



PARENT/FAMILY HANDBOOK

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WELCOME

We are so happy that you have entrusted your child in our care. We will consistently strive to offer you excellent service in a caring educational environment. We are committed to excellence for your child, to you and the that we serve. We would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your family.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Tadpole Academy is dedicated to providing high quality comprehensive educational and family services to children. We are committed to servicing families with children starting at 6 weeks of age and offering a safe, affordable and holistic approach to ensure a creative and successful learning environment with emphasis on pre-reading, language, math and other cognitive skills while continuously focusing on promoting healthy children with social and emotional competence as part of school readiness. We believe in involving the community, families and staff in encouraging, nurturing and empowering children for their life-long learning.

Non-Discrimination Policy

TADPOLE ACADEMY does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

Admissions *(The Licensing Rules are available for your review. Please ask the Administrator or a staff person if you wish to view them).*

TADPOLE ACADEMY enrolls children ages 6 weeks through 5 years (Pre-Schoolers).

Upon acceptance into TADPOLE ACADEMY, a student profile must be completed for our files. Each student will have a file located on-site that may be inspected by the Office of Child Care Licensing and enrolling parent(s) upon request.

The following information must be provided for enrollment:

The Completed Application must be provided for enrollment:

- Child Information Form (must have 2 adults listed with working phone numbers).
- Enrollment Contract
- Current Health Appraisal/Immunization Record. (Current physical must be provided within 30 days after admission.)
- Medical and Religious/Cultural Food Restrictions Form including allergy information
- Child Income Eligibility Form and other CACFP (Food) Forms
- Parent Permission Signatures
- Family Questionnaire
- Symptoms of Illness for Exclusion
- Confidentiality Statement to Handbook/Closing Remarks

The information above must be on file before the child can be left at TADPOLE ACADEMY (excluding the child's Health Appraisal).

Transitions

Initial transition from Home to TADPOLE ACADEMY

In addition to the parental interview process, the transitional meeting is an important step in the enrollment process. This meeting is the family's opportunity to meet and share information with the people with whom your child will be interacting with on a daily basis. This is a meeting with the family, the Center Administrator or Manager, and the child's teacher. This meeting is helpful prior to the child's start date at TADPOLE ACADEMY.

Transitioning from Classroom to Classroom

As children grow and develop, they need new challenges and social interaction with other children in their peer group. Children will make a transition to the program based on chronological age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability.

Classroom changes will be made to fit the developmental characteristic of the children enrolled. During this transition from one program to another, current and future teachers will meet with you, and your child will be slowly integrated into the new classroom environment. You are encouraged to visit the new classroom environment so that you too can become accustomed to the environment and bond with your child's new primary caregiver. You are also encouraged to discuss communication methods that work best for you in order to maintain ongoing dialogue.

Continuity of Care

Your child will remain with the same teacher and the same group of children for the majority of the day in each classroom that they enter while at TADPOLE ACADEMY. As much as possible, TADPOLE ACADEMY will schedule the same teacher to cover a classroom when the lead teacher is out so that continuity of care is not disrupted. Consistency with teacher(s) and peers promotes positive, meaningful relationships between teacher-child, teacher-parent, and children.

Transitioning to Elementary School

The Administrator and teachers will assist families in the transition from TADPOLE ACADEMY to elementary school. The Administrator will provide you with information on local schools, help you with ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school and provide information on what to expect.

Drop-off

Tadpole Academy enforces a drop off time of no later than 9:00 A.M. in order for your child(ren) to be accepted into care for the day. An exception to your child being dropped off after 9:00 A.M. is if they have an appointment, in which case advance notice needs to be given and the parent must provide a note from the medical provider confirming the appointment at drop off. In the event of an emergency, please let Administration know and arrangements may be made for a later drop off time. To ensure that each child is safe and supervised at all times and to foster daily communication between families and teacher, a parent or authorized individual must accompany each child into the classroom and ensure that the child is under supervision before leaving the Center. Parent/guardian is responsible for checking the child in and out each day. Families are responsible for their children once they are checked out of the Center.

Our teachers focus on the bulk of their morning curriculum starting at 9:00 A.M. each day as it is the time of day when children are most focused and interruptions are minimal. When children are dropped off late in the morning, they not only miss important instruction time, but have more difficulty adjusting to the routine. Late drop offs are disruptive to the classroom schedule and to other children both during instruction time and during nap time as more often than not the child dropped off late is unable to sleep/rest quietly because they have not had sufficient time to burn energy and explore the classroom.

Student Access

TADPOLE ACADEMY cannot legally deny access to a parent or guardian unless there is an active restraining order on file or a specific schedule of court-ordered visitation rights that prohibits this. TADPOLE ACADEMY will act in a manner that ensures the safety of all children and staff. If TADPOLE ACADEMY has reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking a child up is under the influence or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way and may endanger your child, we will request that another adult (parent or guardian or someone listed on the Child Release Form) pick up the child. If the person picking up the child refuses to allow someone else on the approved list to pick up the child, the police will be called to prevent potential harm to your child.

