



***Children's Academy
Child Care &
Preschool***

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Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME.....	4
OUR CHILD CARE PHILOSOPHY.....	4
CURRICULUM	5
STAFF.....	7
DICIPLINARY PROCEDURE.....	7
BITING POLICY	8
COMMUNICATION.....	8
ENROLLMENT POLICY	9
TRIAL PERIOD.....	9
TUITION/PAYMENT PROCEDURES	9
HOURS OF OPERATION	10
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES.....	10
ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES.....	11
MEALS.....	12
CLOTHING AND ATTIRE	13
ITEMS TO BRING.....	13
HEALTH INFORMATION.....	14
SICK POLICY	14
SECURITY FEATURES	15
PEST CONTROL APPLICATION.....	15
ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION.....	16
CLEANLINESS/HYGIENE.....	16
POTTY TRAINING	17
FIELD TRIPS	17
RELIGIOUS PRACTICES	18
RECEIPT PAGE	19

LAUGHTER OF CHILDREN

The laughter of children is like the bud of a rose.

It springs forth in glory for the world to behold.

The innocence of joy not tarnished in any way.

The laughter of children as they play.

The laughter of children is spontaneous and bright.

As it fills the air on a warm summer night.

Echoes of time cannot be erased.

The laughter of children cannot be replaced!

By Mary Ann Hanson



WELCOME

We are happy to welcome you to our family at Children's Academy Child Care & Preschool. We are a new facility licensed by the State of Kentucky for approximately 140 children ranging in ages from 6 weeks through 5 years old. We are conveniently located in the heart of Pleasure Ridge Park. We have created this handbook to facilitate a greater understanding between provider and parent(s). It covers all of our child care philosophies, business policies and expectations. Please read this hand book carefully and feel free to discuss any questions that you may have with the owner or Director.

OUR CHILD CARE PHILOSOPHY

Children's Academy Child Care & Preschool was created for parents desiring high quality, educational, child care for their children. As working parents, the owners had difficulty finding the quality of care they wanted for their children....so they decided to create it themselves. At Children's Academy, children will find a safe, clean, comfortable, loving environment where they will develop physically, emotionally, and academically. Parents will find peace of mind that their children are receiving the best care possible!

Children's Academy will exceed your expectations with our security cameras located in each classroom, our observation windows, and our secure coded front entry. We strive to be the leading child care provider in our industry.

We believe in the value of both structured and flexible activities. Structured activities will include the use of age appropriate preschool curriculum, regular reading times, arts and crafts, and musical activities. Outdoor play, -free play, on-site field trips, birthday and holiday parties are some of the more flexible activities we have. Learning can be FUN!

**Come feel the difference at
Children's Academy Child Care & Preschool!**

CURRICULUM

Children's Academy will introduce your child to a program that enhances intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development. The children will experience the curriculum through developmentally appropriate, "hands on" learning experiences with many FUN filled activities.

INFANTS

We thank you for putting your trust in us to care for, nurture, and love your baby. Our caregivers are professionally trained, mature, responsible staff. You will find primary and black and white colors that are stimulating to newborns strategically placed in the infant suite décor. Your baby will enjoy cuddling to look at a simple picture books and having conversations with our caregivers. They will develop their large and small motor skills through a variety of age appropriate activities. Caregivers will take your baby for a stroll and let them enjoy and experience the outdoors in a fenced, safe environment.

There will be plenty of time in your baby's future for structure and discipline. But during these early months, protection, comfort, stimulation and loving care will be the key to your baby's development and your ease of mind.

We will follow your infant profile sheet, according to your own mothering-style, so that you may always know that your baby is being cared for as you instructed. Please remember that state regulations do not allow infants that are unable to turn over on their own to sleep on their bellies.

ONE YEAR OLD TODDLERS

It is so exciting now that your baby is walking and exploring the unknown! Developmentally appropriate stimuli are highly important. By imitation, your toddler will develop early language skills. Motor skills will develop through voluntary movement. We will provide a safe and loving environment for your toddler to explore. At Children's Academy, you will find intelligent role models, toys, books, and various learning centers such as dress up and art. Climbing equipment will also be available to aid in your toddlers growing motor skill development.

