



Parent Handbook

2021-2022 School Year

(Updated August 4, 2021)

Holy Spirit Child Development Academy

Holy Spirit Catholic Church

10650 Gulf Beach Highway Pensacola, FL

32507-9118

Florida Catholic Conference Accredited

AND

Florida Department of Children and Families Religious Exempt Status X01ES0063

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I. Welcome to the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy

a. History and Background

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you and your family to the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy. We hope that this experience will be a positive one that will launch your child on a lifelong love of Jesus Christ and a lifelong love of learning. Each classroom is staffed by great teams who are committed to ensuring that your child is safe and well cared for in an enriching and stimulating environment.

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Parent Handbook is designed to give you the insight into our philosophy of our Academy, as well as to acquaint you with specific guidelines for the day-to-day operations. Our objective is to promote an understanding between the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy and your family. Open communication between parent and teacher is the cornerstone of the Academy program.

b. Education and Philosophy

In the spring of 2014, the Holy Spirit Catholic Church embarked on a five-year planning process and discerned several goals for the parish; one of them being to “break ground on our needed parish facilities.” In the fall of 2014, we completed the playground, the pavilion, and the beautification of our grounds. In 2015, our building committee met with all of our parish groups and formed a site plan to further our mission to bring the community into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. In order to fulfill this important mission of our church, our desire is to reach out to our younger families with small children who are often juggling two careers. Realizing that there are very few options for childcare for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in our area, we discerned that creating a state of the art early-learning facility would benefit our parish as well as the community. The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy broke ground in the fall of 2017 and opened its doors in the fall of 2018.

c. Mission Statement

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy provides a safe and nurturing environment for the development of children and families in our community through Christ-centered childcare and preschool programs, in the longstanding tradition of Catholic excellence.

d. Advisory Council

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is a ministry of the Holy Spirit Catholic Church and under the leadership of the Priest along with a Director, who is responsible for the daily operations of the program. The Advisory Council makes recommendations to the Priest and Director primarily in the areas of strategic planning, marketing and fundraising, policy review for handbook revisions, and finances. The Advisory Council does not advise in personnel matters,

except to ensure that all Florida Catholic Conference and Florida Department of Children and Families personnel guidelines and accreditation criteria are being met.

e. State Licensing

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is accredited through the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program (FCCAP) which provides early childhood programs with a systematic process for continual improvement. These accreditation standards reflect best practices academically, while validating the unique purpose of teaching and living out the message of a lifelong love Jesus Christ according to the Catholic tradition.

In order to validate compliance with standards, every year our program will participate in an on-site health, safety, and accreditation update visitation from FCCAP. Every seven years we will participate with FCCAP in an on-site accreditation update visitation with a third-year review mid-way through the seven-year accreditation cycle.

Additionally, the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is licensed by the State of Florida through the Department of Children and Families under Religious Exempt Status.

A long-term goal of the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is to earn additional accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC is at the forefront for developing recommended best practices based on current research for the early childhood environment. Our program aims to incorporate NAEYC's recommended best practices to the full extent we are able as we work towards this future accreditation.

f. Contact Information

Phone Number: +1 (850) 492-4968 OR +1 (850) 492-0827 ext. 250 (Office) OR ext. 251 (Director)

Fax Number: +1 (850) 492-4968

Director Email: director@hscda.ptdiocese.org

Office Email: office@hscda.ptdiocese.org

Website: holyspiritcda.com

Address: 10650 Gulf Beach Highway. Pensacola, FL, 32507-9118

II. Admissions and Withdrawals

a. Academic School Year (Fall and Spring) Admissions

Parents are notified via e-mail or telephone call when a space becomes available for their child. Parents are given forty-eight (48) hours to notify us of their decision to either accept or decline enrollment. If the space is declined, the child will be removed from the waiting pool. If parents fail to contact us within the forty-eight (48) hour period, the child is removed from the waiting pool. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Office of any changes in contact information. If parents cannot be reached due to invalid contact information, the child is removed from the waiting pool. Parents will attend a new parent

orientation and open house at the beginning of the school year to learn about the Academy's policies, procedures, parent expectations, etc. Parents will also have the opportunity to ask questions, meet teachers, and see their child's classroom before their first official day of school.

b. Summer Admissions

Children coming in during the summer will have a rolling start date. Start dates may vary due to the availability in certain classrooms. Parents are notified via e-mail or telephone call when a space becomes available for their child. Parents are given forty-eight (48) hours to notify us of their decision to either accept or decline enrollment. If the space is declined, the child will be removed from the waiting pool. If parents fail to contact us within the forty-eight (48) hour period, the child is removed from the waiting pool. We will schedule a meet and greet where parents have the ability to see the classroom, meet the teachers, and ask questions before their child starts at the Academy.

Please understand that our teachers are taking vacation during this time so your child may not have the same teachers during the summer as they would in the fall. We will be implementing more STEM activities with our curriculum since attendance is lower.

c. Pre-Enrollment Requirements

Parents are required to input their billing information on the Brightwheel platform to pay the registration and curriculum fee and one week of tuition. Additionally, parents are required to submit the following to the Front Office before their child's official enrollment date:

- Enrollment Packet
- Florida Certification of Immunization Form
- Florida School Entry Health Exam Form
- Swaddling Consent for an Infant (if needed)
- Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (if needed)
- Asthma Action Plan (if needed)

d. Changes in Start Date

When an offer of admission is accepted, a start date is determined for the child. Parents can delay enrollment up to thirty (30) days to provide notice to current provider. Enrollment may not be delayed longer than thirty (30) days. Parents must complete the Enrollment Packet and provide the Florida Certification of Immunization and the Florida School Health Entry Exam Form prior to the child's first day of attendance. Parents that wish to delay their child's start date will need to begin paying full tuition on the first day the space is available in order to retain it.

e. Waiting Pool and Priority

It is important that the Enrollment Packet is completed and submitted as early as possible. Your child is placed in our waiting pool only after we receive a fully completed packet. Notices to confirm continued desire to remain on the waiting pool are sent by e-mail with a forty-eight (48) hour time period allowed for response. If there is no response, the child is removed from the waiting pool.

We use a waiting pool rather than a waitlist because we have children that receive priority regardless of when they submit their paperwork. For this reason, we do not have a numerical “list” of children or accept children on a “first come, first serve” basis. We do rolling admissions year-round and will reevaluate our waiting pool when a space becomes available. Our waiting pool will be prioritized according to the following:

1. Sibling is currently attending the Academy
2. The parent of the child is currently employed by the Academy or the Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit
3. The family is a contributing parishioner of the Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit or another Catholic Parish
4. Application date-prioritized by whomever has been on the list longest

f. Parish Participation Form

If you and your family are active parishioners at a Catholic parish, you will receive priority in our waiting pool. In order to receive priority, a Parish Participation Form must be completed and returned to the Front Office. This form must be submitted with the Enrollment Packet or five (5) days after we receive the Enrollment Packet. Once we receive this form, you will receive priority for active parishioner status. If we do not receive the Parish Participation Form after five (5), we will not prioritize your space in our waiting pool based on active parishioner status.

If the Academy is waiting on a Parish Participation Form in order to finalize a space and begin the enrollment process, a parent will have three (3) days to submit this form before forfeiting the space.

Please contact the Academy Front Office or Director if this form cannot be completed within the given timeframes.

g. Retaining a Space and Refunds

In order to retain a space at the Holy Spirit Child Developmental Academy, you will need to pay the \$100 non-refundable registration and curriculum fee and a one week of tuition. You will need to input your billing information into the Brightwheel platform in order to make this payment. Once we receive this payment, you will have a guaranteed space at the Academy.

We will not issue any refunds after ninety (90) days. Please inform the Academy as soon as possible if you are no longer interested in retaining a space so we have adequate time to refund you and to inform a new family.

h. New Parent Orientation

Each incoming family is required to attend a New Parent Orientation Session; these are scheduled periodically throughout the school year and the summer session. This informational presentation, which is hosted by the Director, is designed to address in detail the operating

practices and key policies of the Academy and to answer any questions that you may have. In addition, the New Parent Orientation addresses key policies associated with health and safety and will ask that you sign an acknowledgment that you understand and will adhere to these policies.

i. Enrolling Children with Disabilities and Special Needs

Enrollment for children with special needs will be determined by the Director of the Academy and its' teachers. Concerns which emerge after admission to the Academy will be addressed as they occur to determine the best course of action. We comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act in enrollment of these children. For more information, please refer to ***XIII. Monitoring Your Child's Progress at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy.***

j. Withdrawal Process

A thirty (30) day written notice must be given to avoid incurring tuition fees past the date you plan to withdraw your child. You must complete the Withdrawal Notice Form or send an *email to director@hscda.ptdiocese.org in order for the thirty (30) day notice to be valid. The Withdrawal Form is available at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Office. Other notifications such as verbal communication with a staff member will not be considered valid notices. Once a Withdrawal Notice Form has been submitted, changes to an earlier date will not be accepted. Failure to give the required thirty (30) day notice will result in monetary charges for a full month's tuition irrespective of whether the child attends or not. This allows the Academy adequate time to prepare for the child's departure from the Academy and a new family adequate time to enroll.

*When emailing a thirty (30) day notice, parents are expected to include the reason for withdrawal.

You must inform the Director of the Academy if your child will be out for a period exceeding one month. Should the child not attend for a period exceeding one month without communication with the Director, enrollment will be cancelled.

k. Termination/Expulsion Policy

Every effort will be made to prevent the termination of a child from the Academy, however, if they meet any of the following criteria, the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy reserves the right to give notice of termination of enrollment. The criteria are as follows:

1. Tuition payments are one month behind and no payment plan has been arranged.
2. Lack of follow through on special arrangements for payment.
3. Failure to adhere to policies and procedures as communicated in the parent handbook.
4. The program is unable to meet the developmental needs of the child.
5. The child's behavior threatens the health and safety of him or herself, the other children, or the Academy staff.
6. A parent's behavior is threatening or inappropriate towards the children, staff, or Director of the Academy.

I. Anti-Bias Policy

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is fully committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all children. The Diocese endorses all efforts to eliminate and prevent discrimination on the basis of age, gender, familial status, race, national origin, color, or disability. Our goal is to teach children to resist the bias that inundates much of today's popular culture. We believe that children can be empowered to reject negative stereotypes of race, gender, religion, and physical capabilities with the help of their parents and teachers. We ask for your support and your feedback to help us ensure that we are living up to our highest standards.

III. Fees

a. Tuition Fees

The tuition that you pay at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is to reserve your child's space for participation in the Academy. No refunds, prorates, or credit are given to accommodate individual family vacations, changes in family schedules, or absences due to illness or injury. By enrolling your child, you are agreeing to pay tuition and any additional fees the Academy requires for as long as your child is enrolled, regardless of the actual number of hours you and your child use the service. Tuition is billed weekly on Tuesday and due by Thursday. Payments are set up online using the Brightwheel platform. Payments are set on a recurring automatic withdrawal system from the inputted debit/credit card or ACH on the billing account.

b. Registration and Curriculum Fee

Upon registration, you will be charged a non-refundable registration and curriculum fee of \$100. This fee will be charged annually during the first week of August for all of our preexisting families. No refunds or discounts will be applied.

