

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**



## **SMILING FACES**

### **LEARNING CENTER**

**5001 St. Barnabas Road  
Temple Hills, Maryland 20748  
(301) 630-6310**

**Covid-19 & Juneteenth Amended 08/2020**

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## **\*MISSION OF STATEMENT\***

At Smiling Faces Learning Center, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Our childcare experience designed to promote each child's own individual social, mental, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

As caregivers and educator's, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which foster's a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create and become a lifelong learner.

### **Philosophy**

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging; We focus on the building of a very strong, stable, well- balanced foundation of the emotional, social, cognitive, mental and physical skills of each child. We also design challenging activities that will meet the needs of each child to accomplish their goals and be more than prepared for Public School and becoming very productive in the world.

It is our goal to always appear and remain a very professional learning center that offers much more than the average daycare. We go a step further for our children, take initiative to really get to know them, know their needs, wants, desires and goals. We go beyond the call of duty, when it benefits our children and take much pride in all that we do for them. We love children, we love educating them and being the greatest Role Models for them. We are their first start! Their beginning to all they will have to face in Public School and the world. They are the future! We take that very serious!! We will be our best and always do our best for every child to accomplish being the very best they can be, doing the very best they can do, having the highest self-esteem, a strong will and never giving up or in. They will be winners and survivors, among all their other great accomplishments.

### **Diversity**

We welcome every opportunity to expand the child's views of the world as a place rich in many cultures. Races, religions and customs. The Smiling Faces Learning Center is open to all families, regardless of ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. We will work with families to provide an inclusive preschool environment for all children. Diversity extends to the family structure as well, and we are committed to the philosophy of treating all family situations equally and without bias. Smiling Faces Learning Center is a non-discriminatory program; therefore, we respect all family's religious traditions. We encourage you to share your family's traditions with our children and staff.

### **Societal Values**

The theme of gender/racial equality and respect for the earth are an integral part of our philosophy and demonstrated in the following ways:

- We use non-gender specific titles such as; 'fire fighters' and 'police officers'.

- We expose children to non-biased professional role models through literature, dramatic play and special classroom guest.
- We incorporate environmental awareness and respect in all areas of the curriculum.

## **Child Care and Your Child**

Our Child Care Center is an extension of your home. Child Care begins the first years of your child's school life. These are the most important years because each child is at a very impressionable age. We will provide a learning environment with love to stimulate interest in all children.

We welcome all children of all abilities that are or will be a part of the Smiling Faces Learning Center. They are given opportunities to interact with one another in a developmentally appropriate environment. We offer a balance of child initiated and teacher directed activities reflecting all interest of our children, their languages and cultural backgrounds.

Children are curious by nature. They are active, love to explore, ask questions and investigate. Children learn through play which is the heart of our child care curriculum. Learning is accelerated when children are exposed to a wide variety of stimuli in an environment where they have plenty of time for spontaneous play. Young children form concepts from real life experiences of their own. Later on, the basis children gain from these experiences can be used to understand and grasp generalities. Our Center will provide most of your child's learning through first-hand experiences. Learning will take place through educational toys and games, field trips and special visitors.

Children have their own style of learning at their own pace. Some children require more time to experiment with cause and effect or to socialize with other children. Some children move rapidly through their intellectual, social and physical stages and seek new challenging experiences. What is most important at our Center is that each child will be given all the time he or she needs to master his or her learning process.

## **Hours of Operation**

Smiling Faces Learning Center is open from 6:00 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 7:00 am-6:00 pm for infants and Toddlers.

During the school year we would like to have all children present in their classrooms no later than 9:00am. Our lessons begin promptly at 9:30am. Once lessons begin, we will not be able to revisit them, as there is not enough time and we cannot take away from the students who has done the lessons and are prepared to move forward. If your child comes late and miss the lessons, you are free to take the work home and complete so that your child does not fall behind. We will not accept students after 9:30am without a doctor's excuse or limited emergencies. You must call before 9:00am to alert us that you have a doctor's appointment and bring in the doctor's slip for excuse. NO EXCEPTIONS! It is unfair to interrupt the children from learning by distractions of late children coming in. The cut off time for accepting children in the morning without a doctor's excuse or emergency (limited) is 9:30am. Please inform us by 8:00am if your child has a doctor's appt. and will be attending Smiling Faces following, so that we will be correctly staffed. Please understand that if you come in that late, the Teachers will not be able to revisit lessons already completed. If you do not inform us by 8:00am and we have relieved staff of duty, we will not be able to accommodate your child/children on that day. NO EXCEPTIONS!!! We have to follow MD State rules, regulations and guidelines for childcare and cannot be out of the set ratio of children per teacher. Please understand that we cannot and will not put our license at risk. During the summer, you are allowed to bring the children till the 10:00am cut-off time.

## **Enrollment Procedures**

Any child between the ages of 6 weeks and twelve (12) years old will be eligible for enrollment. You will meet with the Director of the Center. We encourage you to spend time observing the classroom and to ask any questions that you may have. Completing all the required forms and paying the required fees completes the admissions process. All medical forms must be complete and turned into the office no later than your child's 1<sup>st</sup> day at the center. Together, your Financial Agreement and the Parent Handbook complete the contractual relationship between your family and Smiling Faces Learning Center. Please contact the Director with any questions relating to the policies and procedures of the Center.