Around 12 to 18 months, children usually decrease to one nap per day. At this time, we will attempt to put them on a scheduled nap/rest period.

Your child will enjoy experiencing individual and group play, circle time with stories, songs and finger plays, appropriate exposure to art and music with special individual attention! Outdoors we have set aside a special play area with age appropriate play equipment.

It is not uncommon at this age for little one's to bite when they are teething or experiencing communication delays. We have various techniques that can be attempted to stop this unfortunate behavior. For details on how we handle biting, please see our biting policy if your child is biting or has been bit.

TWO YEAR OLD TODDLERS

Two is a wonderful age! Your toddler has developed language skills and is learning to be part of a group. The curriculum focuses on promoting self esteem. Toddlers are growing into their independence. Your toddler will be able to choose their activities much of the day. They will enjoy the various learning centers such as library space, blocks, dramatic play, puzzles, music, dance, and art.

Structured activities include teacher directed circle time, reading, art and music, and themed discussions.

Your toddler will enjoy the outdoor play equipment made just for their age!

In most cases, two year olds are beginning to potty train. We will work on this effort with you.

THREE, FOUR, AND FIVE YEAR OLDS

This is the time that your child needs physical activity, appropriate challenges, easily followed structure, friend and teacher interaction, and exposure to outside experiences.

You will find a well rounded variety of activities where your child can learn their alphabet, recognize colors and shapes, count, learn sequencing and sorting patterns, and practice writing their names and small words. They will learn language skills and how to socialize with their peers in group situations. They will develop their fine motor skills through creative play such as: shaving cream play, play-dough fun, sand and water tables, and construction blocks. Their gross motor skills will be developed through exercising, obstacle courses, dancing and playing games such as follow the leader. They will learn to express themselves with music, finger plays, and dance.

Just watch their smiles light up when they hit the outdoor play ground!

STAFF

We have a very highly qualified and caring staff. We strive to have at least half of our staff with an Early Childcare degree or equivalent education and experience. Most staff members have been trained in C.P.R. and first aid. All staff is required to have a T.B. skin test every two years. In addition all staff must have at least 15-20 hours of continuing education each year. All new employees are required to take 6 hours of child care orientation which deals with all aspects of child care in addition to two weeks on the job training.

All staff and volunteers will have the state required background checks as well as a Child Abuse Neglect check. Additional checks will be performed for teachers coming to us from out of the area. Staff will be periodically drug tested at the director and owner's discretion.

You can rest assured that your child is being cared for by professional, well trained and loving people.

DICIPLINARY PROCEDURE

We do not approve of physical discipline. We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency, and firmness. When positive reinforcement is not working our staff is instructed to do the following things when having to deal with a difficult behavior:

- Correct the child gently, but firmly. Explain to the child that particular behavior is not acceptable. Reinforce that you know they will not repeat the behavior and praise them when they accomplish this.
- If undesirable behavior continues the child is to be redirected to a new activity.
- If redirection does not work to eliminate the unwanted behavior than the child is to be taken to the director's office. The director will talk with the child and if necessary, a conference with the parents will be scheduled.

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will rest, food, or toileting be associated with discipline. NO screaming or abusive language is to be used. We will NEVER use the word BAD to the children. They are NOT bad. Their behavior is just unacceptable. We look for reasons as to why the child's behavior is unacceptable. We let the child know that we love them and are interested in them.