Children that started attending the Academy for the summer term are not required to pay the registration and curriculum fee in August.

c. Supply Fee

An annual supply fee of \$100 will be charged during the first week of February. No refunds or discounts will be applied.

d. Late Payment Fee

A \$50 late payment fee per child will be charged when a payment is officially one (1) day late. Parents are responsible for manually paying the late tuition and the late payment fee once it is delinquent.

e. Late Pick Up Fee

Parents are expected to pick up their child a few minutes **before** closing time. A charge will be assessed at the rate of **\$5.00 for any portion of the first five minutes beginning the minute the center closes at 6:00 pm and \$1.00 per minute thereafter.** Charges will be added to the family's brightwheel billing account. If the child has not been picked up one hour after closing and parents or emergency contacts cannot be located, the Escambia County Sheriff's Office will be contacted for their assistance. This action will be taken only as a last resort. Parents are responsible for all late fees for the entire period that staff must stay with the child. The Director will be apprised of

families who are consistently late and will then contact the family for a conference to work out a solution.

The same rate will be enforced when a child is deemed sick at school. The Academy contacts parents to pick up their child when the child shows contagious illness symptoms. We first will contact parents via phone or Brightwheel alert, and if not reached, will text or email the parent. **We require that parents pick up their child within one (1) hour of first being contacted. If the child has not been picked up after one (1) hour, charges will start accruing.**

Parents who are chronically late to pick up their child, especially when it extends into the evening hours, may be required to withdraw.

f. New or Replacement Key Fob Fee

When your child enrolls at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, you will be given two key fobs that enable you to enter the building. When a replacement or new key fob is issued to a family, a \$10 charge will be added to the parent's Brightwheel billing account.

g. Sibling Discounts

A 10% discount will be given to the second child in a family enrolled at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy. If three or more children are enrolled at one time, a 15% discount will be applied to the third and fourth child.

h. Tuition Vacation Week

Each family is given **one week** of tuition vacation a year in which they will not be required to pay tuition. The year is defined from August to July. Two weeks written notice must be given to the Director prior to taking vacation in order for tuition to not be processed. The child cannot attend the Academy during the use of the vacation week.

i. Non-Payment of Tuition or Fees

Non-payment of tuition and/or fees are grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying tuition and/or fees by our deadlines, you should discuss the matter with the Director immediately.

Parents will be asked to withdraw their child from the program if tuition and fees are one month past due. Once the child has been withdrawn from the Academy as a result of failure to pay, parents must prepay the entire amount owed to re-enroll their child.

j. Temporary Withdrawals

We allow parents to withdraw their child for a minimum of one (1) non-interrupted month and a maximum of two (2) non-interrupted months and reserve their space by paying half (½) of the tuition, in advance, for the period during which they will be gone. This program is only sustainable if parents adhere to the required notice requirements. Parents may request this only one time per year, even if it is done for only one month since it does have an impact on a classroom and the acclimation of a child. In addition, the temporary withdrawal must start at the beginning of a month. We require at least sixty (60) days in advance for temporary withdrawals using the

withdrawal notification application on the parent portal. Parents who do not provide sixty (60) days' notice, cannot avail themselves to this program.

k. Insufficient Notice of Withdrawal

A thirty (30) day notice is required when a parent plans to withdraw their child. If a thirty (30) day notice is not given, a parent will be charged thirty (30) days of monetary charges from the official notice of withdrawal regardless if the child attends or not.

l. Tuition Agreement

The Tuition Agreement in the Enrollment Packet requires parents to acknowledge and sign that they have read and understand all of our policies and procedures for our **III. Fees** section of the Handbook.

IV. Communication

a. Open Door Policy

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy understands the value of the parent and child relationship and how the bonds of a child and their family are crucial to healthy development. It is for this reason that the Academy maintains an open-door policy for all the families of the children served. Parents have open access to their children who are enrolled in the program at all times. The only exception is if there is legal documentation on file in the center that forbids access. Parents of children enrolled in our programs are not required to call prior to arriving or entering the program and may visit unannounced at any time during Academy operating hours.

Ongoing communication is essential between parents and the program to ensure optimal outcomes for children. This communication can take place via face-to-face conversations, Brightwheel, e-mails, or telephone calls. Other forms of communication and access include, but are not limited to, parent-teacher logs, parent conferences, or center literature. Conferences can be initiated by parents, by the teaching staff, or by the Director of the Academy.

b. Communication During the School Day

Please feel free to contact your child's teachers during the school day. You may contact the teachers at any time throughout the day through the Brightwheel app or call the teachers during the nap period. Please note that your child's teachers may not respond right away during the morning and afternoon work blocks as they are working with the children. Any urgent or time sensitive information should go through the Front Office.

Changes in Academy policies, procedures, and official notices are communicated via a monthly newsletter and announcements through the Brightwheel app. Each parent is expected to read the information that is being sent out.

c. Types of Communication

Communication between families and the Academy is essential to maintain a great partnership. There are many avenues for maintaining this connection:

1. Face to face conversations with the teachers and/or the Director at daily arrivals and departures.
2. Telephone conversations with the teachers and/or the Director at mutually convenient times.
3. Conference appointments at mutually convenient times with the teachers and/or the Director to ensure plenty of time to talk over matters of interest or concern.
4. E-mail conversations when time constraints limit direct conversations.
5. Written notes/letters.
6. Brightwheel messaging.

d. Parent-Teacher Conferences

As part of the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy's commitment to parents and children, parent conferences are an essential part of our educational program. Twice each year, in the fall and spring, conferences are scheduled with the teacher and/or the Director and the child's parents to discuss the overall progress of their child. Following the conference, a written summary is provided to the parents.

e. Communication Regarding Emergency Closings and Inclement Weather

In the case of an emergency that only affects the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, it is at the discretion of the Director to contact families to pick up their children (for example, the loss of utilities). In the event that the Academy needs to be evacuated, the Academy Director will follow the direction of the Escambia County Sheriff's Office.

Severe weather (especially during hurricane season June – November) may prompt the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy to close all operations. If the Escambia County Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, we will follow their lead. Parents can listen to local radio (WCOA 1310AM) or television (WEAR-TV3) stations for the latest information regarding school closings. During the months that the Escambia County Public Schools are out of session, the Academy will follow the lead of Escambia County Emergency Management recommendations for closure (myescambia.com).

If children are not picked up by the specified time, the Academy staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be notified so that pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or an emergency contact at the time of the call of the pick-up location should the children need to be evacuated from the Academy. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated. Please note that the Academy makes its best efforts to always be open during the scheduled hours. However, in the event of inclement weather, we follow the direction of the Escambia County Emergency Management. Many of our teachers and staff travel long distances, so their safety, as well of that of the families, is taken into consideration. There is not a tuition credit granted to parents in the event that the Academy is closed for emergency reasons or inclement weather since the teacher salaries and operating costs are still incurred.

V. Parent Communication within the School Community

a. Parent Partnership

It is only through a strong partnership between parents and teachers that we can maintain the quality early learning environment for your child. You are your child's first teacher and know your child best. Parent participation is welcome in the classroom. If you are unsure about how you might contribute, talk with your child's teacher or the Director. They will be more than happy to share ideas and ways to make your contribution.

The Academy and parents must partner to provide the appropriate support for each child in his or her journey at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy. This journey starts when you decide to enroll your child at the Academy. When you partner with the teachers and support staff while at the Academy, your child will receive the best possible guidance in their development during the first four years. We provide regular on-going parenting training support and discussion groups, online resources, guest speakers, and other information sessions designed to increase parents' ability to provide the best experiences for their children as well as to gain increased insight into their development. As partners in your child's education, we expect parents to participate in these opportunities.

For each child to be supported successfully, the Academy staff and parents rely on a relationship built on mutual trust and support. The teachers and support staff collectively are involved in addressing any concerns you may have. We require that parents and teachers bring any concerns to each other in a forthright and timely manner so that they may be addressed. In this parent partnership families and teachers must each be honored. On our part, we promise to respect families' customs and practices and invite your involvement with the Academy. We ask that the Academy teachers be recognized as early childhood educators rather than caregivers. We hire exceptional educators of young children, provide ongoing training and development for them and we require parents to recognize them as professionals.

b. How Can Parents Help Their Child Be Successful at School

The following suggestions will be useful in helping your child make an easy adjustment to school routines and expectations:

- Establish and maintain routines with your child so that he/she will know what to expect during the day - young children require and thrive on consistency and predictability.
- Make sure your child receives adequate sleep each night. Research shows that children at this young age should sleep for a minimum of twelve to fourteen (12-14) hours within a 24-hour period, and that this sleep plays a critical role in their development.
- Offer your child breakfast each morning and encourage him/her to eat.
- Keep the Academy personnel informed of any stressful situations at home.
- Your child's growing independence is essential to their overall development. Encourage your child to put away toys and personal items at home. Assign your child meaningful tasks (putting their dirty clothes in a hamper, helping to set the table, watering plants,

etc.) that keep the home running smoothly. Allow him/her to take more and more responsibility on self-care tasks as you and the teachers note his readiness to do so.

- Encourage your child to use his/her words and use an enriched vocabulary.
- Be kind, yet firm when dealing with your child. Firmness means using appropriate parenting principles; kindness means maintaining dignity and respect for yourself and your child.
- Involve your child in working out a solution to a problem, whenever possible.
- Refrain from using your cell phone while dropping off and picking up your child: your attention given to your child is a powerful message and fulfills an important need for them.
- Always take note of the words and the tone of voice you use with your child. Do not talk down to him/her. Do not criticize. Do not use sarcasm. Do not use words that shame, intimidate, or discourage them. Words can't be taken back and can scar the soul of a young child.
- Never do for a child what he/she can do for him/herself.
- Allow the child to enter his/her school by themselves, without being carried, as soon as they can walk confidently. Encourage them to say their good-byes to you as soon as they enter their classroom, and allow them to put away their belongings by them self.

c. Solicitation of Others in the Community

At the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, parents and staff may not solicit each other either on the premises or through the use of contact information provided by the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy. Please do not place brochures, magazines, or "gifts" in the lobby area for any ventures that are not Academy related and/or approved by the Director.

Parents cannot solicit teachers for employment opportunities outside of the Academy. If it is determined by the Academy that a parent has solicited staff for employment, the family may be immediately terminated from the Academy. We value our teachers and their continued employment at the Academy for the benefit of all families.

From time to time, parents solicit the Academy to provide goods or services including but not limited to, office supplies, credit card services, enrichment services, consulting services, etc. Please understand that we have long term relationships with vendors. In addition, we are concerned about the potential impact of a parent as a vendor interfering with the parent partnership. For this reason, and other reasons, we don't hire parents as vendors.

d. Babysitting Policy

All teachers and staff in our Academy abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct as set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Washington, D.C. May, 2011) states the following:

"We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationship with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children."

