



**PARENT HANDBOOK
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
2024**

Table of Contents

<u>Mission Statement and</u>	
<u>Philosophy</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Expectations of Parent /Childcare Goals/Curriculum Planning</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Enrollment/Childcare Closings</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Drop Off/Pick-Up/Hours of Operation/ Daily Schedule</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Prohibited Items/Child Abuse and Neglect/Discipline/Confidentiality</u>	
<u>Policy</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Biting/Nap Time/Open Door and Parent Volunteers</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Illness</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Medication/Medical Emergencies/Health and Safety/Transportation/Services</u>	
<u>Offered</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Termination Policy</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Sample Menu</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Signature</u>	
<u>Page</u>	<u>13</u>

Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool Handbook

Please read this handbook thoroughly, as it covers very important policies and procedures that not only govern our childcare contract, but also pertain to the care of your child. There may seem to be a lot of information, if you have any questions regarding our policies, please do not hesitate to contact us. We will go over the parent handbook during the interview process, but this is your copy for reference. There may be yearly revisions to this handbook, and you will be notified in writing two weeks prior to the handbook being released. All families will sign a new contract *if changes are made* from the previous year's contract. We reserve the right to make changes to the policies and procedures, as we deem necessary.

MISSION STATEMENT

Amma's Academy strives to ensure that your child receives physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. We aim to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing atmosphere where all children can express their creativity freely.

Philosophy

It is the philosophy of our preschool that early childhood should be a time of fun, warmth, security, exploration, and discovery. Preschool children are creative and receptive, and our program strives to nurture these qualities in each child.

Our purpose is to provide a safe, wholesome environment based on developmentally appropriate guidelines, solid growth, and development knowledge. We shall encourage the social, emotional, physical, intellectual growth and development of each child. We shall take into consideration that each child is an individual with a diverse background which governs each child's desire to be lifelong learners through a hands-on approach, which fosters creativity and self-expression.

Expectations of Parents/Guardian(s)

- **Open Communication**- clearly explain your expectations about how your child will be cared for. Provide updates on problems and progress your child is making. Good communication helps us work together in the best interest of your child.
- **Agreement on Terms or Arrangements**- the parent/guardian should fully understand the terms of the contract, the policies, and procedures that you are agreeing to.
- **Honesty and Trust**- be honest about how the arrangement is working and trust us as your childcare provider to do the best for your child. Show your trust by asking questions rather than jumping to conclusions when apparent problems develop.

Childcare and Preschool Goals

Amma's Academy is committed to meeting these goals for each child:

- Offer a curriculum which encourages social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth.
- Teach each child how to relate to others, value friendships, and to respect all people.
- Provide a clean, safe, and comfortable environment for early learners and growth processes.
- Help each child learn to develop self-discipline, independence and how to deal with his or her emotions in an appropriate manner.
- Provide a well-balanced schedule of activities and quiet time.
- Provide nutritious meals and snacks that contribute to the growth and development of a happy healthy individual.

Curriculum Planning

Our developmentally appropriate curriculum is a planned framework of our philosophy and purpose. It will include hands-on creative arts, math, and science activities. It will also include music, dance, fingerplays, dramatic play, large and small muscle activities. Children will have exposure to shapes, colors, numbers, letters, science experiments and nature activities.

Enrollment

Enrollment at Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool is open to children from six weeks to age twelve. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability. Also, without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, or disability.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child(ren) at Amma's Academy Childcare by completing the enrollment application and paying the \$50.00 registration fee to include an additional \$10 per additional child. The registration fee is non-refundable. All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a fee agreement prior to enrolling their child(ren) in Amma's Academy childcare. Parents/Guardians are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

All payments are made every Friday by 5pm for the current week of care. A late fee charge of \$10.00 per day will be added to your account if not received by 5pm. Tuition payments can be made by money order or online payment only, cash and checks are not accepted.

There is no credit given for scheduled school holidays, child illness or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of GOD.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at Amma's Academy childcare; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the owner(s) immediately.

Childcare Closings

Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool will be closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Day
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Juneteenth
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (day of and day after)
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas (if it falls on a Saturday, we will be closed Thursday and Friday. If it falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on Friday and Monday.)

- Three weeks per year (parents will be given 30-day advance notice)

Hours of Operation

Amma's Academy is open 6am-6pm (subject to change); however, in accordance with the provider-parent contract childcare is offered for a block of hours. This is so one's child(ren) is not in childcare more than 9-10hrs a day. Amma's Academy will evaluate and determine an individual family's needs if childcare is needed for more than 9-10hrs a day.

Preschool & Pre-K Daily Schedule

9:00 am: Circle Time

9:30 am: Table Toy Activities

10:00 am: Story Time

10:15 am: Snack

10:30 am: Lesson Plan/ Activities/Centers

11:00 am: Inside/Outside Play

11:30 am: Arts/Crafts

12:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 pm: Nap/Quiet Time (two hours)

3:00 pm: Snack

3:30 pm: Inside/Outside Play

- *Breakfast is served from 7:00 am to 8:00 am*

Drop Off/Pick Up/Late Pick Up Fee

All children will need to be in the childcare by 8:45am to ensure they receive the most out of the educational benefits Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool offers. No child will be allowed to leave with anyone except the parent, unless indicated on the pick-up list, without written permission from the parent/guardian, telephone permission will not be acceptable. Anyone unfamiliar to the staff will be required to show proof of identity. Please make sure the alternate pick-up individual is aware of the requirements. It is normal for your child to cry on arrival, especially during the first few weeks. The crying usually stops within seconds of your departure. No child will be released to a honking horn. If the alternate person picking up your

child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, another authorized person will be called to pick up the child(ren).

