



Parent Handbook

Revised NOVEMBER 2021

Definitions:

Federal Name: The Children's Place Academy, LLC (DBA The Academy, Early Education Center, LLC) - mentioned throughout as - The Academy

Parent: Any legal guardian, grandparent, foster parent, or adult responsible for the enrollment of the child at The Academy, Early Education Center

Child: Any individual under the age of 12, enrolled with The Academy, Early Education Center

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Children's Place Academy, LLC (DBA The Academy, Early Education Center - hereafter called The Academy) believes that gentle love, care, structure and stability provide the base needed to advance and educate our young children. We establish routines for children in every program, allowing a sense of security, and freeing young minds for learning. We teach our children to become life-long learners. We encourage them to explore their environment independently, though trusted guidance is provided if needed. The Academy offers the opportunity for each child to develop physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively according to their own unique individual learning style. Each child is considered unique in temperament and development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge individual needs, interests and abilities. We believe a balanced diet and exercise is the cornerstone to creating a positive, healthy, eager-to-learn individual. Qualified staff members develop activities and promote positive relationships to encourage a prosperous environment through personal attention, caring guidance, and creativity.

POLICIES

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our child care and early learning facility serves our families from 6:00 am until 5:30 pm during the week (Monday through Friday). Hours of operation may change at Owner's discretion - particularly during any federal, state, or county emergencies.

Licensing Requirements

The Academy is a licensed facility through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services - in the Office of Child Development and Early Learning. The Academy strictly follows state regulations to ensure the health and safety of the enrolled children and staff members.

SITE SECURITY

Each parent is given a 4 digit code to enter the building. This code is not to be shared with grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends or relatives. The codes are for parents only. If an alternative individual will be picking up, they must knock (a staff member will answer the door) and provide identification upon entering the building. The staff member will verify if the individual is eligible to pick the child up through the Emergency Contact form provided by the parent.

If a parent requires another individual NOT placed on the Emergency Contact form, to pick up the child, the parent must call The Academy. The Academy will then call the parent back, using the contact information for that parent on the Emergency Contact form to verify, they did, in fact, call and ask for an

alternative pick up person to pick up their child.

If a child will be receiving services from an outside agency, the parent must notify The Academy, within 24 hours of the agency's arrival. The agency must arrive with identification, and appropriate clearances. The parent must have signed a Release Form, for the child, prior to the agency having access to the child.

Parents are encouraged to not allow another adult into the building, upon entering. While it is polite to hold the door for others, the individual may not be permitted inside the building and could pose a risk to the staff or children. No Academy parent will consider it impolite, to close the door behind them, and insist the next adult input the security code, for the door.

During a pandemic or illness outbreak, parents and any non-essential persons, will be unable to pass through the front door. Children will be taken from the parents at the door, and delivered to their appropriate classrooms.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Academy has adopted the 'Wellness Policy' which simply states if a child is well enough to come to the center they must be well enough to participate in all daily activities (this will also include going outside). Parents are asked not to bring their child for care if they have any inability to participate in our usual daily activities. This includes children who are lethargic and unable to interact with their peers or teachers - they must be sent home if they are too tired, or too sick to remain active. Parents will ensure their children receive adequate rest, nightly. Additionally, the parents will ensure the center is aware of any allergies, medical conditions, and medical administration their child may have / require. This includes all children with any special needs that would need attention during their time in care.

The Academy believes that following a proven set of health and safety standards is an important way to provide quality early care and education for young children and supports best practices for our site. We use *Caring for our Children's Health and Safety Performance Standards* to create our health and safety policies, care plans and practices regarding the care of all children including those with special needs such as asthma, medical needs, food allergies, and medication administration. It is a collection of national standards that represents best practices for quality health and safety policies / practices and are based on evidence, expertise, and experience.

ILLNESS

Upon arrival at The Academy, our children are quickly looked over for any signs of illness. If any child is determined to be ill, they will be sent home (or to the doctor to determine if an illness exists). Examples of concerning symptoms:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fever over 100 degrees F** | Blisters on Skin | Achiness | Any skin abnormality |
| Complaints of sore throat | Lethargy | Yellow / Green sinus drainage | Wheezing/trouble breathing |
| Low body temperature | Puss draining from eyes | Excessive watery eyes | Vomiting |
| Skin rash | Persistent diarrhea* | Excessive coughing | Deep or persistent cough |

*no more than two leaky/watery bowel movements in a day's time.

** Temperature will be taken using a 'no-touch' thermometer on the forehead. Temperature must not exceed 100 degrees. **During a pandemic, or outbreak of a disease spreading throughout the community or throughout the building, temperature must not exceed 99.5 degrees.** Temperatures MAY BE TAKEN at the door upon entering the building.

Under normal (non-pandemic conditions) we consider a fever, any temperature over 100 degrees F. No child may attend The Academy within 24 hours of having a fever (or vomiting), even if the fever may be related to vaccinations. For example, if a child attends on a Monday, and is sent home at 3pm with a fever, the child may not attend Tuesday. If The Academy feels the child has been medicated with a fever reducer and brought into the center, the child will be sent home with a parent.

The Academy does not currently have a nurse on staff, and are thus not experts in the medical field. If The Academy feels a child is ill and needs medical care or observation, the child's parent will be called. The Academy will initially separate the child from the group of children to avoid any further spread of the illness. In the event a parent is called for pick up of a (potentially) ill child, The Academy expects the child to be picked up within 20 minutes of a call. If a sibling is also in attendance, the parent must take all children. This will avoid any spread of illnesses. If a doctor determines the child to be suitable for a childcare setting, a note is required upon return to The Academy.

PANDEMIC (COVID 2020)

During the time of a pandemic (without a vaccination for a novel virus, or antibiotic for novel bacteria), children or staff with fevers over 99.5 degrees F, may not return to The Academy without being fever-free for 72 hours (without the use of fever reducers). During a pandemic, if staff or a child is found to have a fever over 99.5 the individual will be sent home immediately and will not be able to return, without examination and note from a physician.

The Academy will follow the CDC guidelines pertaining to childcare listed below:

If the child will not have a test to determine if they are still contagious, they are able to return to care after the following have occurred --

- No fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers)

AND

- other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)

AND

- at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared

If the child will be tested to determine if they are still contagious, they may return to care when these three things have happened:

- No longer have a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers)

AND

- other symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved)

AND

- The child has received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart. The child's doctor will follow CDC guidelines.

In all cases, follow the guidance of their healthcare provider and local health department. The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with the child's healthcare provider and state and local health departments.

During a pandemic time, if a family member is diagnosed with COVID19 (or the illness circulating), the child must be excluded from care, until the family member has been symptom free for 7 days and has been cleared by the Health Department, or their family doctor (note required), and the note must indicate all family members are able to be out of isolation.

PROCEDURES

If a child has surgery for any procedure requiring anesthesia, they are not permitted to attend the following day due to possible complications from surgery or anesthesia.

IMMUNIZATIONS / FLU SHOT

**Please see the immunization policy included at the completion of this document.*

Please see PA Code § 27.71—27.75 for readmission after onset and treatment of communicable disease.

Each time a child receives vaccinations, a Child Health Assessment form is to be taken to the physician, filled out, and returned within the next business day to The Academy. The Academy is required to ensure all children enrolled are properly vaccinated. The Academy is required to have each child's current health assessment on file (per DHS regulations). If the Health Assessments are not turned in, in a timely manner, child care licensing regulations require The Academy to discontinue care for the child. If the child receives the flu vaccination, annually, we require documentation to state such, in the child's file.

If flu shots are denied for the child, The Academy requires a letter from the parent stating why they refuse the flu vaccination, and a date/range. For example:

I wish to not vaccinate my child with the annual flu vaccine throughout his/her childhood because I feel that it is ineffective in prevention of the flu.

You may email this statement to: ExecutiveDirector@theacademyeec.com

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

The Academy administers TWO over the counter 'medications' and ONLY if appropriate signatures are obtained from the parents/guardians. The Academy will administer nebulizer treatments with the required equipment, appropriate signatures on Medication Forms, and medication with prescription label. The Academy staff will apply *Sunscreen* and *Diaper Cream* (provided by parents) when needed to the children. Please see attachments/forms in the back of the handbook, and turn them in to the Director upon enrollment.

NEBULIZER TREATMENTS

If a child requires a nebulizer treatment of a medication that must be inhaled (i.e. nebulizer treatments), parents must provide the nebulizer. Parents are asked to include this information on the Emergency Contact form and to be sure to fill out and sign the Medication Form for the child to give staff permission to administer the medication. The medication MUST arrive in its original container, with the child's name, dosage amount, and date information on the box/container.

