



Parent Handbook

“WHERE EVERY CHILD'S PATH BEGINS WITH PURPOSE”

WELCOME!



**Address: 1329 E. Altamonte Dr.
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701**

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Website: Pathwayseec.com

- **To provide a positive approach in learning.**
- **To create a comfortable environment that encourages**
- **the child to think creatively and independently.**
- **To equip each child with the skills he or she needs to excel socially, emotionally, physically, and most important, intellectually.**

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

- We believe every child should have the opportunity to express their creativity freely in a nurturing and enriched environment.

OUR MISSION:

- To provide affordable, safe, high quality educational programs and services through our expertise in Early Childhood Education.

OUR GOALS:

- To provide hands on philosophy that allows each child to explore, learn, and reach their own individual goals.
- To equip our children for the future in a safe, nurturing, and clean environment.
- To deliver the highest quality of child care, education, and developmental services to our children, parents, and staff.
- To maintain a positive and friendly environment for our families, staff, and community.

Policies

OUR PROGRAMS & AGES SERVED

While our programs vary by location, our commitment to enrichment, variety, engaging play and life-long learning guides our everyday! All of our locations offer Preschool and some also provide Afterschool, Summer Camp, and an amazing Family Membership! Our programs provide full time care for infants, toddlers and preschool students up until they start kindergarten. Our Afterschool and Before School programs are for any child enrolled in Kindergarten through Elementary School. You will receive information from your school about specific programs offered and ages served at your location.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

A school calendar is available to show our hours of operation, holidays, and days we are closed at your school. If we make any changes to that calendar, we will notify you in advance.

ATTENDANCE

All children are to be accompanied into the center by a parent or guardian, at least 18 years of age and signed in and out daily.

ABSENCES

Please notify the center if your child will be absent. Any child absent for two weeks without contacting the center will automatically be dropped from the program.

REGISTRATION

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$110.00 per child is due at the time of enrollment and annually every August, to cover administrative costs.

TUITION

All tuition is due in advance of services provided and must be paid weekly, bi-weekly or monthly regardless of attendance:

- Weekly tuition is due on Friday in advance for the following week of services.
- Monthly tuition is due by the 5th of each month.
- Tuition must be kept current during the week they occur.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

All accounts must be current and paid in full before services are provided. Repeated failure to pay tuition or any account that is two weeks in arrears by the due date may result in the termination of services. Any delinquent accounts will be forwarded to a collection agency and the child will be withdrawn from the program.

FAMILY DISCOUNTS

Family discounts apply to parents who have three or more children enrolled in our program. A 5% discount will be granted to the child with the lowest tuition.

WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILD

It is the parent's responsibility to submit a written notice two weeks prior to their child's withdrawal from Pathways Early Education Center.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

Parents are responsible for signing children in and out. This procedure is extremely important for attendance records and safety measures in emergencies. There is a kiosk at the front entrance.

Policies

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

The provider reserves the right to terminate any child or family from the program who does not abide by the policies set forth in this handbook. We may also take action if a parent or child's behavior threatens the safety of the center's staff, children, or parents.

CHILDREN PICK-UP

It is very important that you make every effort to pick your child(ren) up on time. In the event of a late pickup, please note that the Center Director or person in charge can never transport your child from the center under any circumstances. Also, an additional fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged to your account. Your child must be picked up by the person whose name(s) are on your Enrollment Agreement. The child will not be permitted to leave with anyone not listed on your child's Registration Form, unless a written permission slip is provided. If no contacts can be made and there has been no contact from the parents confirming a late pickup within 30 min, it will become our responsibility to contact the appropriate authorities.

CLOSINGS**

The center will be closed the following Holidays:

New Year's Day - Paid Holiday
Martin Luther King Jr. Day Memorial Day - Paid Holiday
Juneteenth Day - Paid Holiday
Independence Day - Paid Holiday
Labor Day - Paid Holiday
Thanksgiving Day & Day after - Paid Holiday
Christmas Eve - Paid Holiday
Christmas Day - Paid Holiday

****HOLIDAYS SUBJECT TO CHANGE IN ADVANCE**

Fees will remain the same during the periods that we are closed for the above Holidays.

CLOTHING

It is recommended that the children wear play clothes so that they can participate more freely in their activities. Please provide two complete sets of extra clothes, including socks to be kept at the center in your child's cubby. All clothing should be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. Children are not permitted to wear open toe shoes or sandals to school.

BRINGING THINGS TO THE CENTER

We are not responsible for toys or belongings brought to the center. Please limit it to one item and bring only on requested days for "show and tell".