BITING POLICY

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for one and two year old children to bite. They will typically bite out of frustration over a toy, due to teething, or due to communication delays. When biting does occur we will deal with it in the following manner:

- The bite wound will be cleaned, ice applied and the child comforted.
- The child that has bitten will be asked to sit out for one minute per year of their age. It will be explained to them why biting is not acceptable. You may here us tell them "no bite" so that if the child is out of reach to stop the incident from occurring they will understand if we firmly say "no bite".
- Incident reports will be made for the child that bit and the one who was bitten explaining the incident.
- For repeat occurrences by the same child the following techniques (with parental approval) may be used to help eliminate the behavior: a sponge swab will be wiped inside the cheeks of the child's mouth, Tylenol or teething medication administered, crunchy snacks offered, a teething toy offered, and any other allowable method of control will be attempted.
- If a child is biting excessively in one day, the child may be sent home on the day in which they are biting. If a day away from the center does not change the behavior, the child may be asked to stay out for a week. If after all attempts have been made and the child continues to bite at unacceptable rates, they may be dismissed from the program.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents, teachers, and center administration is crucial to providing the best possible care for your child. We believe in providing daily information regarding your child's care at Children's Academy. We maintain an open door policy for parents. Parents are welcome in the center at all times. It is important that we share openly concerns or ideas that will have a positive outcome for the children.

We have several methods available for the sharing of information:

- Informal conversations pertaining to a child's progress, classroom activities, schedule changes, medication, illness or other important information can be discussed during drop off and pick up times.
- Center management will have email capability and can correspond via e-mail if desired.

- Your child's cubby is a primary location for notes, letters, newsletters and other written communication to be placed. Please be sure to pick up and read all papers from his/her cubby daily.
- Center wide News of Interest will be posted on the Parent Board in the front hallway.
- The Center will also create a monthly newsletter for parents that will explain some of the activities we are doing, the current curriculum topics, events that will be happening that month, days off, or any other pertinent, fun information that may be of interest to the parents and families.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

We operate on a first come first serve basis. Parents with siblings in the center will be given priority. Staff members will also be given enrollment priority. Others may be placed on a waiting list. There are several forms that must be completed and provided to center management before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. No Exceptions. This is to ensure that your child will get the very best care possible. These forms are as follows:

- Emergency Medical Authorization Form
- Parent Authorization for the Administration of Medication (if medication is necessary)
- Enrollment Forms
- Immunization Forms
- Allergy alert form
- Contract for Care

TRIAL PERIOD

If during the first week of service Children's Academy or the parent (guardian) feels that the care arrangements are not a good fit, care can be terminated without notice. If Children's Academy or the parent (guardian) have a need to terminate care for reasons that allow notice, a two-week notice is required.

TUITION/PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Payment can be made by cash, check, or money order.

Tuition is payable in advance and is due no later than 6:00 p.m. on Monday of each week for that week. Payment may be made by check as long as no checks

are returned for non-sufficient funds. There will be a late fee of \$15 if not paid by Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, you will be required to pay a \$30 returned check fee. Children's Academy reserves the right to only accept cash, money order, or certified checks from any parent that has a history of returned checks.

If payment is late, by the first day of attendance the second week, late payment plus current payment must be made in order for drop off to occur.

A late fee charge of \$1 per minute, per child is assessed when there are late pick ups beyond the contracted hours. Habitual tardiness may result in termination of services.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our Center operating hours are Monday through Friday, 6:30a.m. Until 6:00p.m.

We recommend that children arrive in time for breakfast, which is served until 8:30am.

All children are requested to be dropped off by 10:30 a.m. This is to ensure a smooth transition into the learning activities. Please contact us if you are unable to drop off by 10:30 a.m. so that we can plan lunches for the children and staff. If ratios allow for children to be dropped off after 10:30 a.m., your child will still be accepted even if you forgot to contact us. Children may not be dropped off during nap time, unless prior arrangements are made with the director or owner, because it is disruptive to the other children in the class room that are napping. Please check with the teachers in your class to arrange alternate drop off times.

Please let us know your normal attendance schedule at the time of enrollment. The cost of care allows a maximum of 10 hours per day, five days a week. People whose schedule requires a longer day but a shorter work week may not be subject to the above time cap, per Directors approval.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It is your responsibility to accompany your child into the facility and see that they are received by a staff member. **We must ask that you sign in and out daily via the sign in/out sheet located in the lobby. Please be discreet with your personal code to the front door. We use this as a security measure for our center. Only authorized individuals on the child's registration form may have the code. Please note, only authorized individuals on the registration form may pick up your child, and they**

must present a picture state I.D. at time of pick up (NO EXCEPTIONS).