Educational Measurement

Our program promotes an environment where young impressionable minds are learning, exploring, thirsting, and conquering new things daily. TADPOLE ACADEMY uses The Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold, which are the curriculum and assessment tool recommended by Delaware STARS. The Creative Curriculum encourages students' curiosity and critical thinking through meaningful routines and experiences, well-planned learning centers that allow for child choice and self-directed play, and the implementation of investigative studies. The Creative Curriculum is aligned with the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool. Lesson plans/activities are planned and scaffolded based off of the developmental needs and interests of the children, and documentation is routinely collected for the purpose of measuring each child's growth and for setting goals in the following areas: physical, social-emotional, language/literacy, and cognitive development. Additionally, we use the Funshine curriculum. Assessments are done on an on-going, quarterly basis through the Teaching Strategies Gold online platform, and documentation is shared with parents twice a year, or as often as requested, through parent-teacher conferences.

In addition to The Creative Curriculum, Teaching Strategies Gold and Funshine, TADPOLE ACADEMY also uses a screening and monitoring tool known as Ages and Stages that is designed to identify/monitor children who may require more extensive screening by a licensed professional. The center's use of this screening tool is a requirement of Delaware STARS. Information about the Ages and Stages questionnaires is provided to parents during or shortly after enrollment, and signed parental consent is obtained before proceeding. Once parental consent is given, the questionnaires are provided regularly throughout the child's enrollment in the program. The questionnaires must be completed by the child's guardian and includes questions about the child's communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, personal-social, and social-emotional skills. The use of this screening tool is to support the child and family, and ensure that each child has the best laid foundation for success in school after leaving our program. Upon completion of the questionnaires, a member of the management team will share the results with the child's parent, along with specific activities that can encourage and support the child's development. Information will not be shared with other agencies without written parental consent. The completion of this by the parents/guardians is a requirement for enrollment and/or continuation of care.

Parents are always welcome to come and witness the academic growth and performance of their child, or to volunteer in the classroom as a parent reader or assistant. Parents are asked to notify management in advance and to sign in on our Volunteer Sheet. Any parent(s) that wishes to volunteer in the classroom on a regular basis may not exceed 40 hours in a one-year period and will be required to have a federal background check completed.

Parent-Administrator/Management Communication

Please feel free to talk with the Administrator at any time or communicate via a phone call or an email. Additionally, a parent-administrator conference may be scheduled if you have a concern that needs addressing.

TADPOLE ACADEMY wants to meet your child and your family's needs as best as possible. On a quarterly-basis we will distribute a Parent Satisfaction Survey. This survey is optional and provides you with the opportunity to offer feedback on an anonymous-basis. This information will be reviewed by management to aid in program planning, and resulting program changes will be shared with families through a memo, Tadpole Application and/or email. A feedback form is also made

available 24/7 on our website at <http://www.tadpoleacademy.org>

If you chose to leave our program for any reason we will ask that you complete a Parent Exit Survey. This survey is also optional and anonymous and will be emailed to you shortly after your child's last day with TADPOLE ACADEMY.

Parent to Teacher Communication

Please feel free to talk with your child's teacher at drop off or pick up. We try not to disturb teachers during classroom time. If your student's teacher is unable to talk at that time, we can set up a face to face meeting, talk on the phone, or communicate via email. You may leave a note for the teacher with the Administrator or Manager.

Teacher to Parent Communication

A family communication bulletin board is located near the sign in and out station. Information such as lesson plans, Daily News, health alerts, articles, pamphlets, and the daily schedule is located in this area or in the classroom. Children's daily information is sent to parents/guardians electronically via our Tadpoles Program. This electronic communication will include Daily Sheets, memos, activity announcements, calendars, reminders, etc. Please read this information each day and provide us with any changes to your email

Parent/Teacher Conference

Conferences will be conducted a minimum of twice a year with the teacher and parent/guardian. Documented educational assessments, goals, and accomplishments (to include work samples/portfolio) will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to present any questions or concerns to include constructive feedback. Conferences are strongly encouraged. If unable to attend, you will receive a copy of the assessment via Tadpoles and you will need to sign-off declining the Conference.

Days and Hours of Operations

TADPOLE ACADEMY will operate Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hours are subject to change based on parent needs and with management approval. A late fee of 1.00 for each minute a child is picked up late past closing (for non-POC families) or past the 10-hour window (for POC families) will be applied if a child is not picked up by the closing/allotted time. Late pick-up fees must be satisfied prior to the child returning the next day.

Holidays and Closings

The center will close or dismiss early in observation of the following holidays:

- Memorial Day (closed)
- Fourth of July (closed)
- Labor Day (closed)
- Thanksgiving Day (closed)
- Black Friday (early dismissal)
- Christmas Eve (early dismissal), Christmas Day (closed)
- New Year's Eve (early dismissal), New Year's Day (closed)

Note: If a holiday falls on a Saturday, TADPOLE ACADEMY will be closed on the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, TADPOLE ACADEMY will be closed on the following Monday.

TADPOLE ACADEMY will close at 12 P.M. on one Friday of each quarter (approximately March, June, September, December) for staff professional development. In December, we will announce the early closing (12 P.M.) in advance to account for the holiday period.