HEALTH RECORDS

The center and parents share the responsibility for each child's health. Medical examinations are required for children five years and under. The child's immunization record and medical examinations must be provided upon enrollment, signed by a licensed physician and kept current.

SICK CHILDREN

If a child becomes sick at home, he/she must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to the center.

If the child becomes ill at the center, the parent will be notified by telephone and should make immediate arrangements to come pick the child up from the center. A child shall not be accepted nor allowed to remain at the center if the child has the equivalent of one hundred and one (101) degrees or higher oral temperature and another contagious symptom, such as, but not limited to, a rash or diarrhea or a sore throat.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms we may ask you to keep your child home, or he/ she will be temporarily excluded from the other children:

- Any fever of 101 degrees (child needs to be fever free for 24 hours).
- Any nausea, vomiting, or uncontrolled diarrhea.
- Any suspicion of head lice, scabies, or other infestations.
- Any mouth sores.
- Any illness or condition or problem that requires one-on-one care.
- Any eye symptoms suspicious of a possible eye infection (redness/discharge, etc.)

To reduce the exposure and risk to other children in the center, we may exclude your child (if possible) from the other children until the arrival of a parent. If the parent cannot be reached, the person designated as an Emergency Contact will be notified.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The center complies with the Florida State Law regarding the reporting of incidents, suspected neglect or suspicion, Dept of Children and Families. Those who fail to comply with the State of Florida's rules and regulations may be held accountable under the law.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

After a child has been exposed to a communicable disease, parents should consult a doctor concerning the date that their child may resume normal activities in the center. A written note from the doctor must be given before the child returns. A letter will also be written to inform the parents that their child was exposed to the communicable disease. An example of a communicable disease is Chicken Pox.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency procedures are in place to insure the safety of the children during emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, staff will follow the procedures that are posted in each classroom. Please be aware of the procedures and evacuation location in the event of an emergency evacuation.

BREASTFEEDING AND BOTTLES

Must be discussed with the Center Director to ensure we provide the right environment and support for you and your child. Breast milk must be bottled in liquid form, not frozen, and labeled with the child's first and last name and instructions. All bottles must be provided by the parent daily and already prepared. They should be clearly labeled with specific instructions. Parents are required to bring all food for infants and toddlers until they begin eating table food.

WEATHER

If the weather is so severe that travel is impossible, we will close. We will announce closings on the center answering machine, or morning show if all possible. We will adhere to SCPS severe weather schedule.

PERSONNEL

Staff members are required to attend workshops, developmental trainings or seminars throughout the year. Developmental checklists and Assessments help teachers observe, record and evaluate each child's skills, knowledge, behaviors, and accomplishments.

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Seasonal and cultural birthdays and celebrations are special days for children, and we understand you may want to celebrate these occasions at the center. Parents desiring a simple birthday party may notify the director or teacher in advance, and we ask that all food items be commercially packaged. Please provide enough food for each child and discuss with the teacher to account for child food allergies. We offer custom birthday celebrations.

LAUNDRY - OSHA GUIDELINES

Soiled linen will be bagged at the center and will not be rinsed or handled before bagged. The staff will follow the universal precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control in handling any fluid which might contain blood.

PROBLEMS

If you occur any problems, no matter how small they may seem, please contact management immediately. It is important to your child and his/her environment away from home that we settle any problems as they arise.

The key is communication and a willingness to work things out for the best interest of the child and his/her family. Management is always available after hours for matters concerning the families of the Pathways. We appreciate your input, information and different points of view. Your problem becomes our objective for growth and improvement, it is always in the best interest of the child. Please feel free to share them with us at any time.

MEDICAL CARE

We are not trained or licensed to provide medical care. In the event your child needs medical care, the provider will try to contact the parent first. However, if the time to contact could possibly endanger the child's life, necessary steps such as calling 911 would come first. If required, the child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital. If a parent is unable to be reached, the provider will keep trying until he or she is reached.

MEDICATIONS

Medications will NOT be dispensed by administration or staff members at Pathways Early Education Center.

NONDISCRIMINATION

Pathways Early Education Center does not discriminate on the basis of a person's national origin, race, religion, cultural heritage, political belief, marital status, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or any other factors protected by law.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

In case of an accident or injury that is more than minor in nature, the parent will be notified by telephone and an incident/accident report will be sent home at pick up time. Accidents or injuries will be documented, and first aid will be administered. All staff members are trained in CPR and First aid.

