in cash! There will be a late charge of \$1.00 for each minute a child is left at the center prior to or past their contracted time. If overtime is prearranged, the charge will be \$10.00 per hour. Habitual tardiness may result in termination. **Please understand that I have a family also and enjoy spending my time with them.**

Mealtimes

- I will provide morning breakfast/snack between 9:00 AM and 9:30 AM; lunch between 12:00 PM and 12:30 PM; afternoon snack between 3:15 PM and 3:45 PM; no dinner will be provided.

Medication

- Prescription Medications – should be in the original container, labeled with the child's name, date, directions, and the physician's name. Medication will be administered as stated on the label.
- Non-Prescription Medication – must be labeled with the child's name and date it was brought to the center. It must be in the original container. A physician or the child's parents must give written permission and instructions on how the medication should be administered.
- **ANY DEVIATION FROM THE RECOMMENDED DOSAGE MUST BE AUTHORIZED, IN WRITING, BY THE CHILD'S PHYSICIAN.**

Minimum Standards

- Being licensed with the State of Texas requires following the Minimum Standards for Child Care Homes. If you would like to review a copy of the minimum standards of the child care home's most recent Licensing inspection report, I have a copy on-site that you may look at. If you would like to contact the local licensing office please call (817) 321-8000. The website is www.tdprs.state.tx.us To report suspected child abuse or neglect please call 1-800-252-5400.

Nap-Time

- After lunch a rest period is required for all children. Children may bring a special doll, stuffed animal, or blanket to have **only** during naptime.

Open Door Policy

- I maintain an open door policy for all parents. Parents are welcome and encouraged to call or drop in any time during regular childcare hours. I believe that children benefit greatly from parent participation in their childhood experiences.
- I would appreciate you taking into consideration my schedule when dropping in or calling, and remember that visitors usually cause the children to react in an excited manner that does not normally occur when I am alone with the children.

Outdoor Playtime

- Children will play outdoors as the weather permits, in temperatures above 40 degrees and below 90 degrees. It is important for the children to have fresh air, new worlds to explore, and a wider field of play. **If a child is too ill to go outside, he/she is too ill to be at the center.**

Parent Participation

- Your child will be happy to have the experience of the special people in his/her life working together and getting along with each other. This will allow your child to develop a sense of security and will allow us to develop a closer relationship. You will also have the chance to observe and ensure that the program is suited to the needs of your child and let me know if adjustments are necessary.

Pets

- All animals on the premises are vaccinated according to minimum standards and do not create unsafe or unsanitary conditions. Pets are visible for parents to familiarize themselves with the animal(s) during the interview and child care hours.

Pictures

- Professional pictures may be taken on occasion. No one is obligated, at any time, to purchase these pictures. I will take candid pictures of the children at various times during the day to use for projects or for your enjoyment.

Substitutes

- I may employ a substitute caregiver, if necessary. These caregivers will: be trained in these policies; have current CPR and First Aid; be familiar with the children before being left alone; be someone that I know and trust.

Supplies

- The following supplies, according to the child's age, should be marked with the child's name and left at the center: complete change of clothes, wipes, diapers, pacifier, and bottles. Notice will be sent home when more supplies are needed. If it becomes necessary for me to purchase items for your child, you will be billed. I reserve the right to re-evaluate any child's continued participation in this program to determine that the program can adequately meet the needs of the child.

Termination

- Failure to abide by any of these policies may result in termination. I reserve the right to enforce these policies at will. Lack of enforcement of a certain policy, at any given time, does not indicate that a particular policy is no longer in effect.
- Termination may be required for excessive and/or uncontrollable biting, inappropriate language, destructive, or harmful behavior.
- Unless the child is an immediate danger to himself or the other children, two week's notice will be given should withdrawal of the child be required.

Toilet Training

- I will be glad to assist you when your child is ready to enter the toilet training phase. This is an important period for your child and is generally most successful when we work together. I ask that you provide at least one complete change of clothing, including socks, and an adequate supply of training pants or pull-ups for your child. **Pull-ups are required until the child is completely toilet trained.** Clothing for this stage should be selected for easy on and off.

Toys from Home

- If your child brings a toy from home, they will be required to share it the same as any other toys. I am not responsible for lost or broken toys.