We ask for your cooperation and support by refraining from asking any of our teachers or staff to provide care for your children at any time other than when they are at the Academy. We understand the level of comfort that you feel with the teaching staff and how hard it is sometimes to find quality after hour care; but we also know that you expect excellence and high quality from our Academy and we expect it of ourselves. Your support helps us achieve those goals. Parents and staff that do not adhere to this policy are subject to disciplinary action.

e. Problem Resolution

If you have a complaint regarding the classroom or learning environment we encourage you to speak with your child's teacher or the Director. If this does not resolve the issue, or if the complaint is concerning the Academy, please bring it to the attention of the Director. If you feel that the Director has not adequately addressed the issue, you can reach out to the priest at the Holy Spirit Parish.

Matthew 18:15 (NCB) "If your brother wrongs you, go and take up the matter with him when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over."

VI. Confidentiality

a. Confidentiality at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy

Confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents, and/or children will not be shared with parents, as the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy strives to protect the right to privacy for every family. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following: disability information, HIV/AIDS status, or other health related information of anyone associated with the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy. Please note, that from time to time, pictures of children who have experienced accidents or injuries, or who have a symptom which may appear contagious can be sent to Academy staff who have a "need to know".

Outside the school environment, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when you have given us express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law.

b. Teacher Privacy

The partnership between teachers and parents plays a crucial role in our mission as it facilitates the proper communication between the home and the Academy. As we enter into the "digital age," we realize that we must re-evaluate new methods of communication -- text messaging, online business networking groups (such as LinkedIn), social networking sites (such as Facebook), email, and other emerging technologies -- as well as the resulting implications for family partnership. As a school community, we believe that the relationship between families and teachers must always be a professional one. Since many families and teachers use technology for various purposes and communicate differently in their professional and personal roles, we ask

that social networking sites in particular not be shared by the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy personnel and families. Some of our teachers and parents are not comfortable denying requests to be invited into a group; some view this request as an invasion of privacy. In either case, such communications can easily cross a subtle line between the professional relationship and the personal one and can therefore become an obstacle in the teacher-parent partnership. We have instructed our teachers on professional and personal etiquette in this matter -- they may not request or solicit parents to join their online networking groups, and we ask the same of our families.

c. Photos and Videos

From time to time, we like to publicize the activities of our Academy on our website, program advertising (newspaper, magazines), brochures, and other publications through the Pensacola-Tallahassee Diocese. It helps us share with others the excitement and pride we feel in the children's activities and learning. Parents are asked to provide consent for their child to be photographed and/or recorded by the Academy staff for Brightwheel and other publications of the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy and the Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit. As stated in our Enrollment Packet:

We want to make our parents a part of the day! Initialing below gives us permission to take photos or videos of your child to share with you through our Brightwheel app and for us to use in our newsletters, websites, brochures, church bulletins, or other advertisement publication through the Pensacola-Tallahassee Diocese.

_____The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy has my permission to take photos of my child to send on the Brightwheel app. This is the app used by teachers to send updates and daily reports about your child throughout the day. At times, pictures with friends or of the whole class may be taken. The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy has my permission to take photos of my child to use for newsletters, websites, brochures, church bulletins, or other advertisement publication through the Pensacola-Tallahassee Diocese.

*If you have any concerns about photos or videos of your child/children being publicized, please contact the Director.

VII. Hours of Operation and School Calendar

a. Hours of Operation

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy opens at 7:00 AM and closes at 6:00 PM. Children may arrive no earlier than 7:00 AM and should come in no later than 8:30 AM on a routine basis. If your child is going to be late or absent, we would appreciate a call to the Academy or a Brightwheel message so that we may inform the teachers.

b. School Calendar

The school calendar can be found on our website and will be included in the newsletters. Our calendar consists of, but is not limited to, weekly or bi-weekly themes, closures, upcoming events, etc.

c. Holiday and Other School Closures

We are open year-round except for New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Columbus Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy may add to this closure list at any time. Sufficient notice will be given to families if we change, alter, or add any closures, noon dismissals, or early closures.

d. Limited Care

We limit our hours of care from 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM to 8 AM – 5:00 PM for Christmas and New Year's. The Friday before the start of our Fall and Summer terms we will limit our hours to 7:00 AM to 12:00 PM. We may limit our hours on Holiday weekends such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, etc.

Sufficient notice will be given to families if we change, alter, or add to our limited care.

VIII. Medical, Health and Medication Policies

a. Immunizations and Immunization Form

All children must meet state standards for immunizations. The Academy does not accept any exemptions including medical or religious as it puts the child at risk. The law further requires that an updated "Florida Certification of Immunization" must be on file for every child enrolled in the Academy. We require a Certificate of Immunization prior to enrollment. Immunization certificates must be readily available in the event of a disease outbreak. Parents must bring in an updated form when it expires. If a parent has been contacted several times and the office has not received an updated form, the child cannot attend the Academy until the updated form is received by the Front Office. If immunization records are not up-to-date, a parent may be required by the state regulatory agency which inspects the records to withdraw their child from the Academy until the up-to-date records are submitted to the Front Office.

We do not accept Alabama Immunization forms or any other state immunization forms. A parent will need to contact the Escambia County Health Department in order to get the proper immunization form. If needed, contact the Front Office for more assistance.

b. Florida School Entry Health Exam Form

Parents must provide the "Florida School Entry Health Exam form" for their child prior to enrollment. If this form expires, it is the parent's responsibility to bring in an updated form in a timely manner. If a parent has been contacted several times and the office has not received an updated form, the child cannot attend the Academy until the updated form have been received by the Front Office.

If you currently do not have or know how to obtain a Florida School Entry Health Exam Form, please contact the Front Office for assistance.

c. Health and Medication Policies

In order to provide a happy and healthy experience at the Academy for each child, we must ask that parents observe the health and medication guidelines outlined below. The Health and Medication Policies are also available separately at the Academy, can be accessed on our website, or sent via email.

HEALTH AND MEDICATION POLICIES

(Updated July 6, 2021)

In order to provide a happy and healthy experience at the Academy for each child, we have established the health policies outlined below for parents and teachers to observe. These policies are designed to minimize illness at the Academy. Parental compliance with these policies will help to assure that other children are not exposed to communicable illnesses. **Please note** that for this reason the Academy will always be on the side of caution when making determinations about possible illnesses. We reserve the right to exclude any child that is exhibiting any signs of illness that raise concern for the child's well-being and the well-being of others. Failure to follow the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Health and Medication Policies outlined below are grounds for immediate dismissal or termination from the Academy as it puts the entire community at risk.

1) TEMPERATURES:

No child will be allowed in the Academy with a fever of **99.4 degrees or higher under the arm/100.4 degrees or higher orally (in the mouth) or with an ear thermometer** and if he/she has had a fever **anytime during a preceding 24-hour period**. The Academy does not administer fever reducing medications for a low grade fever unless it has been diagnosed as not contagious (e.g. ear infection). When the Academy contacts a parent because of an elevated fever, he /she may request in writing that Tylenol, Motrin, or their generic equivalents may be administered to reduce the fever if the parent acknowledges that he/she will pick up their child within the hour.

Your child CANNOT be in the Academy if he/she has had a fever the night before. Parents should not administer *Tylenol, Motrin, or their generic equivalents* to their child in the morning before he/she arrives at the Academy or while at the Academy since it will not eliminate the cause of the fever and will mask symptoms.

2) VOMITING AND DIARRHEA:

A child may not attend the Academy if the child has been **vomiting**. If the child is at the Academy when the vomiting occurs, the child will be excluded upon the 2nd incident during the previous 24 hours or if the child is throwing up bile.

Diarrhea is distinguished from loose stools by frequency, amount, smell, and watery content of the stool. Any child who is not teething and has watery stools is considered to have diarrhea and must be excluded from the Academy upon either the second incident in a 24-hour period, any

time there is bloody stool, if there is a significant amount of diarrhea with the first incident, or if it could be considered “explosive” diarrhea.

Please note: In the event that a child has diarrhea or vomiting that is consistent with other sick children in the classroom or has other symptoms that indicates that the child is not well, we will require that the child is excluded sooner than the policy stated above.

3) OTHER CONTAGIOUS SYMPTOMS OR ILLNESSES:

Please note that **PN** indicates illnesses that require a **Physician’s Note** before a child can return to the Academy. A child may **not** attend the Academy if the following symptoms are present:

Skin or Rash:

- a) ***Open or oozing sores: (PN)*** Unless properly covered and 24 hours has passed since starting antibiotic treatment, if antibiotic treatment is necessary.
- b) ***Undiagnosed rash: (PN)*** Unless a physician has specified in writing that he/she is not contagious.
- c) ***Hand Foot & Mouth Disease: (PN)*** The child may return after 24 hours without a fever and child is behaving normally.
- d) ***Scabies: (PN)*** The child may return after receiving an appropriate antibiotic for a 24-hour period.
- e) ***Head Lice:*** The child may return after complete treatment and removal of ALL nits.
- f) ***Fifth Disease: (PN)*** The child may return once the rash has appeared because they are contagious before that time.
- g) ***Impetigo: (PN)*** The child may return following 24 hours of treatment of this bacterial skin infection. Draining lesions must be covered with a bandage.
- h) ***Ringworm: (PN)*** The child may return after one treatment as long as the lesions are covered by clothing or bandage and treatment has begun.
- i) ***Chicken Pox: (PN)*** The child may return after all lesions have dried and crusted (*usually 6-8 days*).

Ear, Eye, Nose, Throat, and Chest:

- j) ***Mouth Sores: (PN)*** The child must be excluded unless a physician has specified in writing that a contagion is not present.
- k) ***Cold Sores:*** A child must be excluded until the lesion is dried and no longer active, and drooling can be controlled.
- l) ***Thrush: (PN)*** The child must be excluded until a physician’s note is received or until after one treatment of a medication (such as Nystatin). The child must be able to eat, drink, and participate in classroom activities.
- m) ***Strep Throat: (PN)*** The child may return after providing a physician’s note and receiving an appropriate antibiotic for a 24-hour period with no fever is present.
- n) ***Conjunctivitis: (PN)*** Defined as pink or red conjunctivitis (“*pink eye*”) when either eye is draining cloudy or has colored discharge. The child may return to the Academy after

having received an appropriate antibiotic over a 24-hour period with a physician's note or is accompanied by a physician's note stating that the drainage is caused by a non-contagious condition (*such as a blocked tear duct or allergy*).

- o) ***Pertussis/Whooping Cough: (PN)*** The child may return after providing physician's note and have received 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.
- p) ***Bronchitis/Pneumonia/RSV: (PN)*** the child may return after symptoms are improving, 24-hour fever free without medication, and a physician's note is provided.
- q) ***Croup: (PN)*** the child may return after 24 hours with a physician's note.