Parents are required to pay a registration fee for all new students at the time of registration. A registration fee will be paid annually for the Fall school year. A Summer activity fee will be assessed for students enrolled in the center June, July and August.

Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis. We do not reserve slots without the payment of registration. Payment of Tuition are due on Monday of every week. All tuition payments must be paid in full, as we do not accept partial payments. Late fees will be assessed at the close of business Monday evening. Payment is due on Monday even if your child is not in the Center that day or if Monday is a holiday, you should pay on Friday before the holiday. You are now able to pay online at [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com) and you can now fill out the auto-pay form if you like. Once you register, your account will be available to use after a 24-hour period. Once tuition is paid there will be *No Refunds*. We ask that tuition be paid by automatic payment, direct debit, money order, cashier check or credit card. We will not accept cash for tuition payments. There is a \$5.00 fee charge when you use debit and credit cards.

If tuition is not paid on time (end of work day Monday), a \$40.00 late fee will be charged to your account for the week. For all outstanding fees not paid by the end of the workday Friday, there will be an additional \$20.00 late charge the following week. If not paid in full by then, you may not return without full payment (Tuition & Late fees).

You are responsible for the weekly payment of your child's/children's slot(s) once they are registered, even if they are out. You must give a 2-week written notice that he/she will no longer attend the Smiling Faces Learning Center and you will no longer be charged after that 2-week period.

## **Returned Checks**

A \$60.00 fee is charged for any check returned to the Center from your banking institution. We will not process checks more than once. A money order for the check, plus \$60.00 will be expected immediately after you are notified that your check was returned. **This applies to new Registration Only. We will only accept a check once at time of registration.**

## **Late Tuition Payments**

Tuition is due on Monday by the close of business. There is a \$40.00 late fee if tuition is not paid by close of business on Monday. No exceptions! If your tuition is not paid by the end of the week, you will be charged an additional \$20 fee. Tuition and late fees must be paid on the upcoming

Monday in full or you may not return until full payment is made or you have made satisfactory arrangements with the General Manager.

## **Tuition:**

**Please pay by money order, cashier's check or debit/credit card (only)**

Tuition is due upon your child's start date and to be paid weekly on Monday. You are to pay no later than Tuesday morning by 9:30am to avoid late fee and be allowed to stay or satisfactory arrangements must be made with the General Manager. Tuition is due on Monday and you are welcomed to pay bi-weekly, monthly, etc., as long as you are paying ahead and not behind.

## **Forms**

**All forms must be completed prior to your child's first day and submitted to the Director. NO EXECEPTIONS!**

Please fill out all center forms at the time of Registration. **Please note that forms must be updated yearly.**

- \* Smiling Faces Learning Center Registration Form
- \* Enrollment Agreement
- \* Financial Agreement
- \* Emergency Form
- \* Maryland State Department of Education's required Health Inventory I & II
- \* Shot Record Form
- \* Discipline Procedures
- \* Lead Form
- \* Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care
- \* Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
- \* Handbook Amendment Acknowledgement and Covid-19 Release and Waiver of Liability

## **Disenrollment**

We, as educators of young children and you as parents, must work together for the best interest of the child. There are times and situations where a decision to remove a child from the center is for the best interest of that child and other children in the center. Please be aware that for the protection of the children, the staff and the center, there are occurrences and situations that may be grounds for immediate dismissal. Should this occur, Parents, Teachers and the Director will have a meeting to discuss the problem that may be cause for dismissal. If further action must be taken, this decision will be made between the Center's Director and the Owner. If after a reasonable time, the child and the parents cannot adjust to the rules and regulations of the Center, the Center reserves the right to request the withdrawal of the child.

If the Parent would like to disenroll a child, a two-week written notice must be given to the Center. If a two- week notice is not given, the parent remains responsible for the two weeks of tuition payment. If after a reasonable amount of time the tuition is not paid, your account will be sent to collections and/or taken to court for a garnishment judgement.

## **Vacations**

Please notify office at time of registration of any pre-planned vacations in writing. You will not be charged if notified at registration. Please note that you are obligated to pay regardless of your child not being present unless notified upon registration or if you have not used your free week given after the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of your registration (**during the advertised “Special” only**).

## **Holidays**

Our Center will be closed on the following holidays each year:

New Year's Eve 3:00pm  
New Year's Day  
Dr. Martin Luther King Day  
President's Day  
June-Teenth  
Labor Day  
Independence Day  
Memorial Day  
Pre-Thanksgiving 3:00pm  
Thanksgiving Day  
Black Friday  
Christmas Eve 12:00pm  
Christmas Day  
Election Day 2:00pm

## **Late Pick-Up**

At 6:00 p.m. for infants and toddlers and 6:30 pm for all other students, the Center is *Closed*, and all children should be picked up by that time. We realize there are unforeseen instances where you may not be able to arrive by that time. However, **we expect that alternative arrangements be made to pick up your child, as per your emergency contacts**. A **\$20.00** fee is due every 15 minutes (or fraction thereof) after 6:00 p.m. This fee must be paid to the office at your pick-up time or within 24 hours. If you are late during holiday closing at 3:00pm, the fee is doubled, **\$40.00** per every (15 minutes or fraction thereof).