If there are any instructions or changes in your child's day that we need to be aware of, please let us know about them either verbally or on a written form upon arrival. When picking up your child from our Center, you should check with your child's teacher for a brief summary of your child's day, including any accidents or problems.

Children's Academy policy regarding children being picked up from the Center by someone other than the custodial parent or guardian is as follows:

No child will be allowed to leave with anyone except their custodial parent and/or guardian unless written or verbal permission has been given to the Director or Owner. If the request is verbal, please be prepared to provide a password in order for us to release your child. You must give us the name of the individual who is to pick up your child. When they arrive to pick up your child they must present picture identification. Only then will we release your child to them and they will sign themselves and the child out along with the time they departed. Once we get to know those individuals you have approved to pick up your child, we will not require picture identification, but will NOT release them without the verbal or written consent of the custodial parent.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Children's Academy will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve. Parents will be asked to declare if they will be bringing their child around major holidays to anticipate staff need. For the above holidays, full tuition is due, unless you are using a vacation day. Our employees are paid for these holidays. If the holiday falls on a weekend, the weekday closest to the holiday will be the day that we are closed (Ex: Fourth of July falling on a Saturday, the center would be closed on Friday to observe that holiday), (Ex: Christmas Eve and Christmas Day falling on a Saturday/Sunday, the center would be closed the Friday prior and the Monday after to observe the two holidays).

Our Center rarely closes for inclement weather. If closing due to inclement weather is necessary, it will be announced on WAVE 3 and also will be on our voice recording when calling the center. We do not prorate tuition for weather related closings, unless we are closed an extended period of time. If weather causes us to close early, then the director or owner will call you either on your cell phone or work phone to give you a time for pick-up. Please check your messages frequently during the inclement weather situations.

Full payment is required regardless of a child's attendance. You may have one week absence (every 12 months) for vacation free from charge after the child has been enrolled in the Center for (3) consecutive months. You may use the vacation time consecutively or you can use it if you your child is sick. Please let the director or owner know in advance if your child is to be absent for vacation or any other scheduled time off. Also, if your child is ill, please keep him/her home for the day. Contact the director or owner to let them know of your child's symptoms so that your child's teacher may be informed.

MEALS

It is our goal to serve meals and snacks that are not only nutritious but are the kinds of food kids love to eat. Breakfast will be served from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and will consist of an assortment of whole grain breakfast cereals, fruit, whole grain toast, hot breakfast such as pancakes, biscuits, waffles, etc. all served with milk.

Lunch is a hot meal and includes the appropriate amounts of the four food groups. Lunch is served between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., depending on your child's age.

Afternoon snacks are served between 2:00p.m.-3:00p.m., depending on your child's age.

Menus will be posted monthly on the parent's board. Please let us know in writing if your child is allergic to or unable to eat any items on the menu. If a special diet needs to be provided for your child, it will be your responsibility to provide such meals.

Please be advised that state regulations require that snacks provided by parents be store bought and not home made. Snacks must have an ingredients listing.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE ARE CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THIS SCHOOL WHO HAVE A PEANUT ALLERGY. DO NOT SEND ANYTHING IN WITH YOUR CHILD THAT HAS PEANUTS IN IT. THIS IS A DEADLY ALLERGY. WE MUST KEEP ALL OUR CHILDREN SAFE.

CLOTHING AND ATTIRE

Children must be dressed for the day when brought to the center. Please dress your child in loose, comfortable and easily washable play clothes. Please note that children's clothing will get soiled and could stain depending on the activities of the day. If you have a special outfit that you would like your child changed into at the end of the day we will be happy to do so. Shoes should be close-toed and sturdy enough for outdoor play.