SUNSCREEN

Families will need to provide The Academy with one bottle of sunscreen per child enrolled with minimum SPF of 30. Children, even siblings, may not share sunscreen bottles. Parents / Guardians will be asked to sign a release for the application of sunscreen by The Academy staff (please see included form). This will be completed each year or each time the sunscreen is changed from the previous bottle (i.e. SPF or brand). Staff will only apply sunscreen according to the manufacturer's directions. Staff will not apply any sunscreen to a child who does not have a current release. The Academy asks that parents/guardians bring in the sunscreen by April 1st so that The Academy can be prepared for the warmer weather early. In the event that a child does not have sunscreen or a current release by May 1st, the child will not be

permitted to go outside each day when the weather permits. The Academy cannot expose children to the sun without protection. The Academy asks that the parent apply sunscreen on the child in the morning before arriving at the facility. If the child does not have sunscreen applied in the morning by the parent, they will not be able to participate in the morning outside activities. The staff will apply sunscreen each afternoon that the children go outside, regardless of the weather. It will be applied to exposed skin, except eyelids, following the manufacturer's instructions for the days of May 1st through September 30th. For children under the age of six months who require sunscreen (per physician), a doctor's note specifying application must accompany the sunscreen provided to the center.

DIAPER CREAM

Because Diaper cream is considered an over the counter drug, The Academy is required by regulation to obtain signatures from parents in order to apply cream to diaper-wearing children. Parents must submit the Medication Log. If parents change the brand of diaper cream provided/approved, a new form must be completed. In the event a child has a rash that requires cream, it will be logged on the parent communication application (KangarooTime). If a child has a rash and a parent has NOT supplied cream, The Academy will notify the parent of the issue (through a call or KangarooTime message). The Academy cannot be held reasonable for the rash if the parents have not provided proper cream.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

SUPPLIES / WHAT TO BRING

Each classroom will require the children to bring in the following labeled items:

- Two sets of extra clothing (seasonal)
- One sleeve of Diapers (if child is not yet potty trained)
- Diaper Cream (see section on Diaper cream)
- Sleeping Bag/Napping Mat and Blanket if napping
- One container of wipes on the 1st of every month or upon teacher request
- One box of tissues on the 1st of every month or upon teacher request
- Sunscreen (see section on sunscreen)
- Facial Masks during a pandemic (one on the child, per day) - must be laundered each evening by the parent.

During a pandemic, no diaper bags will be permitted in the facility. Please bring supplies in a disposable grocery store bag. A teacher will meet the parent and child at the front door. The parents will not be permitted in the building. The teacher/staff member will take the child and the child's supplies from the parent and deliver the child and the supplies to the appropriate classroom. It is imperative that the parent use Kangaroo Time to deliver important messages about the child to the teacher using Kangaroo Time.

MEALS

The Academy participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) funded by the Federal Government. If parents wish for their child to not participate in the CACFP, parents will supply children with each meal, and The Academy will permanently remove the child from enrollment with CACFP. If a child is enrolled with CACFP, the child is NOT permitted to bring in outside food from home.

If parents select for their child not to be enrolled with CACFP (and receive free nutritionally balanced meals), parents must abide by the following food/meal policies:

- All foods must come prepared. Staff may not prepare any foods brought from home.
- Parent will supply all milk and juice in original container
- Food must be age appropriate for the child. Children over 12 months may not be served baby food from a jar. A physician's note must be obtained if your child is continuing to need formula or infant/jarred food past the 12 month mark.
- Food program guidelines must still be followed with the respect of the types of foods served.
- Fast food or take out from restaurants will also not be allowed in the center, nor will delivered pizzas or food be given to the children.

**CACFP eligibility is subject to change month to month depending on attendance, enrolled children income, and staffing.*

CHILDCARE STAFF

At The Academy, EEC - we employ a Director, Assistant Director, Lead Teachers (Group Supervisor), Assistant Teachers (Assistant Group Supervisor), Aides, and a full time cook.

Job Descriptions and Requirements are state regulated and are as follows:

- [General Requirements](#) for ALL staff
- [Director](#)
- [Lead Teachers \(Group Supervisor\)](#)
- [Assistant Teachers \(Assistant Group Supervisor\)](#)
- [Aide](#)

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

We employ non-instructional staff such as cooks and maintenance personnel in our program. We also have volunteers who come in regularly to share activities, complete student training, or help with projects. We train these personnel in the areas of developmentally appropriate practices, diversity, age-appropriate standards, and appropriate interactions so that all adults working with children understand the development and expectations of children.

GUIDANCE OF YOUNG CHILDREN

The Academy strives to build on each child's self-esteem, independence and ability to socialize in a group setting. This is done primarily through developing a child's self control and verbal skills. All guidance techniques are based upon the knowledge of the individual child. In our program, we do not have a discipline policy because we do not believe in disciplining children. We do, however, have a Behavior Management Policy, because we believe very strongly in managing a child's behavior using preventative techniques before behaviors become problematic. We speak at length to children from the infant stage and beyond about expression of feelings, verbally. (i.e. "You are upset you cannot have that toy, right now, aren't you? I understand. Can I give you a hug?").

Child-Centered Behavior Management Approach:

POSITIVE and CALM ENVIRONMENT:

- Choices for activities are provided
- Curriculum is made to be stimulating for each individual child
- Support is given from teachers to accommodate all children's specific educational and emotional needs

- Teachers act as role models by treating children and adults with respect at all times
- Teachers reinforce positive behaviors with reward systems unique to their classroom
- Flexibility with activities are exercised at all times
- Teachers often use techniques such as kid-yoga, or quiet meditation time to reduce stress and anxiety in the morning or mid-afternoon.

NATURAL & LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES:

- Teachers will use redirection with children instead of punishment
 - Redirections are commonly useful in the classroom and help to diffuse most situations before the children become upset or frustrated with the current situation.
- Time out will only be used when a child injures another, inappropriate language is used, or redirection efforts have been exhausted
- Teachers communicate possible behavior choices with the child

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT:

The primary goal of managing behavior within the center is to help the child develop self-control, the ability to communicate feelings through words instead of actions, and to assume responsibility for his/her actions. Most misbehavior is simply the result of a child not expressing their needs effectively. It is crucial to this effort that parents and staff maintain an on-going dialogue about all aspects of the child's development and behavior. Positive reinforcement and redirection are two important tools to be utilized in encouraging acceptable behaviors. Negative behaviors will be handled in a developmentally appropriate manner. Neither corporal punishment nor verbal abuse is ever tolerated. Respect for all children is central to our behavior management philosophy. Parents will be kept aware on an on-going basis of unusual behaviors or behavior patterns (both positive and negative) that develop and, as warranted, conferences shall be scheduled. Parents are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns they have to the director's attention. If a child is injured by another child both families of the children will be notified. Please see the section "Incident Reports" for further clarification.

INCIDENT REPORTS

An incident report is completed any time a child is hurt either by their own doing or by another child. This report is completed by the staff that was present. If the injury is serious and requires medical attention, the parent will be notified immediately, and (if necessary, EMS will be called). If the incident is minor and the child does not require medical attention, the following steps will be taken:

- The staff will complete the form using information from the event
- The staff will indicate on Kangaroo Time, the incident and specifics.
- The staff will speak with the parent at pick up and ask the parent to sign the form.
- A copy of the form will be given to the parent at this time.

The Academy staff are not permitted to share names of other children involved in the conflict with the parents of the injured child due to the State Regulations on confidentiality.

If a child injures a child or teacher twice in a day's time, severely, the parent will be called to pick up the child. If the parent is unreachable, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be contacted next. Parents will have 1 hour to pick up their child before late fees apply (billed at a rate of \$20/hour). Even if the child is asked to be picked up, due to behavioral issues, tuition is still due, as regularly scheduled for the week. Children may

return the following day if they have scheduled hours. If a child continuously hurts other children, and becomes unsafe in the classroom, the child's services could be terminated. Prior to termination, our teachers will schedule a meeting with the parents, and dually create a behavior plan of action for the child. This plan may look different for each child, depending on the child's age, and developmental level. After adequate time is allotted for the behavioral plan to be effective, if a positive change is not noted, and classmates continue to be injured, the child may be terminated at the discretion of the Director. (Please see suspension and exclusion policy at the conclusion).

CHILD OBSERVATION / ASSESSMENT

A screening of your child will be completed within 45 days of enrollment using an observation form/tool. This tool is completed not only to give the staff a better idea in what areas the child excels, but also to help staff create lessons that will give your child the rich experiences they require in order to thrive. After the assessment is completed your child's teacher will review the tool with the parent, the original will be signed. A copy can be given at the parent's request.