## **Before and After School Children**

For those children that attend Smiling Faces Learning Center on a scheduled part-time basis, the tuition is set by a weekly charge. We are limited by the State of Maryland as to the number of children we may have at the Center at any given time.



## **Children Who Attend Head Start**

For those children who attend Head Start or other 3 to 4-hour day programs: The children are considered to be full-time students at the Smiling Faces Learning Center, as they are in the care of Smiling Faces before and after class, also they are at the center longer than regular school-age hours. The tuition remains the same as full-time.

## **Severe Weather**

Please call the Center to make sure that the staff has arrived before attempting to bring your child during inclement weather. The Center will make every attempt to be open during snow or extreme weather. In the event of localized disaster or state of emergency, we will close. If an emergency forces a closure while children are in the Center, we will call you immediately. Tuition payments remain the same during inclement weather. Please sign up for the Dojo App, so that you are able to get important information, alerts and updates on your child/children.

## **Smiling Faces Learning Center Security**

### **Signing Your Child In/Out**

Children arriving at Smiling Faces Learning Center are required to be in the presence of an adult until they are received by a staff member. All children must be walked into the Center, Temperature checked immediately and be signed in, daily. Please sign your children in and out daily using the Procare App. This is very important! We want all of our children to be covered by our insurance in case of emergency.

### **Drop Off/Pick Up**

Children will only be released to their parents or by an adult who is at least 18 years old and listed on your emergency card. Only those individuals listed as authorized pick-ups are allowed to pick up your child (this person will be asked to show ID). For reasons of safety and confidentiality, please do not give out the door code or your clock in/out codes to persons who will not be regularly picking up.

In order for your child to be released to a person other than the parent/legal guardian or authorized pick-up, permission must be given in writing to the office. Verbal permission is not allowed. We can accept emails at [Godloveschildren01@yahoo.com](mailto:Godloveschildren01@yahoo.com) when you call to alert us that you someone other than who is on your emergency form will be picking up your child/children or through the Dojo App. We can no longer accept just verbal permission over the phone. Please remember to update your emergency information if you will have someone new (who is not on your list) picking up and be sure that they have the required ID.

### **PLEASE REGISTER YOUR FINGERPRINT UPON YOUR CHILD'S START DATE, THROUGH THE OFFICE SO THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO SIGN YOUR CHILD IN AND OUT DAILY.**

This is very important for attendance, insurance and other purposes. We will register up to 3 people to sign your child/children in and out. Please note that they must pick up or drop off regularly to qualify.

## Security Precautions

Smiling Faces Learning Center has implemented security measures for entering the building. There is also a video surveillance system in place inside and out viewing the Center's grounds. Please do not give the entrance security code to any unauthorized individual. The security cameras are not for the parents to view, but for the police and government officials to view when there is cause.

## Privacy Policy

Under no circumstances are Smiling Face Learning Center employees permitted to provide any information about your child (including whether the child is enrolled at the center or if he/she is in attendance at the center on a particular day or at a particular time) unless you have provided written authorization for that person to receive such information. Only you and the other individuals you include on the *Emergency Information Form* will be provided personal information about your child, unless you specifically tell us otherwise in writing.

## Parent Custody and Visitation

If a family member is denied custody of or visitations rights for, a child, or if those rights are in any way limited by a court order, please provide a copy of the related legal documents to the Director. We will store your documents in your child's file and will treat them as strictly confidential. If we do not receive copies of all relevant legal documentation, we are not legally able to prevent any parent from visitation and pick up of his/her child. However! We will make every attempt to contact the alternate parent.

## Transportation

Smiling Faces Learning Center offers transportation drop off and pick up to and from some public schools. You are welcomed to contact us for the list of the schools we service. An Enrollment Agreement must be completed prior to your child riding on the bus. If your child is enrolled to be picked up and dropped off by Smiling Faces' transportation service, we ask that you please give us a courtesy call if you child/ children will not be attending school, due to the fact that we drop off and pick up from many different schools it will help improve our time-frame in getting the other children. **Please note that we can decline pick-up and drop-off if tuition is not paid current and may cancel your service if there are unchanging behavior problems, continuous absence without notice and non-payment of tuition.**

## Learning Environment

### *Statement of Curriculum:*

### ***CREATIVE CURRICULUM***

Smiling Faces Learning Center uses Creative Curriculum. The Creative Curriculum's is the only research-based, comprehensive curriculum that addresses the unique strengths and challenges of family child care. Through the curriculum, your child will explore a well-rounded balance of learning experiences and have many opportunities to develop important skills needed to be successful in school. The Creative Curriculum includes developmentally appropriate goals and objectives for children within four main categories of interest: social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language.

A wide range of topics will be discussed this school year, including the following:

- Fire Safety, Down on the Farm, Good Health, Christmas and many more

As a center, we use these principles to help make decisions about the care and education of the children. The teachers use their knowledge of child development, the knowledge of children's individual needs, strengths and interests, and the knowledge of the social and cultural context within each child.