4) COUGHS AND COLDS:

Colds and coughs are difficult to control in a group setting. Allergy or teething symptoms may be mistaken for a common cold. In order to differentiate between contagious and non-contagious conditions, the following symptoms may indicate a contagious illness:

- a) Fever (*99.4 or higher under the arm/ forehead and 100.4 ear*)
- b) Red inflamed eyes; runny eyes
- c) Thick colored mucus from the nose accompanied by fever or coughing
- d) Coughing is frequent enough to prevent eating, sleeping, playing
- e) Discomfort that leads to excessive crying, tiredness, or inability to enjoy time spent in a school setting

5) SIGNS OF COVID-19:

If a child becomes ill at the Academy and is exhibiting symptoms of COVID -19 on campus, he or she may be required to leave the Academy and visit the nearest health center or return home. The following symptoms may indicate a case of COVID-19:

- a) Cough
- b) Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- c) Chills
- d) Repeated shaking with chills
- e) Muscle pain
- f) Headache
- g) Sore throat
- h) Loss of taste smell
- i) Diarrhea
- j) Feeling feverish or measured temperature greater than or equal 99.4 or higher under the arm/ forehead and 100.4 ear
- k) Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID -19

All screening information will be kept confidential by the Academy.

5) REQUIRED PICK UP TIME WHEN A CHILD HAS SIGNS OF CONTAGION:

In order to provide for your child's comfort and well-being, as well as for the prevention of contagion, we require that your child be taken home no longer than one hour after the first notification **without exception**. We contact parents via phone, Brightwheel messaging, text message, and email. It is important that a parent or authorized pick up is available at all times to pick up a child within an hour of the first notification. Please note that we charge \$1 per minute after the child has been at the Academy for 60 minutes after the first parent is contacted via phone, text, or email, whether or not the parent picks up the message at that time. Parents who repeatedly pick up after one hour may be asked to withdraw their child as this poses a health risk to the entire community.

We strongly encourage every family to have a "Plan B" in reserve for those times when timely pick up may be difficult for you. There are several services as well as babysitters who you may want to develop relationships with before the time is needed.

6) EXCLUSION POLICY AND RETURNING TO THE ACADEMY:

Any child who is sent home with contagious symptoms cannot return to the classroom the next school day and can only return the following school day (the day after the "next" day) if he/she has been symptom-free of the contagious illness over the preceding 24 hours. For example, if a child is sent home on Monday with an elevated temperature as defined above, he/she may return to the Academy no earlier than Wednesday morning- and then, only if that child did not have an elevated temperature over the preceding 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

All children are required to go outside at their designated playground time. **If your child is too sick to go outside for playground time, then he/she should remain at home.**

7) REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND TREATMENT PLANS:

Please notify the Front Office immediately when your child or any family members are exposed to communicable or infectious diseases. This will allow us to watch for symptoms in our community and enable us to notify parents of any in-school contagious illnesses as required by regulation. We have posted the Reportable Diseases/Conditions in Florida which is published by Florida Department of Health.

We require a physician's note before returning to the Academy for the following contagious illnesses:

- Fifth disease
- Scabies
- Impetigo
- Ringworm
- Staph Infection
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

- Infectious mononucleosis (Mono)
- Hepatitis A
- Molluscum Contagiosum
- Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)
- Pinworms
- West Nile Virus
- Giardiasis
- Conjunctivitis (or other mucus from eyes which appears to be similar to it)
- Contagious respiratory infections (such as Pneumonia, Croup, Bronchitis, Pertussis, etc.)
- Influenza (Flu)
- COVID-19
- Streptococcal Infections (Scarlet Fever and Strep Throat)
- Measles
- Viral Meningitis
- Cryptosporidiosis (“Crypto”)
- Mumps
- Norovirus
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (“RSV”)
- Roseola Infantum (“Sixth Disease”)
- Rotavirus
- Salmonellosis
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- Shigellosis
- E. Coli
- Undiagnosed rashes
- Persistent undiagnosed coughs
- Frequent undiagnosed temperatures
- Other undiagnosed illnesses or medical conditions for which the Academy leadership deems more information is needed in order to minimize contagion.

Our goal is to prevent the spread of contagion. If the Academy deems that more information is needed or necessary, you are required to provide a physician’s note before the child can return to the Academy. Physician’s notes written by the child’s parent will not be accepted.

We require that parents provide physician notes for certain medical conditions before the student may remain at the Academy so that we can properly support the child in our environment and also appropriately inform other concerned parents and teachers. Your ***confidentiality is maintained at all times.***

8) MEDICATIONS:

Leaving medication in the reach of children poses a severe safety hazard, this is why we ask that all medication or topical ointments brought into the Academy must be given to the Front Office. If the Academy staff find medication or topical ointment in your child's responsibility bag, lunchbox, diaper bag, etc. without being notified by a parent, it will be confiscated. In the event that medication or topical ointment is found, the Director will contact the family.

The methods we use to dispense medications are highly regulated by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). The key regulations include:

1. ***Written approval is required:*** Parents must provide detailed instructions in writing.
2. ***Complete Information:*** We can only dispense medications when pertinent information is communicated in a detailed fashion by the parent – the name of the medication, the dosage, the time of day, the dates to be given, etc.
3. ***Original container and prescription label attached.*** We must have medication in its original container, and if it is a prescription, we need the pharmacy label!
4. ***No more than 10 days:*** unless it is a chronic condition such as asthma, medication forms can be for no more than 10 days.
5. ***Chronic Conditions (such as asthma, severe allergies):*** These must have a detailed medical plan which is signed by the doctor. Please contact the Front Office for additional information.
6. ***Medications must be picked up after the course of treatment is done or disposed of*** by the Academy.
7. ***OTC topical ointments such as sunscreen, soothing ointments, diaper cream can get a onetime approval from parents. Anything ingested must have a medication form each time – even saline and Orajel!***
8. ***All medication and/or topical ointments must have the child's first and last name written on the container.***

In order to comply with these regulations, and to ensure that we can dispense them accurately and safely, we have the following protocols in place:

1. If medication can be dispensed at home by changing around when the medication is given or by the parent doing so at drop off or pick up time, we will require that you do so. Therefore, only medications which need to be dispensed throughout the day (3 or more times a day) – or mid-day, are dispensed at the Academy.
2. In order to manage the medications in a systematic way, we ask that parents conform whenever possible to our policy of 11 AM or 3PM.
3. "As Needed Medications": From time to time, a medication may need to be administered for emergency situations when certain symptoms emerge, in which case the parent must note "as needed" and clearly describe the symptoms.
4. As a general rule, the Academy does not dispense over the counter medications, unless prescribed by the physician. This includes fever reducing medications (because they can

mask a fever), homeopathic medications (due to frequency), and OTC cough medication (unless there is a physician's note).

5. If we have to change the time we are dispensing the medication (e.g. child was sleeping, etc.), we must get updated written authorization from the parent (an email is fine).
6. We must discard medications that do not get picked up. Of course, we will try to reach out to you first!

Expired Medications:

Parents must provide and track all medication provided to the Academy for their child including medications that are stored at the Academy for emergencies (*e.g. EpiPen*). The Academy staff are not allowed to dispense medications which have expired, and therefore, expired medications are discarded and the parent must immediately provide replacement medication if they want it available for their child.

Topical Ointments/External Preparations:

Each family is required to complete the Authorization to Dispense External Preparations Form. The Authorization to Dispense External Preparations Form indicates the parent's preference for the Academy for dispensing or applying non-prescription external preparations or treatments (*Neosporin, Bactine, anti-itch creams, Aquaphor, diaper ointment, etc.*) If the appropriate authorizations are reflected on the form, we can dispense the topical treatments when symptoms occur and do not need weekly written authorizations from you. If parents wish for the teachers to apply an ointment (*e.g. Anti-itch cream*), we ask that you inform the teachers as well as fill out an Authorization for Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication form. Please see the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Parent Handbook for more information.

If you would like to bring in homemade ointment for your child, please contact the Director. We will not accept nor administer homemade ointment unless the Director is notified, a medication form has been completed, and the proper instructions are given to the teachers.

Supplemental Medications:

Each family is required to complete the Supplemental Medication Authorization Form. The Supplemental Medication Authorization Form indicates which supplemental medication such as Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl, Orajel, or their generic equivalents and teething tablets have been granted or denied parent permission. We will not administer any supplemental medications without asking a parent first. Only when the Academy has received permission and the correct dosage for the child from the parent in writing will the Academy staff administer a supplemental medication.

TO AUTHORIZE VIA EMAIL, BRIGHTWHEEL, OR TEXT: To authorize medications when remote, please email or text from an email account (office@hscda.ptdiocese.org or director@hscda.ptdiocese.org) or send a message through the Brightwheel app. Please make sure and send the following information:

- Today's date
- Child's full name
- Child's classroom
- Parent's name
- Medication name
- Time to be given
- Dosage
- Reason for medication

The authorization **MUST** contain all of this information, or we will not be able to dispense the medication.

9) IMMUNIZATIONS:

All children must meet state standards for immunization. The Academy does not accept any exemptions including medical or religious as it puts the child at risk. Please see the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Parent Handbook for more information.

We do not accept Alabama Immunization forms or any other state immunization forms. A parent will need to contact the Escambia County Health Department in order to get the proper immunization form. If needed, contact the Front Office for more assistance.

10) FLORIDA SCHOOL ENTRY HEALTH EXAM FORM:

All children must have the Florida School Health Entry form on file at the Academy. Please see the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Parent Handbook for more information.

d. Communicable Diseases

Please notify the Front Office when your child or any family members are exposed to communicable diseases. This will allow us to watch for symptoms and enable us to notify all parents within twenty-four (24) hours of any in-school illness listed on the Reportable Disease/Conditions in Florida Chart, posted in the lobby area. We notify parents of communicable diseases by sending a letter home or a Brightwheel message to the parents in the affected classroom. Depending on the level of contagion or severity, we may notify parents in the adjoining classrooms or school wide. Your confidentiality in this, as in all matters, will be maintained. If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the Academy. This helps the Academy to monitor trends around contagious symptoms that may emerge. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis.

e. Medical Emergency Procedures and First Aid

In the event of a medical emergency, these steps will be taken:

- If it is a minor medical emergency such as an adverse reaction to medication, minor allergic reactions, or other minor medical emergencies, the parent is immediately contacted to get direction on the next steps.

- If an ambulance service is deemed necessary, 911 is called. All children are requested to be taken to the hospital closest to the Academy. The closest hospital to the academy is Baptist Hospital, the closest children's hospital is the Studer Family Children's Hospital at Ascension Sacred Heart, and the closest Emergency Room is the Perdido Bay ER. Note; The cost of such ambulance service is the responsibility of the parent.
- The parent(s) is/are then informed by phone, if not already done so.
- If the parents are not available, the emergency contacts are notified unless it is a minor medical emergency.
- All procedures are written up at the conclusion of the episode and sent to the Department of Children and Families.
- A representative the Department of Children and Families may contact you to ensure that the proper procedures were followed.

f. Children with Severe Allergies and Other Medical Conditions

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide written documentation to the Academy concerning their allergies, asthma, and other medical conditions. The parents are asked to provide us with detailed written instructions before we start administering treatment. Failure to provide us with appropriate emergency medication or associated paperwork will require us to exclude your child from care until the proper medication and paperwork is in place to ensure the safety of your child while in our care.

A physician's signature will be needed for the Asthma Action Plan and the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan.

Asthma Action Plan: A signed copy of this form must be on file for children with asthma. This form details when and how much Albuterol, Levalbuterol, or another control medication to give to a child when symptoms persist.