Children with Special Needs

It is mandatory that TADPOLE ACADEMY be made aware of children with special needs during the admissions process. TADPOLE ACADEMY reserves the right to determine if proper accommodations can be made and, if so, to ensure an appropriate learning environment and will ensure that all relevant information is shared with necessary staff members prior to enrollment. We do not discriminate. We want to be sure that we can provide the appropriate setting/care for your child. Staff are Certified to administer medications in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy outlined by Office of Child Care Licensing. A meeting between the parent or guardian and the Administrator and Manager will be held prior to a decision being made (if necessary), about enrollment to confirm that TADPOLE ACADEMY is the best match for the child's needs. If this information is known ahead of time, it will allow the family to take advantage of the most appropriate placement for the child. We have allowed agencies to come in for PT/OT and Speech Therapy.

Student Schedule

The schedule for specific activities will vary for each group. All activities will be age- and developmentally-appropriate.

The following is a sample schedule for parents to identify the types of activities their child will participate in at TADPOLE ACADEMY:

7:00 – 8:00	Individual/Small Group Play
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast/Bathroom/Diapering
9:00 – 10:00	Centers
10:00 – 11:00	Recess (<i>outdoor activity is weather permitting</i>)
11:00 – 11:15	Bathroom/Diapering
11:15 –12:15	Lunch/Story Time
12:15 –2:15	Naptime
2:15 – 3:00	Bathroom Break/Snack Time
3:00 – 6:00	Individual/Small Group Play, Free Play Centers Open/Clean-Up/Bathroom/Diapering

Registration, Weekly Tuition Fees, Payment Policies and Late Fees (below prices are subject to change)

INFANTS (6 WKS THROUGH 2 YEARS)	\$250.00	
TODDLERS (2 YEARS POTTY TRAINED TO 3 YEARS)	\$200.00	**must be potty-trained
PRESCHOOL AND PRE-K (3 1/2, 4 & 5 YEAR OLDS)	\$185.00	**must be potty-trained
SCHOOL-AGE VIRTUAL (AGES 5 TO 10)	\$150.00	

Before and After Care prices available at request.

Registration Fee* (additional fees not for POC or POC Plus Clients)

There is a of \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee when you submit the Application. This will cover completion of the necessary paperwork. If you withdraw your child, a new registration fee will be assessed when your child returns.

Initial Deposit* (additional fees not for POC or POC Plus Clients)

An initial deposit for the first week is due when your child is enrolled.

Payment Policy

You will receive an invoice for payment. If you are POC, your payment amount is determined by the State and you are required to pay it with or without receiving a separate invoice. Payments are due in full the Friday prior to the week of

attendance. If you are unable to pay on Friday, you may be extended a grace-period and bring in your payment the next Monday morning when dropping off your child. If payments are not received on Monday, we have the option of accessing a \$50 non-refundable late fee and/or suspension of care until your payment is made. If assessed, the late fee (non-POC only) the outstanding tuition must be received before your child is accepted into care.

Repeat payments not received on time (including Purchase of Care co-payments) may lead to dismissal within the acceptable guidelines of Purchase of Care and Tadpole Academy.

Payments are preferred via Cash, PayPal, money order and/or [credit/debit card (via Paypal Invoice)]. Any return payment or declined card items may be charged a return fee of \$50.00 per item. This fee will have to be paid prior to your child's next day of attendance. If your account is current, you will receive a printout of your payments for the year by the end of January for the preceding year. If you have any questions, please let us know. Thank you!

Late Departure Fee*

It is important that children be picked up at their scheduled time of departure. A late fee of \$5.00 per minute of late pick up will be charged if a child is picked up after the Center's closing time for non-POC families or if a child attends the center for longer than a ten-hour period for POC families. This fee must be paid on the day of pick-up or no later than the following business day.

Payment Methods*

Payment is due on Friday of the preceding week. We accept multiple methods of payment including credit cards, debit cards, money orders, and cash (a receipt can be provided at time of payment). If there is ever a dispute regarding payment, you will need to supply your receipt.

Vacation Week

Cash paying clients are entitled to 5 days of an unpaid absence each year after the completion of 90 business days.

***The above pertains to regular paying clients. In the case of Purchase of Care (POC) Clients: POC Clients are only allowed/required to pay field trip fees, returned check fees, late pick up fees (if the child is picked up after the authorization period), and the parent co-pay if the client has one. Additionally, POC Clients are required to give a 5-day notice when terminating services.**

Staff/Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size

The following staff/child ratios and maximum group sizes will be maintained during normal daily activities (typically between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.)

Group	Age of Child	Min Staff/Child Ratio	Max Group Size
TADPOLES	6 WKS +	1:4	8
LEAPERS 1	1 YR	1:6	12
LEAPERS 2	2 YRS	1:8	16
LEADERS	3 – 5 YRS	1:10	20

Child Behavior Management Policy / Discipline

Young children are striving for understanding, independence, and self-control. Children learn by exploring, experimenting, and testing the limits of their environment and experiencing the consequences of their behavior. (Example, we have a Bite Protocol. You can request a copy at any time. If this becomes a concern, you will be provided with a copy.) Children begin to understand how the world works, their own limits, and appropriate assertiveness. TADPOLE ACADEMY children are

helped to learn self-control and how the world works in a positive atmosphere of support and understanding that recognizes the child's needs.