Our curriculum is based on the spontaneous interest of the child and consists of first-hand experiences (sensory, explorative, investigations, manipulative and creativity). The curriculum offers children the opportunity to learn about subjects in which they show an interest. The staff will reinforce and extend their experiences to include all areas of learning which the children begin to explore. During the child's formative years, a tremendous amount of basic information is acquired. This information serves as the foundation for further school success.

We provide a program that is consistent. Your child's day is balanced between active and quiet periods. Periods of learning are gradually lengthened to match your child's growing attention span. Our classroom structure is free without being too permissive. This allows ample opportunity for your child to listen and gain understanding, to learn to follow directions and to work and play with peers.

## **Developmental Skills and Concepts**

*Language Arts:* Activities will follow a language experience approach. Early literacy skills both auditory and visual memory, left to right progression and letter recognition. Basic reading skills, fine motor development for pre-writing skills, listening and verbal communication skills.

*Science:* These activities are aimed at encouraging observations, comparison, exploration, testing inquiry and problem solving.

*Math:* Developmental experiences such as sorting, comparing and order. Playful lessons will develop skills in counting, number recognition and shape relationships.

*Art:* Art is a creative process that allows for choice, exploration and imaginative expression in a pleasant supportive atmosphere. Each child's work is uniquely different from another's. A variety of materials will be used.

*Creative Movement/Drama:* This is an area of developing language and spontaneous play. Creative dramatics can take many forms in which children use sensory-motor abilities to gain skills in body control, rhythm, tempo, timing, following directions and group cooperation.

*Nutrition and Health:* Body awareness, nutritional health habits

*Foreign Language:* Knowledge and understanding of Spanish and sign language.

*Music:* Develop appreciation, participation and responsiveness. Musical competencies such as listening, performance, rhythm and creativity will be introduced.

*Technology:* {Computers and iPad, Games, Etc.} Activities to introduce children to today's technology.

*Thinking and Gross Motor Skills:* Thinking games motivate children to develop cognitive skills within a play situation. When involved, children are learning to identify, classify and apply skills learned. Gross motor skills contribute to physical and mental health by strengthening muscles and helping to free children from tension. Social development is aided when the children cooperate and learn the positions of leader and follower. Self-concepts are enhanced as children gain motor skills and feelings of success and enjoyment.

These skills and concepts for two, three and four year old's give a clear picture of pre-academic goals that children are expected to develop. Children will study the same topics but in ways that are of interest to and appropriate for their level of growth. We use developmentally appropriate materials that are accessible in promoting several stages and levels of exploration and learning. The total involvement of children, teachers and parents in learning and working together with materials that will reflect children's interests, culture and language; support children of all abilities; are rotated and geared to help children develop and grow to their fullest potential.

## **Smiling Faces Learning Center also uses the ABEKA CURRICULUM.**

### ***Intellectual***

Teaching from a practical, traditional approach will develop your students intellectually. They'll be able to demonstrate appropriate grade-level knowledge aligned with our scope and sequence, achieve or exceed grade-level scores on nationally normed standardized testing.

### ***Moral***

Through traditional teaching designed to help instill good character and by meeting program expectations, students will be able to display personal integrity in their everyday lives and discern right from wrong.

As a center, we use these principles to help make decisions about the care and education of the children. The teachers use their knowledge of child development, the knowledge of children's individual needs, strengths and interests, and the knowledge of the social and cultural context within each child.

Our curriculum is based on the spontaneous interest of the child and consists of first-hand experiences. The curriculum offers children the opportunity to learn about subjects in which they show an interest and are in need of for success in Public School. The staff will reinforce and extend their experiences to include all areas of learning which the children begin to explore. During

the child's formative years, a tremendous amount of basic information is acquired. This information serves as the foundation for further school success.

We provide a program that is consistent. Your child's day is balanced between active and quiet periods. Periods of learning are gradually lengthened to match your child's growing attention span. Our classroom structure is free without being too permissive. This allows ample opportunity for your child to listen and gain understanding, to learn to follow directions and to work and play with peers.

With the Creative Curriculum and the ABeka all children of all abilities that are at or a part of the Smiling Faces Learning Center are given opportunities to interact with one another in a developmentally appropriate environment. We offer a balance of child initiated and teacher directed activities reflecting all interest of our children, their languages and cultural background.

The Creative Curriculum and The ABeka Curriculum together offers a diversified of learning materials developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of each and every child of all abilities, for them to explore, learn, grow in all aspects of their interest, cultures and languages. We provide ongoing assessments and observations and anecdotal records, as well as interaction with the parents to stay informed of what is needed for the child, including any IFSP/IEP information to observe the child's progress through portfolios and checklist designed for and aligned with the 2 curriculums. All of our activities provide opportunities for whole group, small group and individual learning experiences that include sufficient time for transitions, including reading and literacy opportunities.

The book fees are due when your child starts school in the fall and is added to each account.