If your child needs treatment by a health care professional, we will make every effort to contact you and/or the health care professional you have identified on your Enrollment Agreement. If we can't reach you, we will contact one of the individuals you have listed on the Enrollment Agreement. **Parents:** You or your family's insurance is responsible for cost or medical help or treatment due to accidents or illness while at Pathways Early Education Center.

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary actions used to correct a child's behavior, guidance techniques and any activities in which the children participate or observe at the center shall not be detrimental to the physical or mental health of any child. Children will not be subjected to spanking or other means of inflicting pain, to frightening, shaming or humiliating punishment, or abusive and derogatory language. Children will not be isolated in a dark room, closet or unsupervised area.

The staff will use positive discipline techniques that are appropriate to the needs of each child that help him/her learn and maintain self-control and self-esteem and will not use physical punishment or deprivation of food, rest or toileting. Staff shall not physically or sexually abuse a child or engage or permit others to engage in sexually overt conduct in the presence of any child enrolled in the center. Staff will not commit any criminal act, as defined under Florida Laws, in the presence of any child enrolled in the center.

SAFE SLEEP POLICY

All cribs provided for each infant will be in compliance with the Consumer Product Safety Commission and American Society of Testing and Materials International safety standards. ("Infant" refers to any child under the age of twelve (12) months or any child who is under eighteen (18) months of age who is not walking.)

- All cribs shall be in good repair and free of hazards.
- A mattress shall be provided for each crib and shall be firm, tight-fitting without gaps, at least two inches (2") thick and covered with waterproof, washable material. Before a change of occupant, each mattress shall be cleaned with a disinfectant.
- Each crib shall have only an individual, tight-fitting sheet which is changed weekly or more often as needed and prior to a change of occupant.
- All infants will be placed on their backs to sleep unless the child has a documented medical condition that requires alternate sleeping positions.

COTS AND MATS

- Cots and mats shall be of sound construction and of sufficient size to accommodate comfortably the size and weight of the child. Mats must be in good repair, washable, covered with a waterproof material and at least two inches (2") thick.
- Cots and mats must be used by the same child daily and marked for individual use.
- Sheets or similar coverings for cots or mats shall be placed in the child's cubby daily and laundered weekly or more often as needed.
- A light cover shall be available for each child's use on a cot or mat and shall be placed in the child's cubby daily and laundered weekly or more often as needed.
- Pillows are not allowed in the center and shall not be used by any children enrolled at The Learning Academy.

MEALS

Breakfast will be served at a designated time each morning; children must arrive by this time to be served. Breakfast may include applesauce, pancakes, and whole milk for children under three (3) and 2% reduced fat milk for children three (3) to twelve (12) years of age. Lunch and snacks are provided daily according to the state nutrition guidelines. Lunch may include macaroni and cheese, green beans, mandarin oranges, and whole milk for children under three (3) and 2% reduced fat milk for children three (3) to twelve (12) years of age. Snacks may include animal crackers, yogurt, and apple juice. If your child has any known food allergies the center must be notified in writing. To accommodate those with food allergies, outside food is not allowed in the center. Unless outside food has been approved by the Director.

DIAPERING

Diaper changing is scheduled every two hours and on an as-needed basis. Diapers shall be changed on a diaper changing surface that is used for no purpose other than changing clothes in each room where infants or any other children wearing diapers are served. If diapers are changed on a diaper changing surface, the surface shall be smooth, nonporous and equipped with a guard or rails. Between each diaper change, the diaper changing surface shall be cleaned with a disinfectant and dried with a single-use disposable towel. Infants and children shall not be left unattended while being diapered or having their clothes changed on the diaper changing surface. Staff shall wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water immediately before and after each diaper change, they perform. Schedules are posted in each classroom, and the specific times of each diaper change. Each child will be sent home with a daily report.

DISMISSAL

If at any time the Director at the center determines that continued care of a child no longer meets the need of the child, care will be terminated. Absences, Sick Days and Vacation-

To remain active in the center, fees are due regardless of the child's attendance. Please notify the center if your child will be absent on a particular day or will be out for multiple days due to family activities or vacation.

PARENT MEETINGS

Parents' meetings will be held twice a year at the center. Parents will be notified of the day and time in advance. Meeting attendance is required and highly recommended to stay informed of the mode of operation and to understand the purpose and programs of the center. We encourage you to bring any questions, concerns or relevant information you want to discuss.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher relationships are most effective when both the teacher and parent partner together to have frequent and open communication with each other and demonstrate mutual respect for each other's role in the child's life. When families are positively involved in their child's education, the child will flourish. Teachers will prepare for conferences by thinking about each child's interests and progress. Because communication between the parent and teacher is very important in the growth of the child's development, there will be two scheduled parent-teacher conferences per year.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

We encourage parent involvement in your child's program. We welcome you to observe their classroom briefly, not to disturb classroom activities. Parents also have permission to access all center areas used by their child.