The staff completes regular observations on the children in their classroom and records information into these assessments. By doing this The Academy is able to ensure that we are meeting the needs of each individual child to the best of our ability. The Academy will hold Parent/ Teacher conferences two times per year. These conferences normally coincide with the assessments that go home in the fall and spring. This conference gives the family an opportunity to sit down with their child's teacher and discuss any questions or concerns, regarding their child's assessment. If the teacher and /or director feels that any outside resources may help the child or their family, this will be discussed at this time. In addition, the teacher will review any materials the children have worked on in the past few months. We welcome any feedback families may be able to provide.

The approach that the center uses for observation includes all staff working with the child. By doing this we are able to form a whole picture of how the child is learning, and determine if any adjustments need to be made in order to meet the individual needs of the child. When the teachers collect observations, they are then filed in a folder specifically for that child until the information is ready to be transferred to the assessment tool appropriate for their age. If/when an electronic means is utilized (i.e. Kangaroo Time), observations can be made/used/logged in the system for each child.

Teaching Strategies is accredited by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET). Teaching Strategies complies with the ANSI/IACET Standard, which is recognized internationally as a standard of excellence in instructional practices. As a result of this accreditation, Teaching Strategies is accredited to issue the IACET CEU.

CURRICULA

The Academy, EEC is contracted with the *Creative Curriculum by Teaching Strategies*. The philosophy of The Creative Curriculum is that young children learn best by doing. The Creative Curriculum is based on the belief that all children learn through active exploration of their environment and therefore the environment plays a crucial role in learning. The goal of The Creative Curriculum is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive, and enthusiastic learners by actively exploring their environment. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using

various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

The Academy, EEC utilizes the Ages and Stages developmental screening tool that is complete within 45 days of the child's enrollment. *The Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ)* is a developmental and social-emotional screening tool for children ages birth through 6. ASQ is used to set developmental levels for future curriculum planning and determine any areas of needed improvement. We use the results in identifying areas needing specialized interventions and share those observations with parents/guardians providing resources as needed.

ASSESSMENT

The Academy, EEC is contracted with *The GOLD Assessment by Teaching Strategies*. GOLD is an ongoing, observation-based assessment that monitors a child's development. GOLD Assessment results are used to determine what your child knows and can do and how that relates to important objectives for development and learning. Teachers develop goals based on the results and will scaffold learning for your child and check for progress with information gained from this and future assessments. Children's results will be shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences and used in planning and instruction. The TSG tool is completed twice a year.

CURRICULUM, SCREENINGS, AND ASSESSMENTS

By using the Creative Curriculum, we provide learning centers and activities to help meet the children's individual goals and differentiate instruction for them. This curriculum adheres to the PA Early Learning Standards which sets standards for all children and is play-based. To gauge the developmental progress of children, we utilize the Ages and Stages Screening. This tool is completed within 45 days of enrollment and is used to set future goals for the children. It also highlights any areas of concern that we will address with parents as well as seek specialized services if needed. We also use the assessment to GOLD Assessment to assess the progress of the child in achieving those goals. This is a comprehensive tool that assesses all areas of development and monitors the progress of the children. GOLD Assessment is completed 2 times per year and shared with parents during conferences or anytime with parents' requests.

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent - Teacher Conferences are conducted twice a year (March, September). Parents will have the option to meet in-person or virtually. Teachers will gather information from initial ASQ and most recent assessments to talk to the parents about the development of their child. Meetings between parents and teachers can also be scheduled by reaching out to your child's teacher and the office staff to schedule an appropriate time.

TRANSITION OF CHILDREN BETWEEN GROUPS

The transition for children moving from the infant to the toddler group typically occurs between 12-14 months. However, the transition may be based on the child's readiness. Readiness may be determined by a child's mobility or interest in the program. All transitions are based on the concept that the child is physically, socially, and academically ready for the next classroom/program. There also will need to be appropriate space for the child in the next classroom. We move children on an individual basis, not in a group, as a whole.

When the teacher and Director feel the child is ready to transition, a form will be sent home to the family. If/when the family has any questions regarding transition, they are urged to speak to the child's teacher and/or the office staff. The parent will be introduced to the child's next classroom teacher.

REFERRAL / RESOURCE POLICY

At The Academy, EEC, we will believe that early detection saves valuable learning time and makes a great impact on length of time a child will need extra supports. We complete *The Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ)* screening on every child within 45 days of enrollment so that we can quickly identify any areas of need for each child. Once those areas are identified, we schedule a meeting with the director to discuss the need for a family meeting. We then schedule with the family to discuss the findings and the next steps which may include monitoring of the areas and/or extra teacher support during the day. The screening may show that a referral to an outside agency such as the local Intermediate Unit is needed to best support the child. We will make those necessary referrals and the Director will monitor the process of the local agency providing support. We will follow the recommendations based on their evaluation. The teacher will implement any needed supports within the routine and environment. We will also follow the recommended review periods and attend meetings to update the services and lessons within our program.

To assist families who may need resources for health, shelter, food assistance and/or other needs, we offer a Resource Guide that lists names and contact information for local support agencies.

Referral:

Screenings are completed within 45 days of enrollment. If a screening reveals that a child may need monitored or referred for specialize assistance, we have the following procedure in place:

1. Screening is completed and turned into the director/owner.
2. Director/Owner will review the results with the teacher and determine if:
 - a. The child needs monitoring with individualized instruction within our program.
 - b. The child needs a referral made to an outside agency such as Tuscarora IU.
3. If the child needs monitoring, the teacher will review the results with the families and create goals for the child. The teacher will then plan activities to support the child in the areas of need; rescreening within 2 months to monitor progress.
4. If the child needs referred to Tuscarora IU or other agency, the director will meet with the family and discuss the results and the process for making a referral. The director will gain parent permission before making the referral. The Director will then contact the agency and together with the teacher complete any necessary documents from the agency.
5. Our program will make accommodations available for the agency to work with the child within the child's normal environment and routine.
6. We will work with the agency to the extent possible to provide the best learning and support system for the child to strengthen their areas of need and participate in any follow-up conferences or meetings.
7. The family will be kept informed of the progress of the child through various strategies including but not limited to daily communication journals, weekly reports and/or conferences as needed.

Resources:

During daily conversations and/or conferences, families may share they are in need of other resources that fall outside our program abilities. In other situations, the teacher or other staff may notice that a family is struggling with an issue. In both instances, the teacher will notify the Director and either the teacher or the director will give the parent our "Resource Guide" which lists a variety of local agencies that can promote child/family safety, health, and stability. The Director will send out the "Resource Guide" annually through the parent communication app. A copy of the guide will be available at all times at the "Parent Station" located in the lobby of the center.

CONTINUITY OF CARE

Community leads, early care and education providers, and policymakers all have a stake in designing policies and programs that support continuity of care. We believe that continuity of care for young children and families includes nurturing relationships, regular routines, and consistent staff. We support positive interactions between all staff and children to develop a sustained rapport. We create these relationships by minimizing disruptions, such as changes in settings and routines. We have policies in place to have smooth transitions in both daily and yearly shifts. We maintain consistent well-trained staff and support ongoing long-term relationships between caregivers, children, and families.

LANGUAGE POLICY

We at The Academy, EEC, make every effort to communicate with children and families whose primary language is not English. Parents are asked to share words in their home language with their child's teacher to help make their child feel more comfortable in the classroom and to engage them during lessons. Teachers will attempt to label some of the classroom materials in the Home Language of the students. Parents are also encouraged to share books or other materials in their home language with the class. Non-English-speaking parents are encouraged to bring with them someone who can help interpret and translate questions, concerns, and documents. Teachers are required to complete one two hours course pertaining to language development in children in their first year of employment.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The staff at The Academy, EEC know the importance of parent involvement in their child's education. Studies have shown that for school improvement to be successful, family engagement must be an integral part of the process. Families feel more connected to their child's education when they are involved in the decision - making process. Children feel more connected to their school when parents and teachers are visibly working together. This also strengthens the importance of an education to the child. Caregivers have an important partner in developing policies and procedures. There, we ask that parents complete and return a simple survey at the end of the year to gain insight into what is working, and what we may need to adjust to improve our services.

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

We value the importance of education for everyone. We schedule workshops and training sessions (at least two per year) that help keep parents informed concerning new information about child and family development. We will share the latest research and information on topics such as family and early literacy, adult literacy, positive family-child interactions, cultural awareness, developmental milestones and issues, health and safety, and/ or other topics that address the identified needs and interests of enrolled families.

SCHEDULING / TUITION

SCHEDULING

In a childcare facility – parents must reserve their child's spot. When parents reserve their spots, the spot is billed regardless of the child is in attendance. This is much like private elementary school tuition. If an elementary parent's child is sick, the tuition does not decrease. The facility utility bills, insurance, and payroll do not decrease because a child is ill or on

vacation. The parents are reserving their child's spot in the event that it will be used. If a parent does not wish to pay for such reservations, the spots will be given to families on The Academy's waiting list, so that they are not left vacant.