### ***Programs:***

***“Hummingbirds” Infants Program*** The Infants are learning all about their world each and every day. Our goal is to ensure that not only are children's basic needs being met but they are meeting developmental milestones as well. We provide a developmentally appropriate environment in which we take great care to facilitate their development in all areas (cognitive, physical, socio-emotional, and language). The hours for our infant room are from 7am. – 6pm. daily.

***“Little Ducklings” Toddler -1-Year-Old Program*** The toddler years are very exciting with a lot of developmental changes and issues that are specific to this age. We aim to provide a program that enhances a child's learning experiences through play and exploring their environment. Therefore, our “learning through play” program offers a balance of structured and unstructured activities. The children will have a chance to participate in dramatic play, art, circle time with songs and stories, indoor and outdoor play. We will also focus on early literacy, numeracy and science skills.

***“Parakeets” – 2-Year-Old Program & “Red Robins, Canaries” – 3-Year-Old Program*** Our early preschool programs help to develop independence and confidence in a bright and colorful setting. This is a setting that encourages a sense of community and at the same time,

we help your young child adapt to daily routines and positive daily habits. Your child's day will be filled with activities based on a program grounded in early childhood fundamentals. Your young learner will increase their language ability, practice early counting skills and learn to cooperate with friends through group activities.

***“Blue Birds” – 4-Year-Old Program*** Our Pre-Kindergarten Program prepares your child for real life skills as they are nearly ready for school. They can understand simple math, spell and print their first names, and participate in show and tell. They are eager to recall events from a story and describe every detail in a photo. We prepare children with lessons on letters and words, math concepts and valuable social skills that last a lifetime. It's not all work and no play. We ensure plenty of time for independent play, dance and music, as well as small and large group activities. Let us guide your young learner through the final stretch toward kindergarten.

***“Owls & Eagles” School Aged Children*** Our imaginative before-and-after-school program offers age-appropriate activities for each child. Your child will improve problem-solving skills through science experiments, express themselves through dance and music, learn comprehension skills through reading and language activities, and build wonderful social skills and friendships during center time with their classmates.

## **Our Staff**

Each staff member at Smiling Faces Learning Center has been chosen for his/her educational training, creativity, enthusiasm and love for an interest in young children. Each staff member is interviewed with our philosophy and your child in mind. The staff will continue training yearly by attending professional workshops, conferences and college classes. To give your child the best, our staff is evaluated annually so we can maintain the highest quality educator. All of our staff are First Aid/CPR Trained, State Certified, Background Checks Cleared and are capable of giving your child what is needed.

## **Parent Involvement**

We welcome visits from Parents anytime. We schedule 3 parent conferences per year for the parent and teacher to come together for the better benefit of the child's needs. We also have Back to School Night where parents are welcomed, informed about the details of our program and updated on all the upcoming events. We encourage your help with field trips and appreciate your involvement in special projects such as our “Parent/Child Activity Day” at Smiling Faces Learning Center. Share your child's experience by sharing your time and talents. Our Director and Staff are here to serve you as well as your child/children, as an extension of your family. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel to contact or come into the office.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

The Teachers work hard to observe, assess, and create developmentally appropriate experiences that meet the needs and goals of your children. We host 3 Parent/Teacher Conferences throughout the year. Our expectation is that you partner with us, and attend the conference for your child/children in order to maximize your child/ children's learning experience, and prepare them to enter Public/Private School with all they will need to succeed. It is important that the Teacher and Parent work together for the better of the children.

## **What to Expect at Your Parent/Teacher Conference?**

- Your child's teacher(s) will have compiled daily observations and an assessment portfolio individualized for your child, prepared for your conference. The assessment portfolio is updated monthly so you are always free to keep up to date with your child's progress and development.
- The teacher(s) will begin the conference by asking if you have any questions regarding your child's development, so he/she can best know what areas of development to focus on.
- The teacher(s) will then proceed to go over those areas of development, highlighting strengths and areas of growth, as well as next steps individualized for your child.
- The teacher(s) will also present photo documentation of your child's development, creative artwork, and writing samples
- Before the conference concludes, you and your child's teacher(s) will set goals, and discuss areas that you would like to focus on for the remainder of the school term, both at school and at home.

## **Character Education**

**Nutrition:** In serving breakfast and snacks, our program provides whole grains, fresh fruits and/or vegetables at least four times a week, and limits fat, sugar and salt in foods served by the program. We do not offer a lunch program, but monitor meals provided from home and supplements as necessary to ensure that children are receiving nutritious well-balanced meals and snacks. We provide milk and juice and ask that the parents refrain from bringing it in unless your child/children is on a special brand of milk because of being lactose intolerant.

*Health and Fitness:* Meal time discussion is on eating healthy, being outdoors and exercise.

*Outdoor Play:* Physical exercise is a very important way to enhance children's health, motor skill development and social skills. At Smiling Faces Learning Center, children will go outside every day, twice a day, unless it is raining, very cold or excessively hot.

## **Dress Code**

Children are encouraged to wear comfortable and functional clothing for running and playtimes. Please do not put dressy clothes on your child/children that they are unable to play and get dirty in. We allow our children freedom of play, outside. Closed-toed shoes are required year-round. Sandals, flip flops, crocks and jellies are not acceptable footwear for kids on the go. Sneakers and socks are the best footwear both for comfort and safety. Slip on and Velcro shoes are permitted as long as they are closed in.