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan: A signed copy of this form must be on file, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form details when and how much Epinephrine, Antihistamine, or other medication to treat symptoms that occur or persist. Parents should indicate which medication the child should receive and the instructions to follow for that particular medication.

Waiver and Release of Claims for Medical Conditions INCLUDING Allergies, Asthma, and Special Needs: Parents must also execute a "Waiver and Release of Claims for Medical Conditions" form. This form acknowledges that the parent releases the Academy and its' staff of any liability if they exercise the normal degree of duty, skill, and care and understand that the Academy cannot provide specialized care to the child based on the child's condition.

When a child is moved up from one classroom to the next, a parent is responsible for ensuring that the new teachers are aware of any medical conditions or allergies and courses of treatment. In addition, if special equipment is provided, the parent is responsible for moving it from one

classroom to the next. Please talk to your child's teachers to make sure that appropriate signage detailing your child's allergies/condition is displayed in the classroom.

For the safety of children with asthma or allergies, we will make accommodations so they may participate fully in our program without the risk of an exposure or trigger for their medical condition. For example, we will become a peanut free facility upon the enrollment of a child with a peanut allergy. We may also ask for parents to be mindful of certain products that they use for their child that could be a trigger for an asthmatic child. This could be a certain perfume, laundry detergent, essential oil, etc. If a teacher, staff member, or the Director reach out to a parent in regard to creating a safer environment for a child, a parent must comply with what is discussed for the well-being of others. If a parent fails to follow through after multiple discussions with the Director, they may be terminated from the Academy as this poses a safety hazard.

g. Medication Forms

At the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, we require a form to be completed for all prescription and non-prescription (over the counter) medications or topical ointments. All medication must be in the original container with your child's name clearly visible on the container or the medication. Prescription medication must have a label stating the name of the physician, child's name, name of the medication, and medication directions. All prescription and non-prescription medication will be dispensed only according to the written directions on the prescription label or printed manufacturer's label. **ALL medication and topical ointments must be given to the Front Office.**

Prescription and non-prescription medications that are used on an "as needed" basis require the parent to provide additional documentation on the Authorization for Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication Form to describe symptoms that would require the medication to be given. A new form must be completed for each medication and each new series of dosing that is needed. It is important to indicate the dates when the medication is to start and when it is to finish.

Authorization to Dispense External Preparations Form: For external preparations, we require the parent to initial and sign by each external preparation that you give the Academy permission to administer. The external preparations that are included on this form are Neosporin or similar ointment, Bactine or similar ointment, non-prescription diaper ointment, baby wipes, baby powder (only applied in infant room), Band-Aids, sunscreen, and bug spray.

Supplemental Medication Authorization Form: All supplemental medications will need a parent signature authorizing or not authorizing the use of the medications listed on this form. The supplemental preparations included on this form are Tylenol or the generic equivalent, Motrin or the generic equivalent, Benadryl or the generic equivalent, and Baby Orajel or teething tablets. The academy has the supplemental preparations at the Academy and will receive parent permission and the correct dosage before administering **ANY** supplemental medication.

Authorization for Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication Form: All prescription and non-prescription medication that must be given at the Academy requires this form to be completed. This form is valid for only five (5) days. If the prescription or non-prescription medication needs to be continued for more than five (5) days, a new form will need to be completed. This form allows us to administer any prescription or non-prescription medication at a specified time and dosage. This could be, but is not limited to, cough medicine, allergy medication, prescribed ointment (such as nystatin), etc.

h. Allergy Information & Consent to Post

Food allergies come in many forms and severities. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy in writing of any food allergies that may exist for their child. This information must be in writing, as well as your consent to post the information for all staff to see it in an effort to protect your child's health. By signing the Authorization Sheet, parents give us permission to post allergies in the classroom for the child's safety and well-being.

IX. Drop Off and Pick Up

a. Arrival and Departure

It is important that parents adhere to the routine procedures for bringing children to the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy and picking them up as it ensures their health and safety. Upon arrival at the Academy, make sure you sign your child in at the time you arrive as well as sign out when you depart for the day. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, please message them on Brightwheel or contact them later in the day when the children are napping.

To support your child's developing sense of daily, predictable, and secure routines plan to arrive in time to help your child settle into the Academy before the first activities begin at 8:30 AM. In the afternoon, plan your day to arrive in a suitable timeframe that allows you time to re-unite with your child and collect your child's belongings before the Academy closes. If someone other than yourself is going to pick up your child, make sure they are on the authorization list for your child to be released and they bring a picture I.D. to show the staff. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. Make sure your child's teacher(s) are aware that you are taking your child before you leave the classroom or playground to ensure their safety.

b. Late Arrivals

The learning portion of the day at the Holy Spirit Development Academy begins at 8:30 AM depending upon the particular classroom schedule. Please understand that it is important that parents get their children to the Academy on time since it is highly disruptive to the classroom when children arrive during instructional times. In order to honor both your child and the other children in the classroom, it is extremely important that children in the green, blue and orange classrooms arrive before 8:30 AM every day.

On the occasional days when this is not possible, your child must come into the classroom in a manner that does not distract the teachers or the class. Parents must not interrupt the teachers or the children in any way. Should the parent wish to relay a message to the teacher, inform the Front Office (for time sensitive communication) or send a message through Brightwheel. These

are the only appropriate methods of communication with the teachers at this particular time. If you drop your child off after 8:30 AM, this may mean that parents have to wait until a teacher or staff member are able to walk your child back to their classroom.

To avoid potential delays with your drop off, please plan to arrive by 8:30 AM on a routine basis. Please understand that late arrivals are highly disruptive to the classrooms, to the Front Office, and to the instructional period. If a family cannot comply with the requirement of having their child at the Academy before 8:30 AM on a consistent basis, they will be asked to schedule an appointment with the Director.

Continued violations of this policy can lead to the disenrollment of your child, as this is an important part of our teaching philosophy and viewed as a philosophical mismatch between the Academy and parent. Unfortunately, the Academy cannot be highly flexible on this issue since it impacts not just the individual child, but also the learning environment. Therefore, if a family regularly ignores this policy, The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy reserves the right to reconsider a child's placement in the Academy.

c. Absences

By enrolling your child in the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, you are agreeing to pay the monthly tuition fee for as long as your child is enrolled, irrespective of the actual number of hours your child uses the service. No refunds, prorates or credit is given to accommodate individual family vacations, changes in family schedules, or absences due to illness or injury.

We request that every family inform the Academy of any known upcoming absences and/or late arrival so that the teachers can plan activities accordingly. Should the child not attend for a period exceeding one month without communication with the Director, enrollment will be cancelled. Tuition fees are assessed until enrollment is cancelled via the completion of the [Withdrawal Notice Form](#) or until the Director is contacted.

d. Late Pick Up Policy

Parents are expected to pick up their child a few minutes **before** closing time. We bring any single child remaining in a classroom to the lobby after 6:00 PM, and the classroom is closed at this time. A charge will be assessed at the rate of **\$5.00 for any portion of the first five minutes beginning the minute the center closes at 6:00 pm and \$1.00 per minute thereafter**. Charges are assessed and posted on Brightwheel.

If the child has not been picked up one hour after closing and parents or emergency contacts cannot be located, the Escambia County Sheriff's Office will be contacted for their assistance. This action will be taken only as a last resort. Parents are responsible for all late fees for the entire period that staff must stay with the child. The Director will be apprised of families who are consistently late. The Director will then contact the family for a conference to work out a solution.

e. Release of Child from the Academy

Your child shall not be released to any person(s) other than the authorized parent, legal caregiver, and listed individuals on the Enrollment Packet or an individual that was listed as an authorized pick up by the parent at a later time. Any person(s) authorized to take a child from the center, other than the child's parent or legal caregiver, must present picture I.D. to the staff before a child is released.

If parents or caregiver cannot be reached, the persons listed on the "Emergency Contacts" will be called in case of illness, injury, or emergency. It is the parent's responsibility to keep all information current in the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Office. **Please note that employees of the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy that are not familial may not be listed as persons authorized to pick up children from the Academy.** If the child has not been picked up one (1) hour after closing and parents or emergency contacts cannot be located, the Escambia County Sheriff's Office will be contacted for their assistance.

g. Car Seats

Car seats can be left in the lobby in the main hallway. Please place car seats by the back doors, against the wall from the main walkway to prevent any individuals from tripping over them. Do not leave anything in the car seats that could pose a threat or be harmful to other children. The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is not responsible for any items left in the car seats that could become lost.

h. Transportation

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy does not provide transportation to and from the Academy nor are teachers and staff members permitted to provide transportation for children to and from the Academy.

X. Supplies and Attire

a. Appropriate Attire

All Children: The children are very active at the Academy – both in the classroom and on the playgrounds. When on the playground, we encourage them to climb, slide, jump, run, skip – all to develop their large motor skills. It is important that children are dressed so that it does not interfere with their ability to develop these large motor skills, or that it does not contribute to an injury. For girls, we ask that parents not dress them in large billowy dresses – they are a tripping and falling hazard when climbing. In addition, the shoes that a young child wears should be form fitting, appropriate sized, and with traction. We require that all children wear shoes that are closed toe, form fitting, and that provide traction. Flip flops and open-toed sandals are prohibited for children to wear during the school day.

For Children Learning to Walk: Many of the young children at the Academy are learning to become confident walkers. We work very closely with them on their walking skills and confidence in walking. We cannot reiterate enough the importance of wearing proper shoes at this age – form fitting shoes, shoe soles that do not slide, proper arch support, and preferably shoes that

go around the ankle. We strongly recommend that you make the investment to purchase Stride Rite or Buster Brown shoes since they are engineered for this age group and meet all of these requirements. We strongly recommend that you purchase shoes that have been fitted for your child's foot and refrain from purchasing shoes that your child will "grow into."

Special Clothing: Please do not send your child in clothing that is "special" since they can be very messy. We do not want their special outfit to get ruined! If your child requires special attire such as custom shoe inserts, please make sure that you inform the Academy of these.

Additional Clothing: If a child is toilet training, you will need to bring additional clothing that can be thrown away if soiled. We do not allow children to "borrow" clothing from other children and we do not keep extra clothing available for emergencies.

b. Supplies

Depending on the classroom your child or children are in, you will be asked to bring different items for each classroom. This may include, but is not limited to, sunscreen, insect repellent, an extra set of clothes or underwear, pacifier, etc.

c. Lost and Found

All clothing and personal property should be marked clearly with the child's full name. Unmarked articles will be placed in a "Lost and Found" area. Periodically, these items are displayed in an attempt to find owners; after a specified period, remaining items are donated to charity.

d. Items Brought from Home

We ask that children do not bring toys from home to the Academy. The toys are easily lost or broken and young children, developmentally, have not reached the stage where sharing is comfortable. If your child wants to bring a stuffed animals or a "nap time buddy" for nap time, they will need to keep it in their responsibility bag until it is nap time. **If the stuffed animal/nap time buddy cannot be placed in the responsibility bag because it is too large, please keep it at home.**

XI. Food

a. Morning Snack, Lunch, and Afternoon Snack

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy does not prepare nor provide meals and snacks for the children in our program. Parents will need to provide lunch and snacks daily for their child. All food that is distributed to children, other than your own, must be store bought and pre-packaged.