All children need to keep at least one change of clothing at the center in case of accidents. All clothing and belongings should be **clearly marked** with child's name to avoid loss and confusion. Please remember to mark coats also since many children have coats that look alike.

Children may bring a small blanket and/or toddler pillow from home for naptime.

ITEMS TO BRING

Infants or Toddlers:

- Formula, juice, food if not on table food yet
- Ointments, powders
- Pacifiers
- Disposable diapers (cloth if needed)
- Wipes
- Two extra outfits, socks, bibs, etc

Training pants or pull ups (if we potty train your child, it is a good idea to bring as many as 3-4 outfits, depending on their progress in potty training)

- Favorite blanket or naptime toy
- Bottles must be made and labeled by parents with the child's name prior to arriving at the Center. Bottles must have a cap to cover the nipple as required by state regulations. We cannot make bottles at the center.

Preschool

- Extra pants or pull-ups if not potty trained
- An extra change of clothes, including socks and underwear
- Favorite blanket or small toy for naptime

Our center will furnish all linens for baby beds, mats and cots.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Each child is required by state regulations to have on file a health statement, which includes a record of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's source of medical care. Your child's health care summary must be complete at the time of enrollment.

The Center must have on file for each child a signed Permission for Health Care authorizing emergency care and transfer of medical records to the local hospital. Emergency numbers for reaching the parent or guardian and another authorized person must be on file and kept up to date.

In the event a child contacts a communicable disease and exposes the other children, notices of such exposure will be posted, and parents will be notified as quickly as possible. If medical attention is required, the staff will call the local ambulance service, which will transport the child to the local hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the child's own physician. The Director will be responsible for making decisions regarding care of a child until EMS or parent arrives. The child will be isolated and made comfortable until the respective party arrives.

SICK POLICY

Children are not admitted for care if they are exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 degrees
- Runny noses, with green or yellow mucous
- Red or pink eyes, with or without discharge
- Recurring diarrhea or vomiting

You will be called to pick you child up if they begin to exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 degrees without medication
- Runny noses, with green or yellow mucus and not on medication
- Red or pink eyes, with or without discharge, and not on medication
- Upon the 3rd occurrence of diarrhea (if not medication induced) or the first occurrence of vomiting
- Any accident that may require minor medical attention

Signs of infection may include green or yellow discharge and fever. If your child has these symptoms, they must be on medication at least 24 hours before

coming into the Center. Any combination of the above symptoms will prompt the care provider to call you to remove the child from the Center.

Sick children usually want to be at home with their parents. Even on medication, they demand more of the teacher's attention than normal. If at all possible, keep your children home or make other arrangements when they are not feeling well.

SECURITY FEATURES

- Our facility was built with your child's safety in mind.
- The main entrance is the only door anyone is allowed to enter. Upon entering, they are on camera and being digitally recorded with time and date. Recordings are archived for approximately 2 weeks.
- In order to gain access to the facility the set of door in the front lobby requires a four-digit code to be entered. Parents/custodial guardians and employees each have their own personal code to the center.
- If any of the exit doors are opened, the monitor in the office will show who is coming in or going out automatically.
- Rooms are equipped with security cameras so the children's activities can be monitored from the Director's office.
- This facility is a one story facility to make the need to egress quickly and easier.
- Individual fire exit doors are located in or in close proximity to every room.
- Fire alarms are tested annually by a professional.

We have done the above to insure the safety of your children while at Children's Academy and to add to your piece of mind while you are away.

PEST CONTROL APPLICATION

The center may at some time need to provide pest control. As part of state regulations, we are now required to give families and employees at Children's Academy a 24-hour notice prior to any pest control applications made on school property. This information is available to all parents and employees.

The building will be treated as necessary for pest control. We regularly have the building monitored for pest control by Integrated Pest Control Services. You will receive a letter advising that all parents and employees can be specifically notified of pest control applications.