## **Personal Belongings & Change of Clothes**

Accidents will happen. Please bring a complete change of clothes including socks and underwear in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name. Sleeping cot linens will be sent home on Fridays

and expected to be returned on Monday laundered. Children are not allowed to lay on cots that are not covered, so please make sure your child has the required covers. If your child does not have covers for his/her cot, you will be called in to bring covers or take your child home. Please do not allow your child to bring toys, tablets, phones, etc. We will not take responsibility if something happens to it and your child will not be allowed to use while in the center. Please do not allow your child/children to bring it in. Again! We will not and cannot take responsibility if it comes in the center.

## **Daily Schedule**

A daily schedule is posted in each classroom as required by State regulations. We encourage you to refer to your child's daily routine and engage in conversations with your child/children about their day.

## **Toilet Training**

We will work with you and your child to promote consistency in toilet training between home and the center. Please understand that you must do your part in order for the process to be successful. The tuition will remain \$260 for all children of all ages until the child is completely potty trained. So! Let's work on this together.

## **Rest Time**

Daily, children are given a period to rest quietly on their cots with their sheets & blankets brought from home. We will never force children to sleep, but encourage them to remain on their cots, quietly and respect those children who do take naps. They are free to look through a book.

## **Meals**

We serve breakfast and pm snack. The parents must provide lunch for their children. We warm food that takes 90 minutes or less. We do not cook. You must provide ice packs for lunches that need to stay cold in lunch boxes, as we have limited refrigerator space. If your child is not here for breakfast 8:00am-8:30am, please feed your child/children before entering the center. We do not allow children to sit and eat outside food in the presence of the other children once breakfast is over. Please do not bring in outside drinks. We give the children milk twice daily and juice. If your child/children is (are) lactose intolerant, you are welcome to bring in the type of milk you would like him/her/them to have.

## **Communication**

Communication is very important. The office doors are always open to you and we will happily make ourselves available. We have also adopted the Class Dojo App and now you are able to communicate with us and we are able to communicate with you about your child's day, updates, news, closings and important information. Please download the App so that we can keep the communication open. We will check messages at 10:30am, 2:00pm and 5:00pm daily. You are very welcomed to call if immediate attention is needed.



## **Discipline and Re-Direction**

Discipline is maintained in a positive manner. Staff uses positive behavioral supports and strategies. Clear rules and expectations are established with input from the children, throughout Smiling Faces Learning Center. We provide the children with choices, use redirection, reflection and problem-solving methods. Physical punishment will NEVER be used. No child will be subject to cruel or severe punishment or verbal abuse. No child will be denied food, toileting or rest privileges as punishments. No harsh or profane language or implied threats promising physical punishment, nor any other threats will be used. If our discipline procedure fail with your child, we will meet with you to come up with a solution that works for your child. We will try everything possible and if all fails, disenrollment of the child will take place.

## **Positive Guidance**

Young children crave consistency and structure. They thrive in an atmosphere where they are given plenty of choices and a few simple rules to follow. Our goal in guiding children is for them to learn how to control their own behavior. We avoid using negative techniques that will damage the child's good feelings about themselves or others and reward them with compliments and gestures about what great things they are doing.

We begin by arranging the environment to prevent discipline problems. This includes planning interesting activities, not asking the children to be still too long, and meeting their needs for food, rest and active play.

When children do misbehave, we positively guide them in finding a better way to solve the problem. If your child has had a difficult time, the staff will give you a verbal or written note which summarizes your child's day. We will then work together with the family to assure consistency at home and at school in working with the child, and all will be discussed in a confidential manner that is respectful to your family.

### **Our Methods of Positive Guidance Include:**

- Encouraging children to solve problems through use of words
- Learning to acknowledge feelings and associate feelings with actions
- Redirect children to focus on a different activity or different ways to handle situations in a positive manner.
- Tell children what they can do, rather than what they can't do
- Continual focus on building self-help skills in order to strengthen self-esteem and positive self-image
- Positive reinforcement and acknowledging appropriate behavior that should be continued in the future
- Assisting child in planning actions and language for similar situations in the future
- Modeling kind, patient, and gentle actions, words and behaviors

## **Behavior Management**

In the event that a child displays inappropriate behavior on an ongoing basis, the Teacher will discuss this matter with the Director. The Director will then observe the issue at hand and have a meeting with the parents to discuss the issue. In the event that such efforts of the parents and staff at Smiling Faces Learning Center do not improve, disenrollment of the child may occur. If a child jeopardizes the health or safety of him or herself, another child or members of the center's staff, disenrollment will occur immediately.

### **Biting**

Child care experts agree that biting is not uncommon among young children, primarily because of lack of their communication skills. Children who engage in this behavior typically stop through the guidance and direction of family and teachers. Our staff handles biting incidents by redirecting children from the situation. If another child is bitten, we immediately wash the site with soap and water and fill out an Incident Report notifying the parents. Disenrollment may occur if there is no improvement in the behavior after all other efforts have failed.