Our Policy on Discipline: TADPOLE ACADEMY prides itself in maintaining a safe and nurturing environment. All children shall remain free of harm to themselves and other children. It is the duty of our staff to immediately address any child causing disruption in a positive, appropriate and nurturing manner. No child shall ever be handled with negative care to include hitting, name-calling or demeaning remarks.

TADPOLE ACADEMY uses indirect guidance techniques:

- We give advance warnings: "You have five more minutes to play before it's time to clean up."
- We give choices: "You may paint with the other children or read a book in a quiet corner."
- We have regular routine: "We always wash our hands before lunch."
- We avoid nagging: We tell the child what we expect just once, follow it by asking the child if they remember what we asked; and then offer to help the child do what was asked.
- We're consistent: We do things the same way each day so the children know what to expect and learn to trust and feel safe in their environment.

We also use direct guidance techniques:

- We use affirmative: "We use walking feet indoors" rather than "don't run."
- We get the child's attention by crouching down to their level, making eye contact, speaking quietly, and asking the child to repeat the directions.
- We try hard to be fair: We examine our expectations to make sure they are consistent and age appropriate.

If a child is unable to demonstrate self-controlling behavior, a brief "COOL DOWN" will be used for the child to regain control. A staff member will discuss the reason for this period with the child in a language appropriate to the child's level of development and understanding. "COOL DOWN" is no more than one (1) minute per year of the child's age (this method is not used for infants). "COOL DOWN" occurs only when other measures fail and is used as an opportunity for the child to regroup, not as a punishment. At TADPOLE ACADEMY, the discipline goal is educating and redirecting children. Punishment is an inappropriate form of discipline and has no place in our program.

Our program philosophy and policy prohibits the following forms of discipline: hitting, spanking, shaking, scolding, shaming, isolating, labeling (words such as: bad, naughty, etc.), or any other negative reaction to the child's behavior. All forms of corporal (physical) punishment are strictly prohibited.

If a child is unable to gain control and requires more individual attention than can be given within child-to-staff ratios, we may need to remove the child from the class/group to another supervised class/group. If this happens, before the child rejoins their original group, a staff person will talk with the child to encourage him/her to make better decisions. If this method does not work, we may contact a parent. A child that consistently requires one-to-one attention may be asked to leave the center temporarily for the safety of other children. Repeated uncontrollable behavior can lead to suspension and/or discontinuation of services (expulsion).

Process of Discontinuing a Student's Enrollment

TADPOLE ACADEMY'S program is centered on the children for whom we teach and are responsible during their time at TADPOLE ACADEMY. We seek to provide a program designed to support children and to challenge them to learn as individuals with unique learning styles.

Our child-centered approach seeks to accommodate a wide range of individual differences. Therefore, it is only on certain occasions that a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of situations (not all inclusive):

- Child appears to be a danger to him/herself, other Academy children, Academy employees or anyone else at the Academy.
- Medical, psychological or social service personnel available through DFS determine that continued care at the Academy could be harmful to or not in the best interest of the child.
- Any other situation in which the accommodations required for the child's success and participation place an undue burden on TADPOLE ACADEMY's resources and finances and removal is in the best interest of the child or the Academy.

Process of Discontinuing a Family's Enrollment

TADPOLE ACADEMY'S program is based on developing a partnership and supporting families. It is occasional that a parent/guardians' actions/requests may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for themselves and their child(ren).

- Parent/Guardian fails to abide by TADPOLE ACADEMY policies, the requirements of OCCL or non-payment.
- Demands special services which are not provided to other children and which cannot be reasonably delivered by TADPOLE ACADEMY.
- Parent/guardian is threatening, physically or verbally abusive to TADPOLE ACADEMY'S faculty, children, or anyone else at the Center.

Conflict Resolution

Periodically, parents or guardians may have an issue with a parent or staff member at TADPOLE ACADEMY. The Owners are always available to speak directly to anyone with concerns. You can call, text or email. It is important to maintain a positive atmosphere and display any disapproval in a positive disciplined manner. The following steps should be taken to address any concerns and resolve conflicts:

First, any issues or concerns should be addressed with Administration. An attempt to resolve the issue with the person whom they have a difference of opinion will be addressed by Administration.

Second, if Administration's conversation with the person does not bring resolution, a meeting may be held with all parties. It is not appropriate to address a teacher directly, in particular, during her responsibilities of caring for a class. The issue should be clarified in a non-accusatory manner and an attempt should be made to reach a mutual understanding. It is not appropriate or acceptable to discuss the issue(s) with persons in a loud demeaning manner or with persons not directly involved.

Third, in the event a parent is displeased with the actions of TADPOLE ACADEMY, the parent may consult with the Office of Child Care Licensing. Under the Delaware Code, parents are entitled to inspect, at any time, the active record and complaint files of TADPOLE ACADEMY (see: Parents Right to Know Form). Parents should contact Office of Childcare Licensing with any questions or concerns at (302) 892-5800.

Administration will have the right to present a final solution and/or escalate to immediately discontinuing services. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Field Trips and Transportation of Children

Information will be sent home and a Permission Slip for trips are required.