We currently offer TWO types of schedules – **Set Scheduling and Drop-In Days**

Set Scheduling : Upon enrollment, parents and director agree on a set schedule for the child(ren). This schedule is included on the weekly tuition agreement contract. The parents will have selected either 5, 4, 3, or 2 repeating days, weekly (there is a 2 day minimum). The parents will then be bound by this contract. If parents wish to change the child's schedule, two week's notice **MUST** be given. If two weeks notice is **NOT** given, parents will be responsible for their current weekly tuition and any further days that must be added.

If at any time parents wish to decrease or change the child's(ren's) schedule(s), there is no guarantee they will be able to resume their previous schedule. Since The Academy must fill empty spots in classrooms, once a child is removed from a particular day, The Academy will make efforts to fill that spot as soon as possible. Parents must be aware that, by changing the schedule or decreasing the child's day, the previous schedule may no longer be an option, if parents wish to resume the initial/previous schedule.

Drop-In Days (when available): Upon enrollment, the parents will sign the weekly tuition agreement stating they are required to request specific days for the following week. This request is to be submitted to the director by email (ExecutiveDirector@theacademyeec.com) by Wednesday prior to the week of care needed. There is a minimum scheduling of two days per week. These days requested cannot be guaranteed. However, we always do our very best to accommodate! When you request your schedule, and it is approved, you **WILL** be billed for those days during the week they were scheduled (not necessarily the week of care). Once your schedule is accepted, you are immediately billed for those days. You may **NOT** have an opportunity to change your schedule, since we adjust our staffing to accommodate.

DISCLAIMER: When choosing Drop - In Days - Because your spots are not permanent, there are no guarantee days you request will be available week to week.

CHANGING YOUR SCHEDULE

If your schedule needs changed from your previous agreed schedule (Tuition Agreement), you **MUST** request the **NEW** schedule **TWO WEEKS PRIOR** to the new schedule changing. The days must be approved and a **NEW** Tuition Agreement sent. To request a change, please reach out to ExecutiveDirector@theacademyeec.com for further instructions.

TUITION

When a child's schedule is contracted, the parents have reserved his/her spot, weekly. This spot will not be given to another child, and thus will be charged to the parent. Child care tuition is much like any private school tuition. The tuition is due, whether or not the child attends (or is sick).

Tuition is due Monday by **NOON** the week of care needed (effective 5/11/20). If payment is not brought in by Monday (noon), the child may not attend until tuition (including the late fee) is paid. The child may return to the center once payment (and late fees) are received.

Parents are welcome to pay 6 months up to 12 months in advance for the child's tuition. If parents opt to pay 6 months in advance, The Academy offers a 1% discount in cost. If parents opt for a 12 month advance tuition payment, your account will be credited by 2%. If you have pre-paid your tuition, and

there is a facility closure, or you chose to withdraw ... OR, your services have been terminated by the academy for behaviors of yourself (parent) or your child, you will not receive a tuition refund. To be more specific, any time tuition is prepaid, tuition will never be refunded - even if the childcare services are ended either voluntarily or involuntarily.

Tuition rates will be subject to a slight increase every calendar year (at minimum), but may increase more frequently at the owner's discretion.

If you opt to request additional days and/or have a flexible schedule, upon request of those days (and approval), you will be immediately billed for the extra days. This will require payment by that Monday (noon), the week that the extra days were scheduled.

Due to the COVID19 Pandemic, we have found ourselves in a unique situation. The Academy, EEC (along with many other childcare facilities) became extremely vulnerable. Childcare is not a highly profitable business, and thus needs to be protective of income, in order to weather these scenarios.

The Academy, Early Education Center may experience involuntary closures due to: pandemics, epidemics (any illness related issues), government closures (at no fault of The Academy), natural disasters, terroristic acts, and any other issue that may arise at no fault of The Academy, Early Education Center. The Academy may choose to close during these situations, voluntarily to ensure the safety of the children and staff. When any of those referenced situations occur, please note the following changes/modification in Tuition Collection:

First Week of Closure

*100% Regular tuition due - this will allow your child's position to be held, and will continue salaries for Academy Educators until they are able to apply for unemployment.
Online education for the children will continue.*

Weeks 2 through Week 4:

*50% Tuition Due in order to hold the child's position and continue to pay our teachers until their unemployment is able to begin. This will allow our Lead Teachers to continue to develop curriculum, improve the structure of the classrooms, and deep clean and sanitize their classrooms.
This will also allow for overhead (rent, utilities, insurance costs, business vehicle loans, etc.. to continue to be paid).*

Weeks 5 through Week 8

25% Tuition Due in order to hold the child's position and cover partial overhead of the building, during closure.

Weeks 13 through an indefinite amount of time:

to be announced, but will not exceed 25% Tuition Due

Collection of tuition funds DURING a closure, allows the teachers to remain paid until they are able to file for unemployment. Continual collection of reduced tuition funds throughout the closure, will allow The Academy to remain viable throughout the closure, and ensure your childcare center is able to reopen, once restrictions are lifted and it is safe to do so (guidelines of the PA State Governor's Office and CDC, will be followed).

Subsidy Copays during a pandemic/government closure will be determined by the subsidy office. The Academy will NOT collect copays for the following reasons :

Child care providers that close for COVID-19 mitigation or to fulfill quarantine recommendations will not collect copayments from families for CCW (Child Care Works) for the period of the closure but will receive CCW payments based on the children's enrollment. If a provider is partially shut down, the provider may only collect copayments from CCW families whose children are actually in care.

CCIS CO-PAYMENTS:

If parents are eligible for Childcare Information System payments, the co-pay is due by NOON on Monday (the week of care). Failure to submit co-pay in a timely manner will result in possible termination in child care services, and will be reported to CCIS (the Monday after payment is missed). This is a regulation set forth BY CCIS and followed by The Academy in order to comply with CCIS contracts. If CCIS decreases child care coverage for a client, the client must then supply the tuition privately in order to continue the child's current schedule.

CCIS families must be aware that although they may utilize the CCIS Subsidized payment option, they still are required to request a schedule change two weeks prior to care needed. If two weeks' notice is not given, parents will be paying privately for the previously scheduled days (not covered by CCIS).

If a family receiving subsidy child care aid through the ELRC office (or any other subsidy office), fails to turn in appropriate paperwork to the subsidy office and/or has a lapse in subsidy coverage, due to the child being placed on suspension (or for any other reason), private pay tuition must be collected in order for the child to retain his/her spot. If the spot is left unpaid, the child will be removed from care and (if parent wishes) placed back onto The Academy wait list (\$50 enrollment fee will be collected, and new paperwork must be submitted).

ATTENDANCE

Prior to drop off at The Academy, you will be required to 'request check in' on Kangaroo Time. This is especially important for our subsidy families, as the subsidy office will require you to do so. All children MUST be in attendance by 10AM. If you have not informed a staff member or marked your child absent - we will mark your child as a "NO SHOW."

ABSENCES

If a child is contracted at a **full time schedule (5 days per week)**, the child's account is allotted FIVE (5) free sick days and two (2) FREE vacation days per year that parents may use upon request (change made: 4/2020). Parents may only use your sick or vacation free days, if the child is CALLED OFF BY 7:30 am (on date of service). Failure to call the child off by 7:30, results in the inability to use a Free/Vacation Day. Parents will be able to use their 5 free vacation days after the third month they are enrolled. **IF THE PARENTS HAVE AN OUTSTANDING BALANCE, THE 5 FREE DAYS WILL NOT BE CREDITED, UNTIL THE BALANCE IS PAID IN FULL.**

If the child is contracted at a Part Time Schedule (anything less than 5 days per week), the child will receive NO FREE sick/vacation days. Parents will be responsible for weekly tuition whether the child is in attendance or is absent at any point throughout the year. The parents of part-time children will pay for all center holidays/closures as outlined in the holiday closure section (BELOW).

All enrolled children's contracted days are reservations. If the child does not (or cannot) attend on any particular day, parents are still billed for reserving that particular spot. Absolutely, no exceptions.

SUMMER ABSENCE

In order to continue to reserve your child's spot throughout the summer months, tuition for the spots needed in the fall must continue to be paid timely. If tuition is not paid timely, your spot will be given to another child.

VACATIONS

If a family is taking a vacation, we ask that the facility be informed ahead of time (if possible), and the tuition for that week(s) (if due) be submitted PRIOR to going on vacation. If tuition is late due to an absence or vacation, the child's account is subject to a late fee.