### **Scratching**

Please help us with preventing marks and bruises to our children by making sure that your child/children's nails are cut very low.

### **Field Trips and Special Visitors**

We enhance the children's learning by including field trips that will offer great experiences of what is being taught, as well as exercise activities. Forms giving information on the cost of the field trip and permission slips will be sent home with the child's daily paper before an upcoming trip. We travel on Coach (bus) or on our 15 Passenger van. Parents of the Parakeets class (2 yr. old) must chaperone and all other parents we welcome to chaperone, as well.

### **Birthdays & Photography**

Birthdays are very special and we would love to celebrate with your child. Please contact the Director prior to bringing in a special snack. Only store-bought cakes/treats are allowed to be brought into the Center.

Class and Individual photographs will be taken by a professional photographer and will be available for purchase. We will let you know in advance when the sessions will take place. The signed Enrollment Agreement must be obtained in advance. This allows us to photograph your child and permits us to use them to highlight our business advertisement, a classroom's activities or on field trips.

### **Screen Time Policy**

Because we care about the health and well-being of the children in our care, we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendation on screen time. Children age 2 and over should watch less than 30 minutes per week at child care, and less than 2 hours per day

total. Smiling Faces Learning Center understands that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing and interacting with others which encourages learning and healthy physical and social development. Television, computers and other media devices are used when directly related to facilitated learning experiences. Therefore, we will restrict screen time by:

1. Allowing a maximum of 30 minutes total per week of educational and age appropriate screen time (television, video and DVD).
2. Allowing no more than 15 minutes of educational computer time per day.
3. Not allowing any screen time during meals and snacks.
4. No screen time for children under age 2.

## Emergency Procedures

### Parent/Guardian Emergency Notification

All parents must fill out an emergency card that will be kept on file at Smiling Faces Learning Center. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the information accurate and up to date. The Center must be kept informed of the location and phone number of at least one parent and two standby contacts. Please inform the contacts that they are on your emergency contact list and must provide ID when picking up the child/children. We also have in place Dojo. You are given information on how to sign up and the App will allow us to contact you with updates, closings and give you information on how your child is doing. It will also allow you to leave messages for us.

### Health & Safety

#### ILLNESS

Our first priority at the Smiling Faces Learning Center is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. Children/Staff will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- **Fever** of 101 or greater, until 24 hours system free without fever reducing medication
- **Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing.**
- **Diarrhea** (not associated with diet changes or medication) (Two (2) instances) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not infectious by a licensed health care professional. Blood in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication or hard stools
- **Vomiting** (one instance) the child can return has been resolved for 24 hours or a health care provider has determined the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the

child is not in danger of dehydration (This does not apply to a child that is eating at the time of vomiting and may have eaten too much, etc.)

- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness.
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- **Pink Eye** (conjunctivitis) after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- **Head Lice** from the end of the day until after first treatment
- **Scabies** until after treatment has been completed
- **Tuberculosis** until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care.
- **Impetigo** until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- **Hand Foot Mouth** until sores have dried and completely crusted and no fever exist
- **Strep Throat** until 48 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- **Chicken Pox** until all sores have dried and crusted
- **Pertussis** until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- **Mumps** until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- **Hepatitis A Virus** until 1 week after the onset of illness
- **Measles** until 4 days after onset of rash
- **Rubella** until 6 days after onset of rash
- **Unspecified Respiratory Tract Illness Accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion**
- **Herpes Simplex** which is uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at Smiling Faces Learning Center must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of the other children to communicable disease. You must alert the Director that a child needs to be removed from the classroom and the child will remain separated until the parent arrives.

Smiling Faces Learning Center reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that child is not contagious.

## **Medications**

Medication will only be given to a child with a written note signed by a Physician. That also includes over the counter medications such as cough medication and children's Motrin or Tylenol. The Health Inventory Form is included in the entrance packet. All medication must be in its original container and labeled with your child's name, physician's name, dosage instructions and method of administration. Sunscreens and topical lotions may be applied as needed underwritten parental consent in the Enrollment Agreement.

## **Accidents and Injuries**

It is not uncommon for children to have bumps and bruises from time to time. Any serious injuries that occur at the Center will be reported immediately by telephone. Any minor injuries that occur at the Center will be reported to the parents on an accident/incident report form which will be

placed in your hands upon pick-up at the end of each day. The form requires your signature, thereby letting us know that you have been made aware of your child's accident.

## **Special Needs**

\*Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his/her family, regardless of ability to participate in a broad range of activities and context as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.