Food and Nutrition

We will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack, including formula and baby food.

The following nutrition rules/guidelines are REQUIRED for *all* licensed child care centers in Delaware. When providing food, please use the below guidelines when preparing your child's meals.

A. Milk: fluid pasteurized cow's milk;

- Children one (1) year to two (2) years shall have whole pasteurized cow's milk when not on formula or breast milk; Children 3 through 5 years will received 1% milk.

B. Proteins: meat, fish, poultry, eggs, yogurt, cheese, dried beans, and peas (we are peanut-free);

C. Fruits and vegetables: include a variety of fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruits; and

D. Grains: Whole grain and enriched products such as breads, cereals, pastas, crackers and rice.

Breakfast served has at least one (1) item each from the milk (A), fruits and vegetables (C) and grain (D) food groups as noted above.

Lunch served has one (1) item from each of the milk (A), protein (B) and grain (D) food groups and two (2) items from the fruit and vegetable (C) food groups as noted above.

"Mothers who wish to breastfeed are welcome to do so in our infant classroom. We have a partition available that can be easily set up to allow for privacy."

USDA NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

FYI

Delaware CACFP /Delacare Rules for Nutrition

The following nutrition rules are REQUIRED for *all* licensed child care centers in Delaware.

INFANTS

JUICE Infants under 12 months of age may not be served juice.

MEATS & MEAT ALTERNATES Cheese products and cheese foods are not allowed. Only real cheese may be served. Processed meats are not allowed.

Fried or pre-fried and then baked meats are not allowed.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES Fried or pre-fried and then baked fruits and vegetables are not allowed.

GRAINS & BREADS Cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per serving.

For infants 8 through 11 months, a whole grain product must be served at least one time each day.†

Sweet grains (e.g., cookies, cakes, donuts, danishes, etc.) are not allowed.

COMBINATION FOODS Combination foods (a mixture of 2 or more different meal components) are not allowed.

Combinations of fruits and/or vegetables may be served.

Desserts, cobblers, puddings and jarred cereals with fruit are not allowed.

CHILDREN

JUICE No more than one serving per day of 100% juice may be served to children 1 - 18 years of age.

All juice must be 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Non-100% juice (e.g., juice drink or cocktail) is not allowed.

MILK Children 12 through 23 months of age must be served whole milk.

Children 2 years of age or older must be served fat-free or 1% (low-fat) milk.

MEATS & MEAT ALTERNATES Processed meats (e.g., hot dogs, sausage, bologna, etc.) may be served only one time every two weeks.*

No fried or pre-fried and then baked food items are allowed (e.g., chicken nuggets, fish sticks) unless no more than 35% of their total calories are from fat.*

Cheese products and cheese foods are not allowed. Only real cheese may be served.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES No fried or pre-fried and then baked fruits or vegetables (e.g., French fries, tater tots) are allowed unless no more than 35% of their total calories are from fat.*

GRAINS & BREADS A whole grain product must be served at least one time each day.†

Cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per serving.

Sweet grains/baked goods (e.g., cookies, cakes, donuts, danishes, etc.) may be served one time every two weeks for snack only (not for breakfast, lunch or supper).*

*It is highly recommended that these foods are not served at all. †It is highly recommended that whole grains are served whenever possible.

Food Safety

Food or snacks must be clean, wholesome, free from spoilage and adulteration, correctly labeled and safe for human consumption. Staff members must make sure that all perishable food (particularly milk and juice) are kept refrigerated (at least 40 degrees F or colder).

All single service dinnerware or utensils provided with meals or snacks must be discarded immediately. They may not be reused for any purpose.

In the event food is to be stored, all areas must be clean and free from dust particles. Children should not access the food storage area at all.

Breakfast & Outside Food Policy

As a reminder, breakfast is not served after 9:00 AM. In order to be served breakfast, please plan your arrival accordingly. If your child will be arriving after this time please feed them prior to drop off as lunch is not served until approximately 11:45 PM.

Tadpole Academy enforces a no outside food policy; if your child is dropped off with food you will be asked to take it with you or have your child finish the food prior to entering the center. You may not leave food in your child's cubby for pick-up (even if it is bagged) as the cubbies are accessible to children. As a reminder, Tadpole Academy is a peanut-free facility and we do not serve pork products.

Lavatory

All children are encouraged to use the lavatory as needed. However, children potty-training and pre-schoolers will be accompanied by an adult and the following policies will be followed:

- A teacher or assistant will assist the child if needed. However, we ask that parents reinforce proper hygiene so that the child knows how to appropriately wipe herself/himself.
- When a child has an accident by wetting or soiling their clothes, the teacher or assistant shall assist the child in changing their clothes in the lavatory. The teacher or assistant will wear rubber gloves to help remove the clothing, clean the child, and put on clean clothes. Parents are asked to ensure an extra set of clean dry clothes is always available with the child's belongings.
- Soiled clothes will be marked and left in a separate bag with the child's other belongings. Parents are expected to take clothes home that day and return another set of clean clothes the very next day.
- The teacher or assistant will help the children wash their hands according to the posted directions for proper hand washing.

Please note: If a clean set of clothes is not available in an emergency, parents or guardians will be contacted to pick up their child or bring a set of clothes immediately.