PARENT - ACADEMY INTERACTIONS

The Academy conducts all services in a professional manner, and asks it's families to do the same. If a parent has a question or concern with any aspect of services provided, discretion and privacy will be upheld to protect the child and parent/family and teachers. Communications will be kept private in either the office or over the phone (or electronic communication, when neither of the in-person communications are available).

Just as The Academy would not utilize social media to slander a parent or child, The Academy expects the same respect from the parent. Any post or comment on a post made on social media that intentionally or inadvertently slanders, disrespects, or breaches communication privacy interactions involving The Academy, teachers or enrolled children will be considered an immediate termination of services.

HOLIDAYS / CLOSURES

The Owner or Director may close the center or delay opening during inclement weather. Weather related delays or closures will be sent out via text/email through the Kangaroo Application. Please ensure your correct phone number and email address are submitted to The Academy. Tuition will be due if the child is scheduled, and the center closes due to inclement weather and/or if the parent chooses not to bring the child due to weather related causes.

If the center is currently open and must close due to situations such as inclement weather or a power outage, the staff will notify parents of present children first, then parents who will be arriving. We will use the emergency contact forms the Parent/Guardian has completed, contacting the Parent/Guardian first. If we are unable to reach the Parent/Guardian, we will contact the persons listed on the form by the Parent / Guardian. Please make sure all information is up to date.

In the event of an emergency closing all children must be picked up within one hour of being notified. The late fees of \$10 per 15 minutes will begin to take effect once the hour has passed. Parents will still be responsible for tuition for these closings.

If an emergency situation were to arise and the children need to be evacuated from the building, the premises, or the immediate geographical area, we will quickly and orderly move the children to our pre-planned safe locations and then contact each parent. Please see included *Emergency Preparedness Letter and Form*.

The center will be closed for childcare service on the following holidays:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| New Year's Day | Christmas Day |
| Thanksgiving Day | Christmas Eve |
| Memorial Day | Labor Day |
| Independence Day | Columbus Day * |
| President's Day * | New Year's Eve (half day) ^{1*} |

**Dependent upon attendance and the need. President's Day and Columbus Day added closures as of 4/2020, to allow for trainings, and planning for all center staff.*

¹The facility will be open for half a day. Families will be charged regular tuition. Dependent on the need and attendance.

Half Day Schedule:

DROP OFF : 6 AM - 8 AM

LUNCH : 11 AM

PICK UP : 12 PM

A "Holiday Closures" list for each year will be sent to parents via KangarooTime and posted inside the building for the year.

Due to The Academy's contract with ELRC and the subsidy office, we are obligated to charge private pay parents for these closures. If the "private pay" child is normally scheduled on the day in which the holiday falls, parents will be billed for that day. This is policy in every childcare facility that accepts county subsidized payments. Parents may use their 5 free sick/vacation days on these closures if they wish.

ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE

Please refrain from parking in our Handicapped parking spot. This is reserved for anyone with a physical disability.

Please be brief during pick up and drop off (3-4 minutes maximum). We ask that parents please do not occupy these spots for more than a few minutes. If parents wish to speak to a teacher at length about their child, or the director about a concern, parents must schedule an appointment (either in person, or by phone) in order to allow vacant parking spots for drop-off and pick-up.

Please do not allow your car to run, during pick up and drop off. Parents should not allow another child in the car during pick-up and drop-off. Parents should hold the hands of their children immediately upon leaving the classroom, until the child is safely placed in the parent's vehicle.

During a pandemic or federal/state/local emergency, pick up and drop off procedures may be altered in order to ensure safety of staff, children and families. Owner or Director will release guidelines at that time.

LATE FEES

TUITION

Late fees will be charged as per the following:

- ★ Pick-Up after 5:30 pm closing time: \$20 per 15 minutes.
- ★ Late Tuition (anytime past noon on Monday, tuition is due) or if a tuition payment is not received by NOON on MONDAY (the week of care) at a rate of \$20 per week. This will be automatically billed through Kangaroo Time. Example: Tuition for week one is paid on the evening of Monday. A late fee will be added to the week 2 invoice.
- ★ After 10 hour period in care: \$5/1 minute (see below)

Kangaroo Time sends out invoices on Saturday (the week prior to care). Payment on these invoices are due by Monday (noon), the week of care, given. Kangaroo Time will automatically apply a \$20 per week late fee, if there is a balance on your account. You are welcome to pay with cash / check as always (due Monday, by noon in the

tuition box at The Parent Station), or through the Kangaroo Time application (electronically). Because Kangaroo Time accepts electronic payments, there will be no exceptions made to any late payment.

EXTENDED DAYS

Care Beyond 10 Hours -- The Academy daily tuition is for a 9.5 hour day (hours must be agreed upon by parent and provider and included in Tuition Agreement). We feel that it is not in a child's best interest to be without parental care for more than 10 hours per day. If a child is not picked up within a 10 hour period, their account will be charged at a rate of \$5 per 1 minutes per child. This will be included along with any other late fees (i.e. pick-up after 5:30 PM).

Care Beyond Tuition Agreement -- Each child's weekly schedule as agreed upon in the Tuition Agreement, must be followed. If a child is repeatedly picked up after the agreed upon time, the parents risk a late fee assessed of \$5 per 15 minutes, past the agreed upon time. Similarly, if the child is dropped off prior to the agreed upon drop-off time, it will be charged at a rate of \$5 per 15 minutes.

APPROPRIATE PARENT ATTIRE

Parents are not permitted to enter the facility without appropriate clothing. Clothing must be clean, non-revealing and appropriate to wear around children. Parental clothing must not contain lude comments or phrases or pictures. Parents found to be wearing inappropriate clothing, will be asked to no longer wear such attire. If the parent refuses to follow these guidelines, this will result in termination of services.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE FOR CHILDREN

Children must be dressed for the season (long sleeves and pants in the winter and more cool clothing during the summer months). Although The Academy does have spare clothing bins, they are not to be used by parents as every-day attire. They are for extra spills or messes on the children throughout the day.

Children should be dressed in clothing that is able to be played and worn 'hard'. We take our children out almost every day. Although we do our best to keep clothing free of dirt, food, and messes – they *are* children and will get messy during play and eating times. If you do not want a particular item of clothing or shoes to become marked, please DO NOT wear that item of clothing on your child to the facility. We will also not change clothing or shoes of a child in order to play, paint, or eat. Whatever item of clothing your child arrives at the center in, will remain on the child unless it becomes dirty or soiled. We will then utilize the spare clothing items you have stored for your child at the center as substitutes, or if none remains we will utilize one of our spare sets of clothing and ask that it is laundered and brought back the next day.

Children may not wear sandals or shoes with an open toe. Because we run hard and play hard outside, shoes other than sneakers or closed-toed shoes can be a safety hazard. Children that arrive in sandals will not be able to be included in our daily activities and parents will be asked to either bring appropriate shoes to the facility, or take the child home for the day.

Please be sure to have a minimum of two extra sets of weather-appropriate clothes for your child, daily. If your child soils their clothing, it will be sent home in a plastic bag, hanging on his/her hook. That is the parent's indication to replace those clothing items, with an additional set. We do not have spare clothing items, in which to clothe your child. If your child does not have spare clothing items to utilize in the event of an accident or spill, we will call the parent at work and ask that clothes are brought in, or the child to be picked up.

MANDATED REPORTERS

As early childhood education professionals, The Academy care givers and educators are mandated reporters of child abuse. If a teacher suspects child abuse or neglect in the home of one of our enrolled children, we must report this to Childline (child abuse reporting agency in the state of Pennsylvania). We are not obligated to inform the guardians or caregivers that any report was filed.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

We value and respect all religious celebrations and we educate our students on all forms of celebrations. We invite parents to speak to our classes about their family's celebrations in order to help children understand the beautiful diversity of our population. We allow grand celebrations of most holidays to be left to the families in the privacy of their own homes.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES (Expulsion and Suspension)

The Academy reserves the right to discontinue services for any client at any time without warning due to uncooperative parents or those (children or parents) that do not comply with any of the policies and procedures noted herein. Regardless of means/methods or reason behind termination, *a total of two week's tuition will be due upon termination.*



THE ACADEMY, EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

PROGRAMS

Our Center Classrooms

Program Standards:

1. Teaching and Curriculum – The Academy, EEC’s program is aligned with Pennsylvania State Standards and constructed in such a way, so as to include all styles of learning. We believe play is a very important, essential aspect of learning for the young child. We incorporate many of our learning objectives with active play pieces. In the future, we will be purchasing a pre-made curriculum which is on par with the standards of Keystone STARS (and is one of their requirements, to continue through the program).
2. Wellness – We feel a child’s wellness and health are the cornerstone to a successful learning environment. This piece of our program begins with healthily planned and prepared meals. The Academy utilizes as much fresh and in season fruit and vegetables as possible. We serve lean cuts of meat, whole grain components, and prepare all meals on-site. Exercise and movement is essential to keeping your immune system fully functional (moving those good-for-you antibodies around in the blood, and keeping illnesses at a minimum). Both exercise and yoga/meditation techniques are utilized in the classrooms, daily to keep our little one’s bodies healthy and well.
3. Assessment – The Academy uses bi-annual assessment tools in order to observe and record advancement in our program’s state-aligned curriculum. Parents are given observations and reports, and quarterly parent-teacher conferences will be arranged. Our teachers are continually observing your children, and will always reach out with positive comments, improvements or concerns on a day-to-day basis.
4. Families – The Academy families are families to us all! We keep families up to date hourly with our Kangaroo Time parent application for cell phones or tablets. The teachers share pictures, meals, nap times, diapers, and activities/curriculum daily. Your phone app will update every 30 minutes as teachers continue to add information. We encourage open communication between home and school – to provide the child with consistency in his/her young life. We will offer parent involvement activities throughout the year, in conjunction with our weekly themes.
5. Environment – We feel a positive, loving environment allows the young child to feel comfortable and confident to promote optimal learning. We greet families in the morning, encourage communication, and

engage in friendly interactions between parents, staff, and children. Positive reinforcement is utilized heavily to encourage young children to engage in positive behaviors.

INFANTS

ROUTINE

We allow our infants to create their own schedules. If they are tired, they sleep. If they are hungry, they are fed. In general, most infants (as they grow) set their own schedule and routine.

FEEDING

Formula

On CACFP (Food Program) forms, parents must indicate what formula (or breast milk) is preferred. We offer Similac Advance through the CACFP. If this is the formula parents select for their infant, we are happy to make the bottles at our facility. In this case, parents send in clean, sanitized empty bottles (enough for the entire day's feeds). If the parent prefers a different formula other than what is offered, parents must send in pre-made bottles labeled with each child's name and date the bottle was prepared. Parents that select to allow their infant to utilize the formula offered by The Academy, must bring in enough bottles and nipples (one per feeding per day).

Breast milk

The Academy follows guidelines set forth by the American Association of Pediatrics and <https://kellymom.com/>. Any bottles containing breast milk will be discarded within one hour, after each feeding. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Thawed breastmilk bottles are not refrigerated and kept for future feedings. Families may bring breast milk in labeled containers or bags and the center will store this for use. The containers must be manufactured specifically for the use of storing breast milk. If the family is providing the center with breast milk and the center runs out, the Parent will be called. Breast fed babies must have two additional frozen servings of breast milk kept at the facility, in the event the infant requires an additional bottle.

If a nursing mother wishes, she may stop by during the day on a work break to feed her infant. The Academy will make appropriate accommodations for a mother to have privacy (if requested) while feeding her infant.

Once an infant reaches the age in which they are ready for solids, we offer wholesome jarred food as well as nutritionally balanced table food meals, as per the guidelines of the CACFP.

Our policy on introduction to foods is to follow the parent's lead. We will not introduce a new food unless informed by the parents. The Academy would like our parents to send the notes about NEW food introductions over the parent communication application (Kangaroo Time). However, The Academy is bound by the rules and regulations of the CACFP. If your child does not abide by the appropriate meal pattern for his/her age, we will request a note from his/her doctor stating their current meal pattern is appropriate (medically) for the age range. This form is required in order for us to participate in the CACFP. Please see the included infant meal pattern chart for more information and to determine if your infant falls within the appropriate guidelines.

While we understand some parents want their children fed at a very specific time. We will do our best to accommodate this routine. However, if we feel the infant is not getting enough nutrition, we will feed the child in order to satisfy their need for nutrition at our discretion, unless there is a note from a medical physician stating otherwise with a very specific plan for amount and frequency of feeding.

INFANT SLEEP

Each infant is assigned a crib while in our infant room. Our sheets are washed weekly. We suggest parents bring in a blanket from home (labeled with the child's name), in order for our infants to feel more comforted with something familiar – they may only use a blanket while awake in the play space. However, we are not permitted to allow infants in the crib with any objects (with the exceptions of pacifiers, and sleep sacks). We always lay a child on his/her back to sleep. We check on our infants frequently throughout nap time, to ensure their safety.

- *SIDS Reduction and Prevention Policy:*

Sudden infant death syndrome is the unexplained death of an infant under one year of age. The Academy, EEC, will always sleep infants on their back (considered to be the safest and healthiest sleeping position) unless the child's physician submits to The Academy, a signed medical document/statement specifying the child's exact medical condition which necessitates, alternative sleeping position, and duration that this must occur. This document will then be kept on file at the facility. The Academy does not use wedges or position devices. Infants will not be laid down with bottles or Sippy cups of any kind. Sleeping position at The Academy will always follow the American Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines. Infants may not use blankets, pacifiers with a stuffed animal connected, stuffed animals, crib bumpers, or any other soft material. Parent or center-provided sleep sacks are acceptable for use, during infant sleep. Infants will be checked every 10 minutes by the staff member to whom the child is assigned during the day.

The Academy highly suggests infants are in the same sleeping environment at home, as they are when attending The Academy's program. The rate of SIDS is significantly increased when an infant's sleep environment differs between home and their childcare-giver. We encourage all infants to be placed on their backs in a safe crib, while at home.

COMMUNICATION

We ask that parents inform our caregivers if the infant takes a pacifier, requires a "lovey" or likes to be held or comforted in a particular way. Communication between parent and caregiver is absolutely essential at this age. The Academy Caregivers utilize a phone and tablet application called "KangarooTime" that informs parents about the child's day (mood, wet/dirty diapers, how many ounces of formula/breast milk and what time the child ate, or what foods, how well he/she napped, and his/her

general mood). We would like to know how our infants fared during the evening hours at home. We ask that parents become familiar with KangarooTime, in order to make notations about each child's evening and weekend. Communication (either verbally or written) is essential for our caregivers, so we know what to be on the look-out for throughout the day.

ACADEMICS

Although our group is young, we begin education early! The *Creative Curriculum* has material aimed towards infant education and development. The Academy infant room teachers sing the alphabet, begin counting, sing many children's songs, teach body parts, and even begin SIGN LANGUAGE!

SUPPLIES

The Academy asks parents to bring in a box of tissues on the 1st of every month, and a sleeve of diapers and container of wipes as the child is in need (caregivers will inform parents ahead of time). Parents are asked to supply The Academy with at least two sets of clothing changes for our infants. Bibs are provided.

YOUNG and OLDER TODDLERS

ACADEMICS

The Academy education continues with our Young and Older Toddlers (12 months through the last day in the 23rd month). We begin with the letter "A" and continue on. The Academy YT and OT Curriculum is handcrafted to suit the particular needs of the immediate group, and state-standard aligned. Our goal is for our Young Toddlers to recognize all 26 letters by their 23rd month. We sing songs, learn to count, learn colors, learn shapes, practice sharing (a challenge at this developmental age), and begin exploring the outside! Our Toddlers enjoy water play, practice using crayons and paint brushes, and much more! We observe and evaluate our Toddlers at minimum, every six months. We offer parent-teacher conferences to discuss results.

DAILY ROUTINE

The Academy Toddlers are served breakfast until 9 am. After cleaning up, The Academy Toddlers have some free play time before outside play time. At approximately 9:30 we begin circle time – we sing, count, talk about colors, shapes, and more. Toddlers participate in gross motor time, dramatic play, arts and crafts and more. At 11 am our Toddlers are served The Academy nutritionally (and appropriately bite-sized) balanced lunches. After clean-up it is nap time. Depending on the activity level for the day, our Toddlers nap between 12:15 and 2:15. After diapering and cleaning up post-nap, we have free play and read books (and some outside play time) until parents arrive.

SLEEP

The Academy Toddlers nap on the floor with individual napping materials brought from home (sleeping bags, nap roll or mat). We send home each child's napping materials weekly to be laundered. Each nap mat must be labeled with the child's name. The nap mats will be individually contained in a sleep bag, labeled with each child's name.

SANITIZING

Our Toddler teachers remove mouthed toys from the available child care space when dropped to avoid any bacterial or viral illness spread. We often sanitize high chairs, cribs, and toys daily.

SUPPLIES

Parents are asked to bring in two extra sets of seasonal clothing sets, along with a set of wipes and tissues (at the beginning of each month) and diapers (teacher will inform parents when the child is low). (1) Container of Sunscreen (minimum SPF of 30) labeled with the child's name (beginning April 1st of each year). Parents are asked to bring blankets and/or stuffed animals in order for the child to feel comfortable during rest time.

