



Parents' Handbook

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Introduction

- ★ Welcome to Kids First Academy! We are committed to providing an excellent quality preschool education and childcare program in a secure, nurturing and stimulating environment.
- ★ This Kids First Parent Handbook has been designed to provide important information that parents need when selecting the preschool education and childcare program for their child.
- ★ The following contains detailed information on Kids First Academy. Please take the time to read all the pages to help you better understand our program and philosophy. Should you have questions, please feel free to approach us. We would be more than happy to help you.

School Philosophy & Goals

- ★ It is our philosophy in Kids First Academy to partner with parents and keep you involved in your children's early education and preschool-preparedness development.
- ★ We aim to guide each child in the growth of their over-all personality without compromising their safety and providing a nurturing environment that promotes your child's physical, mental, emotional and social development.
- ★ Kids First Academy, then, tailor-fit these preferences when preparing a curriculum for each child touching on creativity and analytical thinking, while honing children's abilities through play-based instruction.
- ★ We have able and caring teaching staff that through keen observations and participation help a child succeeds in areas that need improvement to develop positive self-images. We like to make sure that your child has the very best early childhood experience possible.
- ★ Kids First Academy serves the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of the children and their families. We meet these goals with our age-appropriate curriculum, and our ongoing communication with parents. We are constantly grateful that you entrust us with that privilege and responsibility.

Get to know Kids First Academy

Curriculum

Kids First Academy's preschool curriculum is a discovery and play-based learning experience that gives each individual child the opportunity to move through specially designed learning areas of his or her own level of interest and ability.

The curriculum focuses on learning basic concepts and skills through hands-on experiences and activities. Some learning areas are designed to develop large and small motor skills while others are more academically oriented. Through our program, each child is given the tools needed to encourage the growth of the whole child.

Goals of the Curriculum

- ✓ To provide a positive sense of identity and emotional well-being
- ✓ To develop age-appropriate social, physical, language and literacy skills
- ✓ To encourage your child's thinking, reasoning, questioning and experimentation
- ✓ To expose your child to the arts and encourage creative expression
- ✓ To demonstrate proper health, safety and nutritional practices
- ✓ To respect gender, age and cultural diversity
- ✓ Overall, to prepare the child for school kinder level

Admission Policy

Kids First Academy welcomes children and families of diverse backgrounds. We are happy being able to reach out to these families and meet their child care needs. Children must be between 2-5 years old in order to enroll. Our administrators and teaching staff are more than able to assist in concerns regarding admission or re-admission of children. We also highly appreciate referrals.

Tuition Policy

Tuition fees are not subject to pro-ration for illness, holidays, or emergency closure of the center. If the hours my child attends change in any way, parents will notify the center immediately so appropriate staffing may be arranged. The full tuition fee even if my child is absent for one or more days; however, for each full calendar week my child is absent, the tuition fee will be discounted 50% as a reservation fee. Parents will receive four (4) reservation weeks per year and the payment for reservation fees is due in advance of the absence. The center requests a two-week notice of an intended vacation.

All tuition is due in advance of services rendered. In-center tuition payments are due on or before close of business the Friday prior to service. If tuition is not paid by 11 PM PST the Wednesday immediately following the payment due date, a late fee of \$30 will be charged. The terms of this agreement, including the fees, are subject to change in whole or part by Kids First Academy with 30 day notice. This agreement may be terminated by Kids First Academy at any time.

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$40 is due at the time of enrollment. If a child has withdrawn from the program and subsequently re-enrolls, a new registration fee is due at that time.

An additional charge (\$1 per minute) will be charge to the account for children who are picked up after 1:00PM (half day schedule) or after closing at 6:00PM (full day schedule). Should there be extenuating circumstances that would prevent you from paying on time, please discuss this with the administrator prior to it becoming a problem.

Should payment be subsidized by a state or county agency, payment will have to be received from the agency by the **25th of each month** or payment will have to be made out of pocket, and then reimbursed by Kids First Academy upon receipt of payment from the agency.

Vacations & Observed Holidays

Kids First Academy is closed on the following holidays/staff development days:

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|----------------|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Labor Day | Veteran’s Day | Thanksgiving Day (& day after thanksgiving) | Christmas Eve & Christmas Day |
| New Year’s Day | Martin Luther King Jr. Day | President’s Day | Staff Development day (TBA) |
| Memorial Day | Independence Day | | |

Calendar is subject to change. There is no tuition credit allowed for these days as they are federal paid holidays.

Sign in & Sign Out

Every child must be signed in each morning in the classroom. Upon greeting the child, the teacher will examine the child for signs of illness. An approved adult must sign out your child in the classroom before the child leaves the premises. This is a state requirement and establishes a flow of responsibility.