Dress Code

All children must wear appropriate clothing to school. All children are expected to wear sneakers or "non slippery" shoes with a rubber soles (sandals with open toes, slides, wedges and heels are not allowed, and no flip flops). Parents are to ensure their student has an extra set of clothes at all times that fit and is weather-appropriate.

Clothing Suggestions/Items Needed/Bedding

The playground area is used as an extension of our daily program and activities are conducted outside whenever weather permits. In order for your child to enjoy participation in TADPOLE ACADEMY outside program, please have him/her dress for the weather. In general, durable clothing that can withstand the energetic activity of young children is usually the best.

If the day is very cold, in addition to the child's coat/jacket, please send a hat, mittens or gloves, and an extra sweater. We will probably be outside only for a brief time, but children need to run around in order to have some large muscle activity and to get some fresh air. Our Health Care Consultant recommends that if a child is well enough to come to school, the child should be able to play outside as long as she/he stays dry and is dressed appropriately.

Therefore, we ask that you leave weather-appropriate extra clothing. Additionally, if the child is newly toilet-trained, we need an extra set of underwear and clothing. Please replace items when they become soiled.

When buying indoor or outdoor clothing for school, make sure the child can put them on him/herself. Since the children are involved in active and sometimes messy play and go outdoors on the playground daily, it is important that they are dressed appropriately, wearing comfortable and easily washable clothes.

Each child must have at least a complete change of clothing labeled with his/her name. Clothing will be kept in each child's cubby and used as needed. TADPOLE ACADEMY is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing. All items should be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Children will not be accepted into care without the necessary items, including (but not limited to):

Parents must provide 2 sheets approximately 2 ft wide and 5 ft long. All bedding must be taken home each Friday to be washed and returned on Monday morning. Children 1 year old and older may bring in a light blanket. All bedding items should be labeled with the child's first and last name. For infants, 2 fitted crib sheets should be supplied.

- Change of clothing
- Diapers and wipes (if not potty-trained)
 - Children wearing diapers will be required to supply a minimum of 25 diapers on Monday morning each week. In the event that a child runs out of diapers (due to the required amount not being brought in on Monday) you will be called to pick up your child from the center immediately. Repeated instances of an inadequate supply of diapers and/or wipes could lead to suspension or dismissal of your child.
- Parents can provide swaddles if desired. Or, if we have them available, we will use our swaddles.
- Formula

There will be a charge for items not brought in when required and then have to be supplied by Tadpole Academy. (Current pricing: Sheet \$10, Blanket \$10, Bottle \$5 and Diaper \$1.) Of course, we'd prefer the parent/guardian supply what is needed.

Rest

After lunch and during activity periods children will have an afternoon rest period of at least 45 minutes. However, if your child does not wish to nap, the teacher will provide alternative quiet activities.

Emergency Planning

Seldom, a natural or man-made disaster such as a fire, flood, earthquake, extreme weather conditions, power failure or utility disruption, chemical or toxic spill, bomb threat, or terrorist attack may occur. (A detailed Plan is available for review.) However, in the event of an emergency, staff must follow the following protocol:

- Attend and participate in training and drills on disaster preparedness;
- Staff must move quickly and make sound decisions:
 - Quickly remove the Emergency Binder from the room with name of child(ren), contact number(s) and daily attendance roster;
 - Take a head count of children;
 - Immediately evacuate children from the area of disaster in a quick, safe, and calm manner. Staff members are expected to remain in control of themselves as not to confuse or alarm children;
 - Move in a single file line or huddled together (based on circumstance) to the nearest exit;
 - In the event of a power outage, students may remain in room. The Center Administrator or Manager will communicate with staff of the next steps. If the power outage is expected to last more than 20 minutes, arrangements are to be made for parents to pick children up early.
 - Staff members are to relocate to a safe public school or office.
 - Confirm head count and ensure each child is present;
 - Contact the appropriate authority (based on circumstance) and follow their advisement (when applicable); and
 - Contact parents and inform them of the incident. In the event parents must pick up children, attending staff members must ensure parents sign for their child. If another party besides parent picks up a child, appropriate identification must be shown.

– Monthly emergency drills will be covered to prepare staff members and children. Staff members are expected to take drills seriously and react in the appropriate manner and quickness for the situation being modeled.

Ultimately, staff may be required to make quick responsible decisions not listed above. In this case, staff members are expected to make sound decisions and ensure children are safe and accounted for. Appropriate authorities and parents must be notified immediately about children's safety.

Accidents and Emergencies

Immediately following the proper Safety/Emergency Evacuation Procedure, parents will be notified accordingly. Upon request for early dismissal, parents will receive a brief update of the circumstance. Parents must check their child out before the child can be excused. Parents are asked to follow specific instructions (if applicable) based on the circumstance or situation. The Early Childhood Administrator or staff members will provide further instructions (if applicable). In the event a child gets hurt, the parents/guardians will be notified if serious and in accordance to Licensing guidelines. An incident report will be provided to the parent/guardian when accidents/injuries occur. At pick up time, the parent/guardian or authorized person can sign for the Incident Report. This person is encouraged to raise any questions or concerns preferably with Administration or to attending staff members at pickup. If requested, we can send the completed form electronically or provide a paper copy.