As normal, protocol notification of specific applications will be posted on the front door in the lobby. Parent emails will be sent, as well. If you would like a specific letter of notification, please complete and return this letter to the office. Please also check and sign that you have received the notification.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Medication (prescription and non-prescription) will be given to a child only with the written, daily authorization of a parent or legal guardian. Medication authorization logs are located in the Director's office. The authorization log must be completed for EACH DAY medication is to be administered. We cannot give medication to your child without this information.

Medication must be clearly labeled and in original, dated containers. Medication prescribed by a physician must be in the original bottle and labeled with the child's name and dosage.

Non-Prescription medicines are not labeled for children under 2 years of age (some for children under 6 years). If a medicine is needed that does not provide dosage information for the age of your child your physician must provide instructions. Your physician note must state the specific brand and type of medication. Have them include generic brands of medicine as well.

After all medication has been logged on the Medication Authorization Log, it must be placed in the locked medication storage box located in kitchen. Parents must place all medication in this box, unless it requires refrigeration. In this case, the medication must be placed in the locked storage box in kitchen refrigerator.

All medication storage boxes will be kept out of reach of children and will be locked at all times. Written records will be kept of all medication administered.

Medicine must be taken home each day, only exception is medicine signed in on the form to be given periodically (ex. Diaper rash cream, sunscreen, etc.).

Only the Director or Owner can administer medication.

CLEANLINESS/HYGIENE

We maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed before and after meals and after toilet training. We use paper towels for drying hands. Teachers and caregivers are provided gloves, antibacterial

soap, and bathrooms/sinks with hot running to use each time they care for a new little one.

Infants sleep in separate cribs with clean sheets used only by them. Beginning at toddler age, washable nap mats are used. Each child has a separate mat with sheet and blanket that are washed weekly unless needed more frequently. Mats are marked with the individual child's name to avoid sharing of germs. We ask that parents provide pillows if desired.

In our infant suite, you will notice that the changing tables are wiped with a hard surface sanitizer after each diaper change.

POTTY TRAINING

We are very happy to assist you in potty training your child when you feel they are ready and it is developmentally appropriate. The child must be able to sit on the potty unassisted without falling over. The average age to begin potty training is 2 years old. Our one and two-year-old toddler rooms are equipped with toddler sized toilets to assist with training. We believe that a cooperative effort between parents and our Center will make the process smoother. We also firmly believe that potty training should be a positive experience for your child. The following is our potty training procedure:

Your child is taken to the potty frequently and encouraged to use it. If the child is successful, we reward them with a sticker/stamp and praise. If they are not successful we change their pull up if necessary and simply return the child to what they were doing and try again later. We will never scold or reprimand the child for having an accident in their pants or not using the potty. A daily log will be kept on each child noting times, who took them to the potty and the results.

FIELD TRIPS

An important part of our Center's curriculum is exposing the children to many varied experiences. Many on site field trips will be planned throughout the year. These field trips will include fun filled activities such as field day with blow up slides, bouncy toys and special visitors such as the fire department, clowns, or magicians.

Some outside field trips may be taken during the year. Parents will be informed of field trips in advance and a permission slip will be sent home for each trip. We normally use a bus provided by Miller Transportation. There will always be at least two (2) staff including the driver for over four (4) children. The children

will be required to wear their individual seat belts. Field trip costs are extra. We are always glad to have our parents accompany us on these trips.

In addition to our regular curriculum, we have a Fall party, Thanksgiving Activity, a Christmas Party, Valentine Party, Easter Party, and Derby Party.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Religious teaching should be left up to each individual family. Regardless, please do not expect our day to be completely devoid of any religious activities. We will not teach doctrine, but will celebrate Christmas and Easter in traditional Christian method. Traditional Christian bible stories may be incorporated into our curriculum. Although we hope parents will be the ones who explain all of the important issues to their children, questions about death, etc. are bound to come up. We may mention God or Heaven in simple explanations to the children. Please let me know if this is offensive to you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies and procedures of Children's Academy Child Care & Preschool. I further acknowledge that I will abide by the terms and conditions set forth in this document with regards to payment of tuition.

Signature_____

Date_____