Tardiness

We prefer that children arrive on scheduled time. We do not want the children to miss any activities. If the children all arrive ready to begin their program, the transition is much easier for the children and the teachers. If your child will arrive late for any reason, please contact the school office before 7:00 AM.

Dress Code

☼ Do’s

- ✓ Children must be fully dressed when they arrive at school. Because play activity is such an important part of the curriculum, and their **clothing should be practical and comfortable.**
- ✓ **We prefer shoes that are closed-toes, and has no shoe laces**
- ✓ **Every child must have a complete change of clothing at all times,** including socks and underwear. If your child has changed clothing during the day, please take home the soiled items and replace them the next day
- ✓ All clothing items **must be labeled** with the child's full name.

☼ Don'ts

- ✗ No open-toed shoes, sandals, jellies or cowboy boots are permitted. Little toes are easily hurt and children have a difficult time on the playground.
- ✗ We also prefer that children do not wear jewelry.

Meals

Good eating habits and positive attitudes toward food should be established at an early age. At Kids First Academy, we provide nutritionally balanced breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snacks. We serve only healthy and well- balanced meals. Milk is provided with every snack or meal. Meals are prepared in the facility posted by the sign-up sheet. If you prefer to pack meals for your child, please make sure to always label the food items with your child’s name. If the child is hungry in between meals, we offer fruits or snacks.

Toilet Training

Kids First Academy accepts children that are not yet potty trained; we only request that parents provide pull-ups for potty training.

Nap Time

There is a rest period during the day from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM for all children. Each child is assigned his/her own cot to sleep on. Portion of the \$40 registration fee will be used to purchase your child's sleeping bag which will be sent home every Friday to be laundered.

Parking

Please use caution when driving into our facility parking. The parking lot is situated within a residential area as well, and residents will be in the vicinity. Visitor's parking space is first come, first serve along the fence. There is a designated short-term parking right in front of the main entrance to the school

Pick Up

Children can only be picked up by authorized persons listed in the child's enrollment forms. The authorized person must be over 18 years of age and present a photo ID. Please remember that your child must be signed in and out each day. A late pick-up fee will be assessed when a child is left beyond the center's operating hours. The late pick-up fee does not constitute an agreement to provide afterhours service, nor will the late fee be applied toward tuition. Chronic lateness at closing time may be grounds for termination of service. A late pickup fee will be charged as follows:

- If the child is picked up between 00 and 15 minutes late, there is no late fee of any kind.
- After 15 minutes, \$1.00 per minute

Field Trips

During the year, class field trips will be conducted. In all instances, a signed Parent Consent Form is required for each child in order for them to participate. The forms are distributed a few weeks before the activity and must be returned before the day of the activity. A small fee may be charged. We encourage parent participation as volunteer chaperones.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special and important occasions. You are welcome to bring cupcakes or cookies to share with your child's class. Please make arrangements with us for any special plans to make your child's birthday one of a kind. Please make sure there are no peanuts on any food items. We encourage non-edible treats for giveaways'.

Lost and Found

Please mark all personal items with your child's name. We will make every attempt to locate and return lost items. This task is much easier if your child's name is on the items. We cannot be responsible for any personal items that your child may bring to school.

What your Child May Bring From Home

Share day is every Friday at which time your child may bring one toy to share with his/her class. Books and CDs are welcome at any time. Please do not allow your child to bring items on other days. Violent toys, videotapes, guns and swords may not be brought to school.

Disaster Preparedness at Kids First Academy

Kids First Academy has an emergency disaster plan in place. Staff members are First Aid and CPR certified and prepared to handle an emergency.

Health & Safety at Kids First Academy

Illness

Colds, flu and other contagious diseases seem to occur frequently and spread easily among preschool and toddler children. To help protect your own child's health and to minimize the possibility of contagion at school, please keep your child at home if you observe any of the following symptoms:

| | | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Nasal discharge that is green or yellow | Complaints of ear pain | Productive cough | Severe sore throat |
| Eyes that are pink, burning or itching or producing discharge | Diarrhea or vomiting | Fever | |

If these symptoms of possibly contagious conditions or other conditions deemed contagious are observed in your child during the day, you will be called to come pick up your child immediately.

If there are any lingering signs of illness, please keep your child home an additional day. This will help to ensure that the illness has actually passed and that your child will be well enough to resume school activities. Please make sure that your child has been fever free for 24 hours without aid of medication before returning to school.

Medication

As a service to our parents, the office staff will administer medication prescribed by your physician. All medications (prescriptive and over the counter), including topical are given as a courtesy. Medication must be in the original container with the child's name on the label, as well as the prescription number, name of the medication, dosage, and expiration dates medication permission slip is required to be completed.