Emergency School Closure

TADPOLE ACADEMY will observe state emergency closings in the event of severe weather conditions. Effective March 2015, TADPOLE ACADEMY will no longer follow the closing of Christina School District but will open on schedule and remain open for as long as conditions are safe for employees to travel to/from work. Any notification regarding inclement weather closings will be made available using any of the following methods:

- Tadpoles Application
- Text Messages
- Email

In the event TADPOLE ACADEMY is not listed, we encourage parents to contact the school directly when in doubt.

If weather conditions such as snowfall or hailing begin while school is in session TADPOLE ACADEMY reserves the right to close early. Parents or approved persons are required to pick their child within 1 hour of the call so staff members may leave before roads and travel conditions become too hazardous.

In the case of serious emergencies such as earthquakes, fire, storms, loss of power/water, parents will be notified to pick their child up immediately. Children will be cared for at all times until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

Child Abuse and Neglect

TADPOLE ACADEMY staff members are required by Delaware State law and licensing requirements to immediately report to the police and/or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is a reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation of any kind. You may see the Early Childhood Administrator or Manager regarding the school's policies and procedures for reporting and documenting suspected child abuse and neglect.

Staff members may not notify parents when the police or CPS is notified about possible child abuse, neglect or exploitation, except based on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called.

Health Appraisal and Forms

Parents are required to ensure that a current physical is always on file for their child. Within one (1) month following admission, parents must ensure that an age appropriate health appraisal is provided unless child has been required to by law to be admitted without a health appraisal as specified in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act or any applicable local, State and Federal Laws and regulations. Otherwise, the health appraisal must have been conducted within the last twelve (12) months prior to admissions to TADPOLE ACADEMY.

Health appraisals shall be certified by a health care provider and updated yearly or in accordance with the recommended schedule for routine health supervision of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The health appraisal shall include:

- A health history;
- Physical examination;
- Growth and development;
- Recommendations regarding required medication, restrictions or modifications of the child's activities, diet or care;
- Medical information pertinent to treatment in case of emergency;
- Documentation of the immunization status, with a listing of day, month and year of administration for each immunization required by the Division of Public Health.

All information must be provided within one (1) month following admission. If the appropriate information is not provided, then a child will not be permitted to attend TADPOLE ACADEMY until the proper forms and information are received.

Additional forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment showing any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and current immunization history. These forms must be kept current.

Health Observations on Arrival

TADPOLE ACADEMY will observe children upon arrival for signs of communicable disease, physical injury, or other evidences of ill health. TADPOLE ACADEMY asks for parental support by ensuring your child arrives to school in good health ready to learn. Otherwise, TADPOLE ACADEMY will proceed with the necessary actions to ensure the well being of all children and staff members.

Management of Illnesses

It is important that children are healthy and free of any illnesses that may pose a threat to others in the facility. A child cannot remain at the center if they show symptoms of the following illnesses:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or greater (4 months and under) AND 101 (over 4 months). A thermometer may be placed gently under their arm for proper reading. A child shall never receive a rectal temperature reading at the school. Oral may be done for preschoolers four (4) and older if a digital thermometer is used.
- Signs of severe illness such as unusual lethargy (exhaustion, fatigue, drowsiness), uncontrollable coughing, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or wheezing;
- Uncontrollable diarrhea;
- Blood in stools;
- Vomiting illness that occurs two (2) or more times within 24-hours;
- Stomach pains that continue for more than two (2) hours or intermittent pain associated with a fever or other symptoms;
- Mouth sores with drooling;
- Purulent conjunctivitis known as "Pink eye";

- Scabies;
- Pediculosis known as “head lice”;
- Tuberculosis;
- Impetigo known as a highly contagious skin bacterial infection;
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection;
- Varicella-Zoster known as “chick pox”;
- Shingles that are exposed and can come in contact with others;
- Pertussis;
- Mumps;
- Hepatitis A virus or jaundice;
- Measles;
- Rubella;
- Herpetic gingivostomatitis known as “cold sores”
- Other illnesses that limit the child’s ability to comfortably participate in activities or results in the need for greater care that can’t be provided without comprising the health and safety of other children. Other illnesses that may affect other well children in care.

The parent or guardian is required to provide written documentation from a health care provider that the symptoms or illnesses do not pose a serious health risk to the child or other children. Parents are welcome to discuss details of this rule in depth with the Center Administrator or Manager.

Children that are ill will be cared and supervised in a separate area until picked up by the parent or guardian. *Pick up must be within 1 hour of being contacted.*

Exposure of Communicable Disease

In the event your child has been exposed to any reportable communicable diseases (as listed under Management of Illnesses). TADPOLE ACADEMY will release, if required, a written notice to parents. This written notice will indicate the suspected disease to which the child was exposed at the school.

Health Return Policy

TADPOLE ACADEMY will not permit a child with a reportable communicable disease to return without one of the following documentations:

- Written documentation from a health care provider that the child has been evaluated and poses no risk to the child or others;
- TADPOLE ACADEMY has reported the illness to the Division of Public Health and has been advised the child presents no health risk to others;
- If there is a conflict of opinions of the health care provider and Division of Public Health, TADPOLE ACADEMY will follow the instructions of Division of Public Health.