**Definition of Early Childhood Inclusion**, excerpted from: \*A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), April 2009”

Our goal is to meet the needs of every child at the Smiling Faces Learning Center by acknowledging that all children have their own special needs at one time or another. We are often the first educators to identify these needs, and we see facilitation of early intervention services as a critically important aspect to our work with young children. We closely watch the development of all children in our care and, should we have a question, we will take the following steps. Throughout this process, we ensure that the confidentiality of every child is protected,

- We will document and note when behaviors seem outside the developmental range over time for children of this age (through anecdotal notes, and samples of work) and meet with the Director.
- We will contact the family and communicate our concern in writing and verbally. We will request their permission to arrange for a screening. If the family agrees, we will help to coordinate a screening through the appropriate school system or agency for that family.
- If the family refuses to pursue a screening or consult with their child's school system, and the need presented by the child requires additional programmatic resources, families may be asked to assume the cost of those additional supports of their child's inclusion in the program. The Director will be responsible for the hiring and supervision of the additional staff.
- If the screening indicates an area of concern in a child's development, teachers, director and parents will meet with the special needs coordinator for that school system or agency and develop a plan for the child in writing.
- Typically, these plans will involve modifications to our classroom environment or practice, and guidance will be provided to teachers to support their work.
- In some cases, a school system may recommend that a child be enrolled in a different program, where there may be more resources available to provide early intervention.
- In some cases, certain adaptations to our program may be impossible (an additional teacher at the cost of the family, for example) and we may

recommend a different placement for the child. Please know that whenever possible, we will draw upon all resources to meet the child's needs.

- The Smiling Faces Learning Center may determine that we are not able to serve the child. Staff and Administrators will let the family know as early in the year as possible if this is a possible outcome, so that the family can pursue other placement options. The family will be notified verbally and in writing.
- The program has three considerations when asking a child to leave: a) has implementation of strategies over time resulted in improvement, or have the concerns persisted or escalated? b) Is the program able to meet the needs of the individual child and the needs of the group as a whole? c) Is there a safety issue regarding the child or other children in the classroom? Each case is considered on a case-to-case basis, and the program will apply every recommended strategy to support the child's progress before considering termination.

#### OUR POLICY FOR INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IS AS FOLLOWS:

- The Smiling Faces Learning Center will integrate children with disabilities and other special needs (such as chronic illness) and children without disabilities in all activities possible.
- Children with special needs and their families shall have access to and be encouraged to receive a multidisciplinary assessment by qualified individuals, using reliable and valid age and culturally appropriate instruments and methodologies, before the child starts in the facility. The multidisciplinary assessment shall be voluntary and focus on the family's priorities, concerns, and resources that are relevant to providing services to the child and that optimize the child's development.
- The individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individual Education Program (IEP) and any other plans for special services shall be developed for children identified as eligible in collaboration with the family, representatives from the disciplines and organizations involved with the child and family, the child's health care provider, the staff of the facility (depending on the family's wishes), and the agency's resources and state laws and regulations.
- If a child has an IEP or IFSP, the Director will be responsible for coordinating care within the facility and with any caregivers and coordinators in other service settings, in accordance with the written plan.
- A child with special health care needs shall have a special care plan on file that includes emergency contact information, health provider, triggers, signs and symptoms of the condition and treatment instructions.
- In all cases, we place the best interest of our children and families at the center of all plans, and work with the family and with the community partners to ensure that the best plan is developed.

#### **Photographs and Media**

Smiling Faces may use the center's digital camera to document children's activities. These photos are primarily used to document your child's progress and may be hung up for view in the Smiling Faces Learning Center. You will receive a release form during the registration process, granting

or declining permission to Smiling Faces and all staff to use still, motion, video or audio recording of your child's image for use in conjunction with the production of visual bulletin boards, social media or other educational purpose.

## **Preparing for the First Day**

### **First Day Checklist**

Infants & Toddlers	Required forms, Rest Time Items (blanket and sheet), Family Photo, Change of Clothes, Diapers if applicable, Formula or breast milk, Pacifier, Sippy cup or bottles, Wipes, Any special directions, Items on Supply List, Box of tissue and Food.
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Preschool and School Age	Rest Time Items (blanket & sheet), Change of Clothes, Family Photo, Required Forms, Items on Supply List and Lunch
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Please do not bring pillows unless your child has a medical condition that requires him/her to have it, which must be in writing from a licensed medical doctor.

It's normal for children to feel anxious when they enter a new situation. As a Parent, you can tremendously help to make this transition go as smoothly as possible. By sharing a positive attitude about Child Care, giving your child a hug /kiss and letting them know that you will be back to get them and leave. Chances are that your child will adjust quicker and do great.

**Please feel free to come into the office with any questions or concerns you may have.**

## **SMILING FACES LEARNING CENTER'S HANDBOOK POLICIES** **AGREEMENT**

Please carefully read, sign and return this form to the center director.

I have read the Smiling Faces Learning Center's Parent Handbook and agree to abide by all policies and procedures therein.

I agree to pay the following tuition amount and understand that these may change depending on schedule, rate adjustments and special needed staff during the course of enrollment.

Starting Tuition \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Approved Start Date \_\_\_\_\_

Child/Children's Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Discipline and Guidance Policy**

I have read and agree to the Discipline and Guidance Policy for the Smiling Faces Learning Center.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



### Special Needs Policy

I have read and agree to the Special Needs Policy of the Smiling Faces Learning Center.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Photography & Videography

I understand that photographs/videos of the children in our program may appear in newspapers, brochures, publicity materials and/or educational trainings. Your child photos will also be posted in the classroom and center-wide from time to time, as well as on our website and Facebook site. I understand that is no compensation for using the photos.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_