Head Lice

This is a very common occurrence in young children and has nothing to do with cleanliness. They are very easily transmitted by leaning back in an upholstered chair where someone had previously sat who had head lice, sharing caps or helmets, hair accessories, brushes, combs, even sitting close and touching heads. Random lice checks are conducted by office personnel. If lice are found on a child, the following steps are taken:

- Parents are notified and child must be picked up from school. A handout of additional information regarding lice is given to parents at the time of pick-up.
- Child's head must be treated with a product formulated to remove head lice.
- Nits must be removed with a special nit comb included in product. Nits on the scalp may be seen more easily on the hair at the back of the neck and above the ears.
- The child will be excluded from school the following day, or until the lice is under control. Upon returning to school state health laws require examination of hair and scalp before returning to school. To avoid infestation, it is important to inspect all family members for two weeks and treat if infected. Please be assured that we will do everything possible to prevent infestation.

We Love our Kids First Parents

Parent Information

You will always be in the loop! As school progresses and the children adjust to their new routine, we will continue to provide you with information regarding our program at Kids First Academy.

We will keep you informed of field trips, holidays, curriculum and other important information through regular communication verbally, by email, by text message, and by written notes and newsletters.

Separation from the Parent

At Kids First Academy, we also help your children prepare for going to preschool. The process of separation from the parent as the child enters and attends preschool is one of the most important accomplishments of the preschool child.

At each age level, a child will react differently. As children mature, they begin to identify themselves as independent personalities. In separating from you, the parent, your child is learning:

- ✓ To develop an interest in the activities of the preschool
- ✓ To feel comfortable with others at preschool
- ✓ To understand that his/her parent will come back and pick him/her up
- ✓ To understand that all parents leave their children and come back for them
- ✓ To understand that parents often must concentrate on their own interests and duties which are separate and different from those of a child
- ✓ To develop an acceptance and willingness to allow the parent an open-door policy

Discipline Policy

Positive Measures to Produce Acceptable Behavior

In order to maintain a happy, healthy, disciplined environment, the children are taught the importance of safety, care of property, good habits, rules of conduct and consideration and respect for others.

Constructive methods of discipline are used to maintain group control and handle individual behavior. Our main focus on discipline (teaching/training) is preventative in nature, as we aim to build self-discipline in the child

Constructive Measures to Discourage Unacceptable Behavior

When a child exhibits unacceptable behavior or attitudes, he/she is instructed as to what is wrong and then directed to a positive alternative approach/behavior. Along with these new attitudes and behaviors, the child is guided in the direction of self-discipline by encouraging him/her to make as many decisions as possible within limits. The limits are as follows:

- ✓ If a child strikes another child, he/she and the other child are respectfully separated. Each child is asked to explain what happened (define the problem). After each child has verbally given information, they are asked to help solve the problem, talk to each other, reconcile with one another and are redirected to another activity.

- ✓ If a child is disruptive, he/she will be respectfully asked to stop the behavior. If the child persists to the point of disruption again, he/she is reminded of his/her behavior and how it affects others. If the disruption continues, and the child willfully refuses to yield to instruction, he/she will be separated from the other children. After the child has been separated from the class activity for a short period of time (2 to 5 minutes) he/she will be invited to rejoin the class.
- ✓ If a child continues to misbehave and disrupt the class, the parents will be asked to come in for a conference to discuss how we can best meet the needs of the child.

Biting Policy

The safety of the children at Kids First Academy is our primary concern. The school's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our school:

- ✓ Staff will stay calm. The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people"
- ✓ The bitten child will be comforted. The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and apply ice. The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff
- ✓ Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The biter may be taken to the office so that the Director may further investigate the situation. The biter shall be reminded that teeth are used for chewing food and help us talk.
- ✓ The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident.
- ✓ Depending on the ages and circumstances involved, additional actions might include:
 - Separation of involved children. Discussing a better solution with all children involved. Explaining to the children that teeth are used to chew food help us talk
 - Showing/giving the biter something appropriate to bite (teething ring), while ensuring that the environment provides enough challenging activities
 - Carefully observing the involved child to identify precipitating events and prevent recurrences.
 - Maintaining a log to track when the behavior occurs
 - Conferences with parents to discuss the child's actions at home, parental discipline techniques, search for outside resources, etc.
- ✓ Just as any behavior issue regarding a child is confidential, the name of the child that has bitten is also confidential, in order to ensure the privacy of the child and family and prevent bias from others children. Informative handouts are given to parents regarding biting. Children who bite three times in the same day will be sent home.

Discipline Policy

Kids First Academy Discontinuation Policy

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Administrator to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child. Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- ✓ Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- ✓ Abuse of other children, staff, or property
- ✓ The facility's inability to meet the child's needs