Depending on the age of your child and their eating habits, you will need to provide between 2-4 snacks for each snack time and 3-5 items for each lunch time. Please send nutritious snacks and lunches. Avoid sending foods high in sugar and caffeine. We have a small fridge in the classroom to keep some items cold such as milk products. We ask that all parents pack their child's lunch

box with an ice pack as we do not have sufficient space to keep ALL items that need to be refrigerated in the classroom refrigerator.

We have an example meal plan available for parents to view. Please note that we are not nutritionists and this meal plan is only intended to provide parents with an idea of items to pack for your child. Parents DO NOT have to follow this meal plan.

Per the State of Florida Department of Children and Families, all lunchboxes and drink cups are required to be labeled with your child's first and last name.

b. Breakfast

If you drop off your child between 7:00 AM and 7:30 AM, you have the option of packing a breakfast for your child that he or she can eat at the Academy. Breakfast should contain between 1-3 items for each child depending on the age or the child's eating habits. Please note that if you drop off after 7:30 AM, your child should eat a healthy and nutritious breakfast at home.

c. Water Bottles and Milk

Please provide a water bottle or a water cup for your child. Your child's water bottle or water cup will be offered to them multiple times a day and at meal times. Each classroom has filtered water to refill the children's water cups/bottles throughout the day. Please label your child's water cup/bottle with their first name and last initial. Water cups/bottles will be sent home at the end of every day. If the water bottle or cup is left at the Academy, please send in a new cup for your child to use and the one that was left will be sent home.

Milk cups should be clearly labeled as milk and have your child's first name and last initial visible. Please notify your child's teachers that you are bringing milk and when it should be offered (ex. at meal times, before nap, after nap, etc.) Milk cups are optional and not required.

We do not have the capabilities of properly sanitizing cups and/or water bottles. Please do not ask your child's teacher to wash and reuse the same cup and/or water bottle.

d. Classroom Parties

At the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, we will have class parties for holidays, specials events, and for end of the school year celebrations. Depending on the type of class party, we may ask parents to provide snacks and/or drinks. A list will be posted with food or drinks that each classroom would like parents to provide for the party.

If parents would like to have a small birthday party. Please speak with your child's teacher about what you would like to provide (ex. cupcakes, pizza, sandwiches, fruit, etc.). If parents plan on providing more than a small birthday treat, please give the Academy sufficient notice to notify other parents in the classroom so they can plan accordingly.

All items provided for classroom and birthday parties MUST be store bought and pre-packaged. Any food made at home or not following the guidelines above will not be accepted.

e. Food Project Participation

In our Enrollment Packet, you will have the opportunity to give your child permission to participate in food related activities such as birthday parties, class parties, or any other special events. **All food provided will be store bought.** Homemade food is not allowed. All food allergies in the class will be taken into consideration and all parents of children with documented food allergies will be contacted before any activities take place.

XII. Classroom Management

a. Taking Age-Appropriate Risks

At the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, we diligently work to keep children as safe as possible. However, healthy and productive children must be involved in age appropriate large/small motor activity involving discovery and risk-taking in order to achieve optimum physiological and psychological development. Research has confirmed that children acquire life skills when they conquer fears and develop resiliency. In addition, these types of sensory-rich exercises are essential to neurological development in the first five years. The ability to climb a rope ladder, ride a bicycle, kick, throw and catch a ball, climb steps, roll down hills, run, jump, spin, and twirl all develop balance and coordination. The Academy offers the student numerous occasions involving an element of acceptable risk throughout the week so that confidence, judgment, imagination, and the use of precise movement is fostered.

b. Move-Ups and Classroom Placement

Children are placed in classrooms based on attaining developmental milestones and classroom availability. As a result, most move ups occur at the start of the summer session and the start of the new school year. The readiness of a child to move up or the placement of a child in a particular classroom are at the sole discretion of the Academy, without exception. Please note that children may exhibit certain behaviors at home that are not exhibited at the Academy. Class placements are determined based on space availability, age distribution, and other factors such as social-emotional and cognitive development. On rare occasion, children may be moved to a new classroom in the age range to accommodate changing attendance patterns, to address dynamics between children, or because the classroom designations have changed.

Occasionally, parents request that their child be placed in a certain classroom based on their perceived needs: friendships, location, diversity, or familiarity with the teaching team, etc. Please understand that we cannot and do not make adjustments to class placements for these parental requests, without exception. Our experience has consistently demonstrated that in spite of the parent anxieties, their concerns are overcome so that both the child and his/her parents have a successful relationship with the new classroom and teachers. Please do not make assumptions as to where your child is going to be placed and recognize that until you get it in writing from the Front Office staff or Director, it is not final.

Our teaching approach is designed to meet the needs of each child based on his/her readiness and mastery of concepts – no matter what classroom your child is placed in. If your child does not progress to the next classroom with his/her friends, we will still, through our teaching approach and through the materials which are available to all teachers, be able to meet his/her needs.

For a few parents, the move up process is a stressful time if their child is not progressing on an accelerated path. We encourage these families to meet with the Director to discuss their concerns. Please remember that children who attend the Academy are in an enriched environment and virtually always excel in their next school environment. We also encourage parents to remember that while their child may be the oldest in a classroom or cognitively advanced compared to their peer group, other factors such as social-emotional development and maturity are just as important. The teachers are in the unique position to understand the developmental progress of all the children in the class, and they have additional information that is used to develop the appropriate move up plan for all of the children.

Please remember that when your child moves up from one classroom to another, you must communicate any special requests for your child – dietary restrictions or preferences, health considerations, etc. - to your child's new teachers. Please do not rely on your child's current teachers to communicate this information for you.

c. Classroom Ratios

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy adheres to the Florida Catholic Conference standard for teacher-child ratios.

- Under 12 months, the ratio is one teacher to four children.
- For children 12 months to 23 months, the ratio is one teacher to six children.
- For children 24 months to 35 months, the ratio is one teacher to eleven children.
- For children 36 months to 47 months, the ratio is one teacher to fifteen children.
- For children 48 months to 59 months, the ratio is one teacher to twenty children.

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy staffs each classroom to maintain certain teacher-student ratios. The room is staffed in the morning based on typical attendance patterns of the families. It is crucial that each family use the automated attendance system each day when checking in so that we can monitor attendance and adjust staffing levels accordingly. In the evening, we also staff according to normal attendance levels. Therefore, it is important that you always check your child out each day as well. Please understand that from time to time, certain teachers may leave the classroom to go to the Front Office, to check email, or to attend meetings and that this may affect the classroom ratios. State ratios are maintained at all times.

d. Multi-Age Classrooms

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy reconfigures classrooms each year based on the student census and age distribution of the children. All of our classrooms operate with broader age ranges to compliment the child's social-emotional and cognitive needs. The infant classroom operates with an age span from six (6) weeks to eighteen (18) months. The toddler classrooms range from ten (10) months to forty-seven months (47) months. The preschool classroom operates with an age range from thirty (30) months to fifty-nine (59) months.

e. Volunteers and Interns

From time to time, we will have volunteers in our classrooms. This could be a reader who reads to the children once a week or a high-school volunteer who is interested in working with children over the summer. Please note that any and all volunteers are never left alone with the children and have met with the Director before volunteering at the Academy.

At the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy, we would like to give students who are obtaining a teaching or education degree an opportunity to gain experience and knowledge first hand. We will have interns working with our teachers throughout the year in our classrooms.

f. Hygiene

Hand Washing Hygiene: We ask that you wash your hands and your child's hands when they are being dropped off. The teachers will inform you which sink is to be used for hand washing. In some classrooms, the teachers may ask you to allow your child to wash their hands without your assistance.

Diapering Hygiene: The Academy posts diapering procedures in each classroom. The main steps are:

1. Prepare for Diapering Before Bringing Child to the Table
2. Avoid Contact with Soiled Items and Always Keep a Hand on the Child
3. Clean the Child's Diaper Area
4. Put on a Clean Diaper and Wash Child's Hands
5. Clean and Disinfect the Diapering Area
6. Wash Your Hands and Record in the Child's Daily Log

Cloth Diapers: Some parents may opt to use cloth diapers as opposed to disposable diapers. Cloth diapers must include an absorbent, disposable inner lining (in order to ensure that organic matter doesn't pose a health hazard by sitting in the classroom all day). Diapers must also include an outer shell that is waterproof and prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the inner and outer covering must be changed as a unit (meaning we cannot reuse the outer portion for more than one change) and the inner lining disposed of during each change. Please note that it is the parent's responsibility to provide the inner and/or outer shells.

Toilet Training Hygiene: The Academy staff work closely with parents to toilet train each child when the child is developmentally ready. The Academy follows strict hygiene practices and

closely supervises children at all times. Children must always be honored during this process. We ask that parents bring extra clothing during the toilet training phase; this would include several changes of underwear and/or pull-ups, several pairs of pants or shorts, a couple of shirts or tops, and several pairs of socks. Teachers may also request a second pair of shoes from time to time. While your child is going through the toilet training phase, please be aware that sometimes clothing articles may not be salvaged due to a need to maintain a hygienic and healthy environment.

All children must be reliability toilet trained before being accepted into the Orange Room.

Meal Time Hygiene: The teachers and children are required to observe the highest hygiene standards during meal time. This includes washing hands before and after each meal and ensuring that teachers properly handle food in a hygienic manner. All excess food placed in common containers is discarded at the end of meal time.

g. Nap Time, Bedding, and Safe Sleep Policy

In our Infant Room, the children nap according to their own schedule. Beginning in our one and two-year-old classroom, one (1) scheduled nap time is offered during the day. All children are required to rest during the planned rest period, even those in the three and four-year-old room. Once your child starts in the one and two-year-old classroom, you will be required to bring a blanket or a nap mat for your child. All blankets must be smaller than 36 x 45 inches and not bulky!

Safe Sleep Policy: The Department of Children and Families (DCF) regulations require that parents of infants acknowledge that they have read the *Safe Sleep for Your Baby Brochure* and that the parent understands it. Parents sign the acknowledgement as part of the authorization package when enrolling their child. Here is a summary of our safe sleep policies and the *Safe Sleep for Your Baby Brochure*:

1. Infant is placed on their back to sleep unless center has been provided a letter by a physician authorizing another sleep position for that particular infant which includes how the infant should be placed for sleep and a time frame for which the instructions should be followed.
2. No items will be placed in or on the crib with an infant, not limited to toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys or other soft items.
3. The Academy shall not attach or allow any objects to be attached to a crib with a sleeping infant, not limited to, crib gyms, toys, mirrors or mobiles.
4. Appropriate sleep clothing to be provided by parents or guardian. Sleepers, sleep sacks, and wearable blankets that fit according to the commercial manufacturer's guidelines and will not slide up around infant's face may be used.
5. A *Swaddling Consent for Infant* form must be completed before the Academy staff can swaddle an infant. This form requires both a signature from a parent and a physician. Once a child can roll over from back to front, swaddling will be terminated immediately.