FIRE/TORNADO:

In the event of a fire or tornado, the emergency procedures posted in each classroom will be followed and put into action. (Infants will be placed in an evacuation crib and moved to the designated evacuation area.)

Step by step fire plan:

- Evacuate children, visitors, and staff.
- Stay low to avoid smoke and close doors behind you; take the following items with you: class/staff attendance sheets, children's emergency and medical information, and cell phone, if available.
- Call 911 from outside the building, indicating the need for assistance from the local Fire Department and Law Enforcement.
- Make certain all children and staff members are accounted for and are safe.
- Evacuate all children and staff members to the designated area as far from the building as possible.
- Adhere to predetermined evacuation routes.
- Conduct a second head count for children and staff members.
- Do not approach or re-enter the building until directed to do so by the correct personnel.
- Director or staff member will check area of concern and use fire extinguisher if safe to do so.
- Have the following items ready for police and fire personnel:

*Number of children in care, staff, volunteers and visitors. *Director will notify parents of evacuation.

*Director will complete a written incident report at his or her earliest opportunity.

*All parents will be notified of the incident.

*Report the incident to Bright from the Start within 24 hours
Or the next business day.

Step by step tornado plan:

- Advise all staff of the weather conditions.
- Stop all outdoor activities and seek shelter.
- Move all children to pre-identified shelter space in the hallway away from windows.
- Do a head count of all the children prior to moving them to a new location, after arriving, and before leaving the area.
- Monitor the radio continuously.
- Report incident to Bright from the Start within 24 hours or the next business day.

SEVERE WEATHER

Thunderstorm:

- Advise all staff of the weather conditions.
- Stop all outdoor activities and seek shelter.
- Maintain flashlight and voice contact with staff members at all times.
- Ensure all children wear shoes.

Once the storm has passed:

- Do a head count of all children.
- Provide any necessary first aid and call 911 if needed.
- Check the entire building for damages.
- Test utilities.
- Report incident to Bright from the Start if there are any damages or injuries.

Hurricane:

Hurricanes are usually predicted several days in advance. As soon as a decision is made to close or dismiss early, notify parents, staff, and Bright from the Start.

- Monitor Hurricane Watches and Warnings.
- Check status on battery operated radio.
- Advise staff of weather conditions.
- Always maintain flashlights and voice contact with staff members.
- Account for all children before moving to a safe place, after arriving, and before leaving the area.
- Direct all children to sit on the floor in the hallway, away from doors and windows.
- Ensure all children wear shoes.
- Once the storm has passed, do a head count and check the building for any damages.
- Call 911, utility agencies, etc. if necessary.
- Contact parents and Bright from the Start to report the incidents if there are any injuries or damages.

LOSS OF ELECTRICITY

- The building emergency exit light should come on automatically.
- The facility should have several flashlights. Staff should be able to readily locate flashlights and batteries.
- If power failure/loss is due to weather, use a battery- operated radio to monitor weather conditions.
- In the event of power failure/loss, the director or person in charge should contact the local power company and the Licensing Regional Office to report power failure.
- In the event of long-term power failure/loss, parents should be called to pick up children.
- Report the incident to Bright from the Start if there are any injuries or damages to the building.

LOSS OF WATER:

- In the event of water loss, the director or person in charge should contact the following:

*Local public utility company.

*Sewer or Water Company if the outage is a result of an Internal plumbing problem.

*Regional Office to report incident.

- Bottled water will be purchased to be used for drinking and other needs until the water is restored.
- Report the incident to Bright from the Start within 24 hours or the next business day, if there are any injuries or damages to the building.

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE:

- In the event of bomb threat, gas leak, or structural damage, children will be evacuated from the building, and authorities (911) will be notified.
- Contact Bright from the Start of the incident within 24 hours or the next business day.

LOSS OF HEATING/COOLING SYSTEM:

- In the event that the heat or air conditioning goes out the director should contact the installer of the system or company that serves it.
- When the inside temperature exceeds the regulatory limits due to a failure of the heating or air system and the problem cannot be corrected within 4 hours, contact parents to pick up their children.

Pathways Early Education Center

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have been provided a copy of the written Parent Handbook for Pathways Early Education Center. I have read the parent handbook, and if applicable, reviewed my questions with the center director. I fully understand these policies, procedures and the importance they play in providing a safe and healthy environment for children.

*Please return to the front desk.

Child's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____