Transportation

- I will take all possible precautions when transporting the children. **All children must wear a seat belt.** Transportation will be for emergencies only.

Trial Period

- There is a two week trial period for each child, beginning the day your child actually begins care. This is important to ensure harmony throughout the center. It is important that we all have a working relationship with total cooperation from children and parents. Either party may terminate this agreement within this trial period, with 24 hours notice, with or without cause and no notice will be required. No pre-paid fees will be refunded upon cancellation during the trial period.

Tuition, Fees, Deposits, Refunds

- Your specific rates will be outlined in your Childcare contract. Tuition is **due on Friday morning, prior to the week of care.** A late fee of \$10 per day, including Saturday and Sunday, will be added to any payment not received before 5:30 PM on Friday. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Tuition, including all late fees, must be paid on or before the following Monday or care will no longer be provided.
- If your child will be absent on Friday due to a vacation, holiday, or other reason, you are responsible for payment on the last day that your child will be in attendance. Otherwise, late fees will begin at 5:30 PM on Friday.
- A supply fee of \$40 per child will be due at the time of enrollment as well as August 1st of each year.
- A non-refundable security deposit equal to one week's tuition plus the supply fee is required to reserve a space for your child. This week's tuition will be credited to your child's last week in my care.
- In order to reserve a space for longer than two weeks, you must pay ½ the regular weekly fee for each week your child is not yet in attendance.
- No refunds will be given for tuition or other fees paid, for any reason.
- I reserve the right to change tuition rates with a 30 day notice.

- A fee of \$25 will be charged on all returned checks. If any check is returned, service will be continued on a cash only basis.

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Verification of Legal Custody

- I must have on file a copy of the court order recognizing the parent who has custody of the child. Otherwise, I have no choice except to release the child to his/her parent.

Visitors

- Parents are encouraged to visit and participate in this program. Any other visitor must have prior approval by the appropriate parent and myself and will be accompanied by me at all times. No smoking is allowed on these premises. No one who is a danger to the children will be allowed on these premises.

Volunteers

- All volunteers must be orientated in and must agree to follow these policies and procedures. Regular volunteers will be required to pass a criminal history check.

Withdrawal

- Parents may terminate this service by giving two week's notice **in writing**. Earlier notice, if known, would be greatly appreciated. You are responsible for two weeks tuition if you do not give the required notice. Absences of more than one week without notification or payment of tuition will result in an automatic withdrawal. You will still be responsible for the two weeks of tuition. Re-admittance will include all back pay including late fees and a registration fee.

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

I/We have read and do understand and agree to abide by all policies and procedures as described in the Parent Handbook. I/We also understand that Shayla Drumm, providing 30 days notice to me/us, may change the contents of this handbook.

Please initial each topic, sign, and date.

_____	_____	Welcome	_____	_____	Arrival & Departure
_____	_____	Changes	_____	_____	Child Abuse/Neglect
_____	_____	Children with Disabilities	_____	_____	Children's Absences
_____	_____	Closings	_____	_____	Clothing
_____	_____	Communication	_____	_____	Daily Schedule
_____	_____	Damages	_____	_____	Days & Hours
_____	_____	Emergency Drills	_____	_____	Enrollment Requirements
_____	_____	Equal Opportunity Provider	_____	_____	Extended Absence
_____	_____	Field Trips	_____	_____	Food from Home
_____	_____	Guidance & Discipline	_____	_____	Health Requirements
_____	_____	Holidays	_____	_____	Illness
_____	_____	Injuries	_____	_____	Late Fees
_____	_____	Mealtimes	_____	_____	Medication
_____	_____	Minimum Standards	_____	_____	Nap-Time
_____	_____	Open Door Policy	_____	_____	Outdoor Playtime
_____	_____	Parent Participation	_____	_____	Pets
_____	_____	Pictures	_____	_____	Substitutes
_____	_____	Supplies	_____	_____	Termination
_____	_____	Toilet Training	_____	_____	Toys from Home
_____	_____	Transportation	_____	_____	Trial Period
_____	_____	Tuition, Fees, Deposits, Refunds	_____	_____	Verification of Legal Custody
_____	_____	Visitors	_____	_____	Volunteers
_____	_____	Withdrawal			

Mother's Signature

Date

Father's Signature

Date

Shayla Drumm/ Academy for Kids

Date