6. Individual crib or cot bedding provided by center with daily changing/ cleaning practices.
7. Infants who fall asleep in other equipment, on the floor, or elsewhere will be moved to a crib to sleep.
8. No positioning devices or wedges can be used.
9. Cribs shall be in compliance with the DCF. Crib construction shall be in good repair and free of hazards.

h. Field Trips

Teachers and children are permitted to take on campus field trips with signed consent from the parents. Parents will grant permission in the Enrollment Packet for the children to participate in all on campus field trips. The following sites are included on the on-campus field trip consent form: the Chapel, the Music Room, the Church, the Family Life Center, the Field across from the Academy, the pavilion, and the Seaton building. The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy does not participate in off campus field trips at this time.

XIII. Monitoring Your Child's Progress at the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy

a. Bi-Annual Progress Reports

The Academy conducts bi-annual parent-teacher conferences in the Fall (October) and Spring (April / May). We use assessment tools as part of the conference and a progress report will be provided. If you wish to have other conferences, please consult your child's teachers or the Director.

b. Comprehensive Approach to Monitoring a Child's Progress and Development

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy supports every child entrusted to our care with the understanding that the path to development is a highly individualized one for each child. Because the first four years are a time of intense physical, cognitive, and emotional growth, a child may exhibit behaviors that require additional resources and methods to support their ongoing development. These can take the form of assessments, outside consultations, and more in-depth observations. In keeping with the philosophy of the Academy, it is crucial that each parent partner with us through this process so that the needs of the child are met in a timely, knowledgeable manner. We know that for most parents, a lack of understanding may lead to deep concern and a feeling of being overwhelmed. Our goal is to minimize these feelings while supporting the child and their family to the best of our ability.

Assessments: The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy practices a comprehensive approach to monitoring student progress and development; this includes the utilization of a variety of resources (detailed below) to support and honor the children entrusted to us. Our assessments are completed to:

- Ensure shared expectations and observations between parent and teachers.

- Track each child's developmental progress.
- Identify red flags which can be best addressed with early detection and intervention.
- Ensure adequate support is in place if a child is experiencing challenges with regard to development or academic progress. Should the Academy staff identify a potential developmental concern with a child, we will share with you our observations in an informal conference; at this time, a request for an external assessment with a timeframe requirement may be required. This type of assessment is necessary as our teaching and administrative staff do not have the education or expertise that the young child may need to help him/her with any developmental challenges that they may have.

c. Routine Assessment Instruments: Infants and Toddlers

Specifically for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers we use the following tools to routinely track academic progress and development:

Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ): This developmental screen is administered to students near parent-teacher conferences each fall and spring and is meant to identify any potential red flags for atypical development. Parents will also be asked to fill out a copy to bring with them to the conference so the observations from home and school may be compared and discussed. If concerns emerge from this screening, our first step is simply to rescreen the child. If concerns persist, parents are provided with resources and support to ensure that the child is developmentally on track (see below section on Additional Assessments).

It is important to note that parental permission is not obtained nor required for Routine Internal Assessments, as this is a function of general classroom support and not a formal evaluation.

Additional Internal Assessments: The Academy staff may find that they are concerned about a particular child's development or may observe a child experiencing challenges in our classroom environment. These concerns or challenges can include any behavior that is outside of the norm of what is typically expected or appropriate for the age of the child including, but not limited to:

Behavior Issues in the Classroom: Consistent tantrums past the age of two (2) years old that are considered atypical such as chronic and recurrent biting, physical aggression towards teachers or peers, aggressive use of or chronic breaking of Academy materials, and inability to conform to and consistently follow classroom or Academy rules. The last is especially relevant if the safety of the child or other students is in question.

Developmental Concerns: A perceived deficit in any area of development including cognitive ability, speech/language development, motor development, social-emotional, or physical health.

Academic Concerns: A concern over a child's academic development, ability to focus on activities, rate of progress, or age-appropriate success in academic subject areas such as reading, writing, and math.

When concerns arise, we may use a number of additional tools to provide more information so that together, parents and the Academy staff may better discuss observations and concerns together in order to formulate the best plan for addressing them. The additional steps include, but are not limited to:

Consultation with the Academy Staff: We have a well-trained Director who is available to assist when a challenge or concern arises with a student. The Director will provide expertise and additional context to help determine the potential root cause of observed challenges and will work with teachers and parents to provide support needed to ensure your child's well-being and success.

Consultation with Retained Outside Specialists: These recommendations are based on classroom observations and are limited in scope. Interventions can range from simple classroom changes to support a wide range of learners to a recommendation that we meet with the parents and pursue further evaluation with outside resources.

d. Gesell Developmental Observation

The Director of the Academy has been trained on administering the Gesell Developmental Observation, a developmental assessment meant to identify potential areas of developmental delay in any area. The article "What is the Gesell Developmental Observation?" from *Gesell at Yale Program in Early Childhood* states "The Gesell Developmental Observation-Revised (GDO-R) is a comprehensive multidimensional assessment system that assists educators, and other professionals in understanding characteristics of child behavior in relation to typical growth patterns between 2½ to 9 years of age. The GDO-R uses direct observation to evaluate a child's cognitive, language, motor and social-emotional responses in five strands: Developmental, Letter/Numbers, Language/Comprehension, Visual/Spatial, and Social/Emotional/Adaptive."

What happens next?

If we have made an internal determination as to whether additional outside intervention and support are needed to ensure a student's success in our environment, we will discuss our observations and concerns with the child's parents.

During this time, we will provide our verbal recommendations for the next steps; these may include discussions to ensure a consistent approach at school and home or may address the need for outside referral and evaluation. It can also include, but is not limited to, other strategies such as: enrollment in specified parent education series relating to the area of challenge, a shorter school day for the child, requiring the child to be taken home each time after the behavior emerges, withdrawal from the Academy for a period of time (or permanently if a different environment is in the best interest of the child), or a requirement for a dedicated support person while the child is at Academy.

In this last instance, the dedicated support person is referred to as a "shadow" and the cost of providing this additional resource will be the parents' responsibility, added to their weekly

tuition. Parent education is crucial for every Academy family. Our Academy offers an array of parent education classes throughout the year to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities of child growth and development.

e. Outside Resources

Should developmental challenges emerge, parents may be asked to attend a particular offering so that we can ensure a consistent approach between home and school for the benefit of the child. If outside referral is recommended, the child is most often seen by one of the practitioners listed below. These individuals frequently arrange to visit the student at the Academy, and we encourage this! Please note – whenever an outside therapist or specialist visits the Academy, they must complete paperwork, including a background check, to ensure mandated safety protocols are followed. Further, if an outside referral is recommended by the Academy, it is the responsibility of the parents to secure and pay for any such services. Outside referrals and evaluations include professional assessments from any of the following practitioners:

Developmental Pediatrician: Developmental pediatricians can provide diagnostic and intervention recommendations to address any potential disabilities or developmental delays a child may be experiencing.

Speech Assessment: If there are concerns, your teacher may ask that you participate in these screenings. Speech/Language Pathologists can determine whether speech therapy is needed and can provide those services to students as deemed necessary.

Physical Therapy: Physical Therapists can assist with any issue having to do with pain, strength, joint range of motion, endurance, and gross motor functioning.

Occupational Therapy: Occupational therapists assist children with physical, cognitive, and sensory issues in order for them to be as independent and self-regulatory as possible.

Child Psychologist or Counselor: Psychologists and counselors who specialize in working with young children can assist in helping children learn to cope with life events like parental divorce, traumatic events, illnesses, etc.

Behavior Specialist: Behavior specialists assess what a particular behavior is communicating and assists parents and teachers to put strategies in place in order to systemically change behavior that is maladaptive. It is important that the appropriate type of specialists evaluate the child, and frequently this will require that the specialist visit the Academy to see your child in the classroom environment. So that the child is seen in his or her normal state, and to reduce anxiety, parents should not coach the child ahead of time and that the therapist observe in a non-obtrusive manner.

The Academy keeps an updated list of resources for you and your family to use in the event of behavioral issues. Please contact the Director for a complete list.

f. Concern Management

When concerns arise and are communicated to parents, the Academy expects that the family will address such requests in a timely fashion. As noted in our Mission Statement, we value the partnership between educator and parent. We believe that in order for children to be successful while in our environment and after they leave the Academy, parents and the Academy must both have a continuing dialog and a trusting relationship. On occasion parents may not agree with the concerns, observations, and/or recommendations offered by our staff and so do not act on them in a timely manner; we understand and empathize with this fully.

Other parents may consult with a specialist who does not evaluate the child or does not visit the child in the school environment which may be needed to properly support the child.

In these cases, in order to maintain a learning environment that provides for every student and for our teaching staff, we must then assess the appropriate direction to take with the child and their parents so that all students and staff in the classroom may be supported. This direction may take the form of continued conversations, further observations, one-on one support for the child (at cost to the family), or, as a last resort, alternative child care arrangements.

g. Children with Special Needs

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy will make every effort to include children with special needs. The staff and Director will assess each child on a case-by-case basis in cooperation the parents and other professionals as appropriate.

h. Discipline Policy

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy strives to create an environment that honors each child during their developmental growth while at the Academy. During these developmental stages, children will want to test boundaries as they grow into their own identity. Our goal is to give children the tools to effectively communicate, understand, and interpret their feelings. We want to help each individual child understand that it is acceptable to have these emotions, however, they cannot hurt themselves, other children, or teachers when they occur.

The Academy staff are trained in Conscious Discipline. Conscious Discipline is a leader in classroom management that provides a whole child solution. Conscious Discipline gives our staff the ability to integrate social-emotional learning, discipline, and self-regulation in order to spend less time policing behavior and more time teaching. This comprehensive approach empowers teachers with the skills to create a safe, cultivating, problem-solving environment for your child.

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy does not subject a child to discipline that is severe, humiliating, or frightening. Corporal punishment (such as spanking and/or other forms of physical punishment) is not permitted on the Holy Spirit campus, either by staff or parents. Children will not be denied active play as a consequence of undesirable behaviors. Food may not be withheld as punishment nor are children punished for accidents related to toileting. Children are always encouraged to handle conflict in a positive and peaceful manner and to develop and maintain

self-control. We reserve the right to dismiss a child whose behavior becomes so disruptive as to cause physical harm and/or emotional harm to themselves, other children, or the Academy staff.

i. Parents Concern About Another Child's Behavior

If you have a concern about a child other than your own, discuss your concern(s) with the Director of the Academy **in a private setting.**

XIV. Security, Safety, and Emergency Procedures

a. Security and Safety Protocols

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy has implemented a security system that uses a key fob which allows access only to those who have been issued access. This ensures that only those with a legitimate need to be in the Academy.

Each family is issued one fob per parent after all paperwork is completed for enrollment and is verified by the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy Office. If a key fob is lost, it will be deactivated upon a replacement key fob being activated. Please see *f. New or Replacement Key Fob Fee*. Authorized individuals other than a parent who frequently pick up or drop off may be issued a key fob.