Medications

TADPOLE ACADEMY has staff that are trained in the administration of medication. They will only administer medication based on a medication form and/or note from the doctor and/or parent/guardian and provided that the medication is in its original packing and label with child’s name, date of birth and dosage noted. To administer medication, Tadpole Academy must also have the following: doctor’s name and phone number, pharmacy name and phone number, name of medication, time or frequency, route of administration, medication expiration date, end date to stop, reason for medication and any special directions. The use of diaper ointment and sunscreen will be administered by personnel authorized in administering

medication only and with parent/guardian written permission. Unused medication will be returned to the parent/guardian when no longer needed by the child.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a regular part and exciting daily routine for children. Children should be prepared to play outside (this may include going for a walk or playing at the playground) some part of every day. Please do not request your child stay indoors. Your child should remain home if unable to participate in all activities. No flip-flops, sandals, or other slippery shoes should be worn while playing outdoors.

Authorized Persons for Drop-off and Pick-up

Parents and guardians are authorized to sign child in and out daily. Only those persons approved by the child's parent/guardian, a court appointed guardian or DFS may take the child from TADPOLE ACADEMY. Authorized persons must provide photo identification prior to the child being released. In this case, the person must obtain clearance from the Center Administrator or Manager. We ask that parents attempt to notify TADPOLE ACADEMY if there is a change in routine for the child.

Personal Items

We understand that children love their toys. However, we ask that children not bring toys from home to avoid any confusion, misplacement, or mishaps with the child's personal property. Staff members cannot assume responsibility for lost or broken toys.

General Parent Responsibilities

Parent and guardians are responsible for the following:

- Provide the appropriate forms required;
- Ensure contact information remains current and up-to-date;
- Ensure child has an extra set of clothes and bedding. All personal belongings must be labeled;
- Ensure proper medication forms are completed if medicine must be administered by TADPOLE ACADEMY;
- Ensure child wears sneakers or shoes with a rubber (non-slipper) sole;
- Communicate any concerns regarding the program or your child immediately with staff;
- Read notices and information left in your child's mailbox.
- Pick up your child's work and projects daily. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communicating their progress with you;
- Encourage your child to govern herself/himself in a positive manner within the values set by TADPOLE ACADEMY.

Cameras/Video/Microphones

Tadpole Academy has indoor and outdoor cameras surveillance at our location. The equipment videotapes and also records conversations via microphones. Your use of our childcare services and/or being on our premises provides consent for these recordings. Review of camera footage is not provided to parents/guardians. It is used by Tadpole Administration and can be provided for Childcare Licensing, Child Services and other legal agencies of authority.

The Tadpoles system used by the staff in the classrooms allow us to take photos and send them home attached to the daily sheets. We may use this feature to allow you to see some candid shots of your child's day. We can also use some of them on

our school's website and/or Facebook page. Please see the separate form (in the enrollment package entitled "Electronic Communication and Photographs") to indicate your preference for allowing or disallowing photographing your child(ren).

Community Agency Involvement/Partnerships

COMMUNITY EDUCATION BUILDING

Since the early part of 2015, we have been partnering with the Community Education Building. Their mission is to transform urban K-12 education through collaborative partnerships.

We have partnered with them to offer their Food Pantry to families that may need temporary/emergency assistance. They also have available credit counseling and a very nice Family Resource Room. *(Please see an Administrator for additional information.)*

Our children are benefiting from the partnership by our contractual use of the playground. We have also been invited to and have access to their Library, etc.

YMCA

For the last few years, our Leaders/Preschoolers participate in weekly swim lessons for a nominal fee or at no charge if a grant is available.

WILMINGTON FREE LIBRARY

Our Leaders/Preschoolers participate several times each month in the morning story/reading program.

Confidentiality

Our policies regarding confidentiality are intended to demonstrate the utmost respect for every child and family we serve. We place a high value on the confidentiality of each child's information. Consequently, we will not reveal the identity of a child who has engaged in an aggressive act against another, even at the request of the parent/guardian whose child has been the target of an aggressive incident. Anyone on our premises is under surveillance via cameras and audio. Our camera system is for the use of Administration only. Footage is not available for parental viewing. TADPOLE ACADEMY'S position is that it is in the best interest of all involved parties to maintain a policy of confidentiality in these and other situations. This policy is consistent with what we know to be the standards of excellence in early childhood education, and is one practiced consistently by other high quality child care organizations.

Closing Remarks

The staff of TADPOLE ACADEMY
would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to service you.

(We reserve the right to amend this Handbook.)

I, _____, the parent/guardian of

acknowledge receipt of the Parent/Family Handbook via the Tadpoles Application and/or will
view it on the website: tadpoleacademy.org

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

POC PLUS CLIENTS ONLY:

I agree to pay Tadpole Academy's POC Plus fee in addition to my DSS parent fee. Tadpole Academy will give me a worksheet with a breakdown of its charges, how much the Division of Social Services pays and the fees that I must pay Tadpole Academy each week or monthly (per my agreement with Tadpole Academy).

SIGNATURE _____ *DATE* _____