Sippy cups will be provided, labeled with the child's name and washed and sanitized, daily.

DIAPERS / TOILET TRAINING

When providing diapers or pull-ups, we ask that parents bring in a full unopened package the following scheduled day. Children wearing diapers will be changed on the changing table only.

Each teacher will utilize Kangaroo Time in order to communicate with families, (a few days prior) when the child will run out of diapers. It is the parent's responsibility to continue to utilize the communication application to read about the child's day, and be aware of diapers, wipes or clothing shortages. If the parent does not bring in diapers in adequate time and the child runs out of diapers, The Academy has an extra supply of hypoallergenic, natural diapers on hand. The spare diapers will be charged at a rate of \$2/diaper to the child's tuition account for each diaper used, until a new supply of diapers is brought in for the child.

Toilet training for an individual occurs over a period of time that can range from a few weeks to several months and include several stages of development. Regressions are not unusual during the process, particularly if the child is affected by such things as illness, a move to a new home or child care center, or even a new member of the family. Accidents are expected and never met with disapproval. Daytime control may occur easier than nighttime control. The staff will aid the parent/guardian through this process when the parent has decided to begin the process and has done so in the home.

Pre-School 1 & 2

[ages 24 months to 35 months]

ROUTINE (may change, depending on children/classroom needs):

6:30 to 9 am – Breakfast

9 am to 9:30 am– Circle Time (we talk about the weather, days of the week, letters, shapes, numbers, colors, sing songs and play games)

9:30-10 am – Centers / Organized Play

10 am to – 10:30 - Craft time and fine motor skill practice

10:30 to 11 – Gross Motor / Outside Play

11 am to 11:30 – Lunch

11:30 to 12 – Clean up and diaper/potty time

12:15 to 2:15 Rest/Nap

2:15 – 3:15 Clean up/Diaper/Potty time and Snack Time

3:15 to close – Free Play (parents begin to arrive)

MEAL TIME

The Academy Older Toddlers eat with their utensils. We eat at tables together, and practice manners. As with all the other children in the facility – our meals are nutritionally balanced and follow the CACFP meal pattern for this age group.

SUPPLIES

Parents are asked to bring in TWO sets of seasonally appropriate clothing, one package of wipes and tissues (1st of every month), and one sleeve of diapers (if appropriate). If the child is potty training – The Academy caregivers ask that pull ups (if being used) and an additional set of clothing is retained for accidents.

DIAPERS / TOILET TRAINING

The Academy feels that communication between home and caregiver/teacher during potty training is essential for success. Our teachers will keep toilet routines consistent between home and school. Deviation from what's

'normal' for the child can be disruptive and confusing. We rely on the parents to guide us in the direction they would like to go with potty training. We ask that children in our Pre-K classes are fully potty trained (as there are no diaper changing areas in those rooms), so we work hard on completing the training process during this time period.

Each teacher will utilize Kangaroo Time in order to communicate with families, (a few days prior) when the child will run out of diapers. It is the parent's responsibility to continue to utilize the communication application to read about the child's day, and be aware of diaper, wipes or clothing shortages. If the parent does not bring in diapers in adequate time and the child runs out of diapers, The Academy has an extra supply of hypoallergenic, natural diapers on hand. The spare diapers will be charged at a rate of \$2/diaper to the child's tuition account for each diaper used, until a new supply of diapers is brought in for the child.

Please note - children who are not potty trained, are not able to come along with The Academy on off-site field trips. Children who are not potty trained and whose classroom will be attending a field trip, will be responsible for finding alternative care on that particular day.

PRE-K

ROUTINE

The Academy's Pre-K program begins promptly at 9 am. Parents should have the children at the facility and have time to eat breakfast (if not done so at home) and finish before 9am. Our children participate in the program from 9 through 11am. There will then be a break for our nutritionally balanced lunches. Pre-K will clean up, and have free-play time in centers until approximately 12 pm. Nap time begins at approximately 12 PM. In order for children to be enrolled in The Academy PreSchool and Pre-K programs, each child MUST be potty trained. The facility's Pre-K classroom does not have the appropriate set up for diaper changing. If a child is not potty trained, the child will not be able to participate in their developmentally appropriate classroom.

CURRICULUM

Academy, EEC utilizes a curriculum which is aligned with Pennsylvania State Standards, *The Creative Curriculum by Teaching Strategies* (described above under CURRICULA). The teachers will add to the program as needed. The Academy stays in close contact with local Kindergarten educators to ensure our students are prepared for their ongoing education, and are attending elementary school with a significant knowledge base and skills necessary for success. PreK Educators will cover many different subject areas to give each child a well rounded education, and utilizes different teaching methods in order to reach each child (as individual and unique learners).

The Academy feels physical activity is important in the lives of our young children – and we incorporate physical movements/activities into our educational curriculum.

SUPPLIES

Parents shall bring in the following:

1. (2) Labeled sets of weather and size-appropriate clothing.
2. Nap-roll/Mat/sleeping bag for nap time (LABELED with child's name)
3. Container of Sunscreen (minimum SPF of 30) LABELED with child's name-Beginning April 1st of each year.

School-Age

The Academy offers private transportation to some Altoona Area School District Schools. Hollidaysburg Area School District buses provide transportation to/from The Academy for the following schools:

C.W. Longer Elementary School
Frankstown Elementary School

The Academy offers care during snow delays and cancellations, school district closures or holidays, and throughout the summer months.

The Academy offers quiet homework time if needed after school. Nutritious breakfast and snacks will be provided. Lunch will be provided in the event of a school cancellation, school closure, or holiday.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Parents will coordinate a time in which to view the facility, speak with the director about curriculum, policies/procedures, tuition, and care. The director will answer any questions the parents may have. At the time of enrollment, parents and the director will agree on a schedule (days of the week, and time period of care), start date, and fill out a Weekly Tuition Agreement Contract. Parents must then submit a one time non-refundable enrollment fee(see below). At time of enrollment, parents must also submit the following forms BEFORE agreed upon start date (available electronically and hard copy) :

- ❖ *Emergency Contact Form (every line must be filled – if line does not apply please write “NA”)*
- ❖ *Weekly Tuition Agreement Form*
- ❖ *Child Health Assessment (must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment)*
- ❖ *Emergency Preparedness Release Form*
- ❖ *Photograph/Media Release Form*
- ❖ *Child Release Form (if applicable)*
- ❖ *CACFP (Food Program) Income Eligibility Form (one per family)*
- ❖ *CACFP Child Enrollment Form (one per child)*
- ❖ *CACFP Infant Feeding Form (for ages 6 weeks to 12 months only)*
- ❖ *Sunscreen Permission Form*
- ❖ *Diaper Cream Permission Form*
- ❖ *Transportation Permission Form (if applicable)*

Wait List Fee/Paperwork Processing Fee: \$25 (non refundable)

Enrollment fee (non-refundable) - due once start date is confirmed:

- Full and part-time: First weeks tuition.
- Flexible schedule enrollment fee: drop-in day rate X 2.
- CCIS: Co-pay. CCIS must provide verification to the Director.

Parents who remove their child from care, for the Summer (or any other time throughout the year), will forfeit the child's spot for Fall enrollment. The child must be placed back onto the wait list, wait-list fee, and an additional enrollment fee will be collected.

During any type of emergency, pandemic, or act of terrorism, The Academy and its designated Director or on-call Supervisor, may opt to change any procedures or policies to best ensure the safety of all its enrolled children and employed staff. Time permitting, changes will be announced. During an immediate emergency, there may not be time for notifying parents of changes, and The Academy must make quick decisions to safeguard the children in care.

The Academy, EEC: Inclusion/ IEP/IFSP Policy

Philosophy:

The Academy, Early Education Center believes all children learn on different levels and different paces. The Academy believes in full inclusion which is defined as the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society (NAEYC). We accept children for their differences, and strive to teach how each child learns individually. We will not discriminate based on age, gender, race, religion, language, financial situation, or abilities/disabilities. We believe that inclusion supports the right of every infant, child and family to participate as a full member in our program. Every child has the right to develop friendships and learn from peers. We recognize that everyone has different needs and accommodations must be made. We want to promote higher expectations for all to increase confidence and independence and will assist children in all possible ways to accomplish this goal.

We promote access and participation for all children. We are flexible in our schedule and routines and adjust as needed for various disabilities. We evaluate our environment, activities and materials to make sure all children are able to participate and work within our program. We will try to incorporate family cultures by encouraging communication. We will also address any communication barriers by seeking out extra resources and incorporating the language in our daily routines.

We want our staff to be confident and competent when working with all children. We accomplish this ongoing goal by utilizing professional development training and promoting higher education levels. We also understand that from time to time a "breathing break" may be necessary for staff. We also schedule meetings with staff to discuss any needed changes to support children. Our Lead Teachers are giving monthly "one on one" meetings with office administrators to aid in the improvement of our program.