For the Security of All:

1. Please do not share your fob with others, even those who may infrequently drop off or pick up your child.
2. The fob will be deactivated and returned effective on the child's withdrawal date.
3. Parents need to notify the Academy well in advance, preferably by Brightwheel message, of alternate plans for pick up.
4. In the event of an emergency that prevents a parent from picking up their child, it is important to notify the Academy Director as soon as possible so that alternative plans can be made.

The Academy has several important security measures including security monitoring system, direct link to the fire department and the sheriff office, and an automated attendance tracking system. Our parent communities have been great partners in keeping our Academy safe, and we appreciate the efforts that parents have made to protect the children and staff. Always adhere to these important security protocols:

Unauthorized Persons and Tailgating: There are several types of individuals to whom we cannot allow access. These include not just "suspicious persons", but in addition, and more likely, parents in a custodial disputes or disgruntled ex-employees. And in both of those situations it is likely that parents may have seen the now-non-authorized person before and so would have no suspicion as to their entry authorization. Because of this possibility, it is important that you not hold the door open for others, even if you recognize them as parents or teachers. This is going to be difficult for all of us to do because we believe it may seem rude, silly, or inconvenient.

However, this is the primary manner in which an unauthorized person can enter the building. The general message here is “we’re not being rude; we’re just being safe!” Please help the person in front of you follow this guideline by not grabbing the door and tailgating in! If you see someone standing at the outside door who may not have a fob, or who is having difficulty getting into the building, whether you have seen them before or not, please do not scan your key fob and let them in! In this case you should inform the Front Office and they will handle the situation. After that person either enters the building via “being buzzed in” by the Front Office, or leaves, you can scan your key fob. You can also use your key fob on the other set of doors by the Chapel and restrooms.

Suspicious Activities: Please let us know immediately if you see suspicious activities or persons outside. This can sometimes be awkward, but it is better to be safe than sorry.

Authorized Pick Ups: You may recall that we differentiate between “frequent” and “occasional” authorized pick-ups. The Front Office staff and the classroom must be fully familiar with the frequent authorized pick up. This person must pick up weekly to obtain the “frequent” designation. Occasional authorized pick-ups should always bring in their photo ID in case our regular staff is not at the Front Office. Parents must notify teachers and the Front Office staff if an occasional authorized pick up is picking up that day. This can be in the form of a Brightwheel message or an email. Children will not be released to an occasional authorized pick up otherwise.

Play Dates: From time to time, you may pick up a child for another parent at the Academy for a play date or in an emergency situation. If you are not recognized as a frequent authorized pick up for that child, the parents of the child must notify the teachers and the Front Office staff in order for the child to be released to the parent. This can be in the form of a Brightwheel message, an email, or a phone call.

Secure in Place and Lockdowns: The Academy has protocols for both “Secure in Place” and for “Lockdown”. Under “Secure in Place”, all exterior doors are locked so that the key fob panel does not work, no access allowed into the building except for parents and for teachers who are granted access by the Front Office staff, and normal activities will continue to take place in the classrooms. Under “Lockdown”, the exterior doors are locked so that the key fob panel does not work, no access is allowed into the building by anyone (including parents and teachers), and the teachers and children seek refuge in pre-specified areas.

Reunification During an Evacuation: If the Academy must be evacuated, we will attempt to send a mass communication using the normal methods (Brightwheel Alert). Most likely, in the event of an evacuation, city authorities (police, fire department, etc.) will be providing direction. Please remember that during the reunification process you will be required to check out your child in an orderly fashion and provide valid identification.

Contact Information: It is important that you provide the Academy with written documentation in the event of a change in address, phone numbers, or emails as soon as they occur.

Supervising your Child at Drop Off and Pick Up: Please remember to actively supervise your child before drop off and after pick up, especially when you are talking to other adults. It is very easy for children to slip out of the exterior doors or out on to the road if you are not paying close attention! You are fully responsible for your child once you have picked up your child, or another child from the classroom, and they deserve your full attention!

Children Accompanying Parents: If your child has an older sibling who accompanies you at drop off or pick up time, you may not leave that child in the lobby as the Front Office staff cannot supervise that child. In addition, we have instructed teachers not to release a child to an older sibling – parents must pick up their children.

b. Fire Procedure and Evacuation

When the fire alarm sounds, all classrooms will follow their posted evacuation routes out of the building. Using our automatic attendance system and physical rosters, we will make sure every child is accounted for. Parents will be contacted through the alert system on Brightwheel in the event of a fire and include our meeting location.

In the event we need to evacuate the building (without a fire present), we will follow the same route posted in the instance of a fire. We will not enter the building until the Director or officials “sweep” the building and the “All Clear” is given.

c. Loss of Power

In the event that we lose power, the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is authorized to close the Academy. Once power has been restored and all operations are fully functioning, we will notify families when we are able to open the Academy.

d. Tornado Procedure

All classrooms will follow the shelter in place procedure and bring the children to the central part of the Academy, away from windows, doors, and electrical panels. The children will squat with their hands over the backs of their necks and look at the floor, if applicable. We will remain in shelter in place until the “All Clear” is given by the Director.

e. Hurricane Procedure

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy closes when a hurricane threatens the safety of children and their families. The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy will follow the lead of the Escambia County Emergency Management recommendations for closure (www.myescambia.com) and/or the Pensacola Tallahassee Diocese. In the event that we lose power from a hurricane, please refer to **d. Loss of Power**. Parents will be contacted through the alert system on Brightwheel in the event we have an early closure or if we close the Academy for a hurricane.

f. Severe Thunderstorm and Tropical Storm Procedure

Teachers will be on the alert for safety issues such as close lightning strikes that may cause a power outage or fires. If it becomes dangerous for children, staff, or families to travel, we will

close the Academy to give adequate time before hazardous weather approaches the area to ensure that everyone gets home safely. Parents will be contacted through the alert system on Brightwheel in the event we have an early closure or if we close the Academy for a severe thunderstorm or tropical storm.

g. Injury at the Academy and Medical Emergency Procedure

If your child is injured at the Academy, an Incident/Accident report will be completed by your child's teacher or the teacher that witnessed the incident. You will be given the incident report to sign at pick up or drop off. A copy of the report is available for the parent. All injuries are recorded by the written Incident/Accident report and parents will be notified through the Brightwheel app. The nature of an injury will determine if a parent is contacted via telephone call. All head injuries, major falls, and injuries with excessive bleeding for long periods of time are examples of when a parent will receive a telephone call.

If the injury is serious, appropriate emergency care will be administered and emergency personnel will be summoned (if needed). For all medical emergencies, 911 will be called. Staff are not allowed to transport children when there is a medical emergency.

h. Intruder/Lock Down Procedure

In the event of an intruder or lock down procedure, we will lock the exterior doors and place the children in the bathrooms and/or closets, away from windows. We will remain under lock down until the "All Clear" is given. If the children are outside, they will seek shelter in the closest building.

If we have an active shooter in the Academy, please do not activate any fire alarms, silence cell phones, and DO NOT answer the door. We ask that if you pick up or drop off during this time, please remain calm and hide or evacuate if possible. Parents will be contacted through the alert system on Brightwheel in the event that we have active shooter around or at the Academy.

i. Missing Child Procedure

In the event that a child goes missing, we will immediately go into a shelter in place. An organized search for the child will begin. If the child is not found immediately, we will call 911 then the parents.

j. Emergency Preparedness Drills

We practice numerous emergency preparedness drills throughout the year. Fire drills will be practiced monthly and other emergency preparedness drills will be practiced quarterly. If you are dropping off or picking up your child during an emergency preparedness drill, please wait until the "All Clear" is given and communicate with your child's teachers or the Front Office before you leave or take your child.

k. Evacuation Plans

Evacuation plans are posted in every classroom and in the lobby. We will follow the evacuation plans in the event of a fire, tornado, evacuation, and shelter in place.

l. Family Reunification Destination

In the event that there is an emergency event that requires the complete evacuation of the Academy, the designated place of Family Reunification is at the Holy Spirit Catholic Church Building.

m. Weapons Safety Policy

To ensure the safety of the children and the employees, no firearms (loaded or unloaded) are allowed on the premises of the Academy. If you have any firearms in your automobile, they must be locked while on the premises of the Academy. Children are not allowed to bring knives, play guns, play swords, or any other dangerous instruments to the Academy.

n. Smoke-Free Campus

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy is a smoke free environment. This means that smoking cigarettes, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited within the Academy and all outdoor areas on the Holy Spirit Campus.

o. Your Role in Keeping the Environment Safe of Hazardous Items

We all must play an active role in keeping our environment safe for our children. Some items are unsafe because they affect the health of a child, and some are not appropriate because they affect the safety of the child. When you are dressing your child or packing their bag, please be aware of anything that says “keep out of reach of children”, that can cause physical harm to a child, or choke a child. These items should not be sent to the Academy.

When your child brings their responsibility bag to the Academy, please check it each day to make sure that it does not have any medication, sunscreen, insect repellent, hand sanitizer, sharp objects, small objects that can fit in a child's mouth, money, or any other item deemed hazardous to a child. Also, be cognizant of how you dress your child and whether they may have items that are hazardous typically due to choking hazards – for example, small barrettes, safety pins, certain necklaces, certain earrings, pennants, etc. If you are not sure if an item is appropriate, please stop by the Front Office.

We ask that parents exercise extreme caution while on the Academy premises in handling or transporting medications or other items which may be dangerous to children. This includes items that may be inadvertently dropped or that may be accessible when a parent sets down his/her purse or briefcase in reach of children. We ask that under no circumstances should dangerous items be brought into the Academy in your handbags including but not limited to adult medications, handguns, knives, mace, adult scissors, etc. Finally, we ask that you also not bring hot beverages into the building! While we know that it is cold outside during the winter, we do not want to take any chances - the hot drinks can easily be spilled on a child.

p. Mandating Reporting Child Abuse

As stated in the Department of Children and Families “Reporting Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults” (2013):

“Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.) mandates that any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, neglected, or abandoned by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child’s welfare shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Abuse Hotline of the Department of Children and Families.”

Any Academy administrator, teacher, or related professional who has reasonable cause (a set of facts which would cause a reasonably prudent person to conclude that abuse or neglect will occur or has occurred) to suspect child abuse or neglect or who has reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that the abuse or neglect will occur, is obligated to report the case immediately (as soon as possible but no more than twenty-four (24) hours) by telephone or personal visit, to local County Child Welfare Agency, the office of the County Sheriff, or the Escambia County Police Department.

As mandated reporters, the staff of the Holy Spirit Child Development Academy cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.” Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Withholding appropriate foods or liquids from a child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

q. Safety Requirements of Staff, Vendors, and Volunteers to Prevent Child Abuse

The Holy Spirit Child Development Academy takes the safety of the children and staff as a high priority. All employees and vendors are required to pass a Criminal Background Check. The staff and vendors are also provided with training and protocols to keep children safe from child abuse at Academy. We employ a diverse group of employees and enrichment vendors, and we require that they adhere to practices designed to keep the children safe. Wherever possible, we require that two (2) adults (either male or female) are always present when toileting children or with children, and if this is not possible, when teachers and children are one-on-one, we require that they be visible and working in a transparent manner.