We want our families to feel welcomed and we wish to partner with them to provide the best service possible. We address this by encouraging open communication daily and collaboration with our team. We want to learn more about their values and language so we can have a better understanding of how best to include all cultures. We also schedule conferences and other meetings with families to gain insight into their principles and traditions.

We also support inclusion by working with outside organizations such as Altoona and Hollidaysburg school districts, IU8, Learning Express, and other organizations. We will make accommodations for

these providers to assist children in any way possible within our program such as areas to work, schedule adjustments, and following IEP's / IFSP's.

Center Involvement:

The Academy will make accommodations to the curriculum and within the classroom in terms of behavioral, educational, religious, or personal factors to meet the individual child's needs. The Director will assign professional development training to staff to help aid in their understanding of the subject. We want our staff to be confident and competent when working with all children. We accomplish this ongoing goal by utilizing professional development training and promoting higher education levels. We also understand that from time to time a "breathing break" may be necessary for staff. We also schedule meetings with staff to discuss any needed changes to support children.

Family Involvement:

The Academy will partner with families and the community to ensure each child is achieving his or her individual goals. We will involve parents by communicating daily with parents through our KangarooTime app, and verbally at pick up and drop off. We will encourage family involvement for activities throughout the year. We promote access and participation for all children. We are flexible in our schedule and routines and adjust as needed for various disabilities. We evaluate our environment, activities and materials to make sure all children are able to participate and work within our program. We will try to incorporate family cultures by encouraging communication through our parent communication app (KangarooTime) and our informational enrollment form. We will also address any communication barriers by seeking out extra resources and incorporating the language in our daily routines. We want our families to feel welcomed and we wish to partner with them to provide the best service possible. We address this by encouraging open communication daily and collaboration with our team.

Community Involvement:

The Academy will work with the community (i.e. outside agencies) to give the child the help they need to succeed within our center, and allow them to work within our center when necessary. We will partner with the community by providing our families with information regarding services they may need/are interested in for their child.

IEP/IFSP Policy

At the Academy, EEC, we accept all children with IEP/IFSPs. The child's teacher will attend IEP/IFSP meetings (with parent approval), and participate in creating/updating the plan. The teacher/ staff will partner with parents and outside agencies to give feedback when needed. The office staff, along with the assigned classroom teacher, will review the IEP/IFSP together to make accommodations to the child's daily schedule and curriculum as stated in the document. We require all children with IEP/IFSPs have them in their file. We will work with the individual service providers to assist updating the document as needed, and required. The Director will identify professional development training for staff to help aid in their understanding of the subject. We want to learn more about their values and language so we can have a better understanding of how best to include all cultures. We also schedule conferences and other meetings with families to gain insight into their principles and traditions.

We also support inclusion by working with outside facilities such as Altoona and Hollidaysburg Area School Districts and Early Intervention Agencies. We will make accommodations for these providers to assist children in any way possible within our program such as areas to work, schedule adjustments and following IEP's/IFSP's.

The Academy, EEC: Behavioral Plan (Expulsion and Suspension Policy)

Expulsion is the permanent removal or dismissal from the program

Suspension is taking an action due to a child's developmentally inappropriate behavior that requires that a child not be present in the classroom for a specified period.

For any behavior problems, teachers will use redirection and positive behavior strategies. Behaviors could include and ARE NOT limited to:

- a. Aggression
- b. Defiance
- c. Sensory Issues
- d. Interpersonal relationships issues (Negative peer interactions)

The following steps will be taken when behaviors are present:

1. Teacher will document behaviors on Kangaroo Time (communication app) and communicate with parent/guardians verbally.
2. Teacher will observe the child, and make accommodations for the child considering the environment as a factor for certain behaviors.
3. Teacher will implement positive behavior strategies such as developing clear behavior guidelines (behavior chart)
4. Teacher will complete a developmental screening on the child if behaviors continue.
5. Teacher will partner with parents to form an action plan utilizing Evidence- based practices to support positive social emotional development.
6. Teacher will communicate with the Director, and/or Owner about any behavioral problems within the classroom.
7. If the behaviors continue through the redirection and positive behavior strategies, The Academy will ask for a family team meeting. This meeting will consist of the parents/ guardian, teachers, and office management (Facility Manager, Director, or Owner).
8. Teacher, Director, and parents/ guardian will discuss the plan, and discuss referring the child to local services for screening (if necessary).
 - a. *If the child is already enrolled in Early Intervention (or other local services),* The Academy will partner with community agencies (ECMH, IU, local mental health agencies, etc.) to make accommodations within the classroom, and aid in behavioral plan.
 - b. *If the child is not eligible for Early Intervention (or other local services),* The Academy will require written notice of service denial from community agencies (if necessary).
9. The Academy will work with the EI program and local behavioral health partners to find a program in which family I child may be eligible.

Families and Early Childhood Educators may contact the CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288 for any references to Early Intervention and other services.

If all options are exhausted, and the child is putting themselves, other children, or our teachers in danger we will, for the safety of all, have no choice, but to remove the child from our program. This removal could be a temporary suspension or permanent expulsion. This decision is up to the discretion of the Owner/Director and is dependent on the circumstances.

If at any time, the selected liability insurance company disapproves of behaviors, actions, or situations which are in direct relation to an enrolled child, The Academy must disenroll the child, in order to retain liability insurance as per PA State Childcare Regulations.

I understand The Academy, Early Education Center policies on Behavioral Plan approaches and agree to abide by the information contained, herein. I promise to work in conjunction with The Academy to serve my child to the best of his/her abilities and aid in the development of educational and social emotional skills.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____



SUBJECT: Nondiscrimination in Services
TO: Patients/ Clients/Residents/Parents
FROM: Erin Fouse (owner)

Admissions, the provisions of services and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age or sex.

Program Services Shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any individual/client/patient/student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

The Academy, Early Learning Center
1214 South Logan Blvd
Hollidaysburg, Pa 16648

Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health & Welfare Building
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Pittsburgh Regional Office
302 Fifth Ave, Suite 390 Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Sincerely,

Erin E Fouse



IMMUNIZATION POLICY

At the Academy Early Education Center, we feel strongly that all children be vaccinated that are enrolled in our center. We trust the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation that states:

“Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful diseases that can be very serious, may require hospitalization, or even be deadly.”

We respect all individuals’ decisions to decline immunizations for religious, medical, and personal (philosophical) reasons. However, we reserve the right to make the decision to require immunizations for our center regarding our own personal and medical reasons. We will not accept any children that are not following or up to date on the recommended vaccination schedule as stated by the CDC, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Please refer to the CDC website for any information. (cdc.gov)

Samantha E. Pope

Samantha Pope, Director

The Academy, EEC

By signing below, I fully understand the information contained, in the Parent Handbook, and agree to abide by all my responsibilities, listed throughout The Parent Handbook. I understand that if my child contracts a communicable illness while being cared for at The Academy, Early Education Center, I will not hold The Academy, EEC liable. I understand that enrollment in any childcare program, increases the level of contacts my child will have on a daily basis and will, as such, subject them to an increased amount of viral, bacterial and fungal particles. I understand that while The Academy, Early Education Center and staff perform routine cleanings, room sanitizing procedures, and practice safe hygiene policies disseminated from the CDC and ELRC (licensing agency), The Academy (nor any other childcare facility) can fully eliminate all contaminants from a classroom. I therefore, will not hold The Academy liable for any illness contracted by my enrolled child.

Parent's Printed Name

Date

Parent's Signed Name

Date

Tuition Rates 2021-2022

Rates Effective: 8/23/21

Tuition Due - Monday by Noon (via Kangaroo Time Application)

\$25 Wait List Fee

Enrollment Fee: First Week's Tuition

| Age | 5 Days | 4 Days | 3 Days | 2 Days | Add-On (Drop in / FLEX) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------------|
| 6 weeks to 23 months | 182 (includes 5 free days) | 149 | 114 | \$78 | \$46 |
| 24 months | 174 | 142 | 110 | \$75 | \$46 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|
| through 35 months | (includes 5 free days) | | | | |
| 36 months and up | 163 (includes 5 free days) | 133 | 102 | \$70 | \$46 |

Meals: Currently included in the cost of tuition, however, this is subject to change, monthly, based on the Center's eligibility in the Federal Government's CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program). If the Center is determined ineligible, families will pack their children's breakfast, lunch and snacks. No changes will be made in tuition at that time, as the CACFP is a non-profit program. Center's collective eligibility relies solely on the personal income of the individual families.

Tuition does not include field trips, or any extra activities, not listed in the Parent Handbook.