All children must be picked up no later than 5 minutes after pick up time. Late pick-up fees are as follows:

\$5.00 per each minute late and shall be paid when child(ren) is picked up.

Court Order: If there is a court order keeping one parent/guardian away from the child, we must have a written note from the custodial parent/guardian on file. Otherwise, we cannot prevent the non-custodial parent/guardian from picking up the child.

Confidentiality Policy

The information regarding the children, families, and/or staff is privileged and confidential. The staff is expected to keep information confidential and shall not discuss information in front of the children, other families, or other staff members (unless there is a need to know).

Information contained in a child's records shall be privileged and confidential. Parents shall have access, upon request, to their child's record at reasonable times. A written log shall be included in a child's record indicating any time a child's records have been released.

Prohibited Items

No outside food, drink, toys, candy, or distracting items such as but not limited to jewelry, costumes, head garments, etc. shall be brought to the childcare. Staff will inform the parent/guardian or whomever is dropping the child(ren) off to retrieve the outside food, drink, toy, or distracting items before leaving the child(ren). If the item is found after being dropped off staff will discard or put the item up to give to the parent/guardian when picked up.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff are mandated reporters and shall report suspected child abuse or neglect. The report shall be made to the childcare owner IMMEDIATELY. The childcare owner shall gather all information from the staff involved and report the suspected abuse or neglect. The childcare owner will then notify their state licensing consultant. The staff will cooperate fully in all investigations into abuse and neglect.

Discipline

Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool believes that keeping children busy and actively engaged decreases the frequency of behavior problems in the classroom. Transition activities help the children move smoothly from one activity to another. Our teachers use positive guidance and redirection. Setting consistent, clear understandable limits fosters the child's ability to become self-disciplined, which is our goal. We encourage staff to ignore negative

behavior as much as possible (since much of it is an effort for attention) and reinforce appropriate behavior. Hopefully this will draw the child into the group and avoid a need for frequent discipline.

When these methods do not work, your child will be spoken to and removed from the situation as a first step. By teaching the child that each choice they make has a direct consequence, they will begin to learn to be responsible for their own actions. A negative choice results in negative consequences. We prohibit corporal punishment of any kind, cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse. No child will be denied food as a form of punishment nor punished for soiling or wetting their clothes. If a behavior problem presents itself, every attempt will be made to remedy the situation. However, dismissal of a child for behavior problems will be a last result and at the discretion of the owner(s). Refer to discipline policy for specifics.

Biting

Amma's Academy recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 ½ year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their child(ren) may be bitten or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and the staff is working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior. They will redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curve this behavior.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed.

Nap/Quiet Time

Our program offers a nap/quiet time from 1:00pm -3:00pm. Staff shall set up the sleep cots so that they are 3 feet away from one another. Children are provided with their own cot, cot sheet, and blanket. These items will be laundered every Friday here at the program. Children are encouraged to sleep, however if after ½ hr., children are not sleep quiet activities will be provided to them (puzzles, books, quiet toys, etc.)

Open Door

Any parent is invited and welcome to visit Amma's Academy childcare and preschool anytime your child(ren) is present. We ask that you avoid visiting during nap/quiet time as much as possible. Parents are also free to call the program at any time.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. Parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classrooms, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. The childcare will have volunteer opportunities available posted on the parent information board. Parents not interested in volunteering directly may donate items, such as age-appropriate art sets, supplies etc. Any parent who volunteers in the childcare will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks and five panel drug tests, as required by our licensing regulations. Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order.

Illness

Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to bring a sick child to the program. Staff will take child(ren) temperature during check in. Parents are required to pick up an ill child(ren) within 1 hour of notification by phone. If a parent is reached but cannot pick up their child(ren) it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the emergency contact list. If a parent cannot be reached the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact list to pick up the sick child(ren). Please make sure the people on the emergency contact list are aware of this policy.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The parent must present a doctor's statement that the child(ren) is no longer contagious and can return to the program. Amma's Academy childcare reserves the right to refuse to allow a child(ren) to return if the owner(s) believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hrs. If your child(ren) is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for diarrhea which occurs 2 or more times in a 24-hr. period. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

If your child is absent due to illness, we request that you notify Amma's Academy staff. This enables us to keep track of any illnesses which may occur at childcare. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the childcare owner(s), so parents of the children in the

childcare maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. No other information will be shared as it is confidential.

If your child has a non-stop or on-going runny nose Amma's Academy reserves the right to refuse to allow the child to participate in the program. Parents must submit a doctor's statement if it is a medical condition.

Medication

Amma's Academy childcare and preschool will only dispense over the counter and/or prescription medication that is in its original, labeled container and is accompanied by a doctor's note with dosage and administration instructions. Amma's Academy will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor's note is written. One doctor's note per course of treatment is required. Parent(s) are required to complete a medication form and the form can be obtained from the Director, Assistant Director or Administrative Assistant.

Medical Emergencies

Supervision is constantly given but there will be instances when staff cannot always be by the child's side to prevent falls, tripping, bumps, blows from other children, etc. If the child is injured in a non-life-threatening way, we will assess the child and provide home health first aid. If the injury is more serious, the parent will be notified so the child can be transported to the hospital or doctor's office. All costs related to injuries to the child will be the responsibility of the parent unless we have been found negligent. In case of a medical emergency, and immediate intervention all staff members are certified in infant and child CPR as well as first aid. Staff will take appropriate actions by calling 911 and having the child transported to the nearest hospital. The parent(s) insurance will be responsible for the cost of medical care or treatment due to accidents or illness while in childcare.

Health and Safety Precautions

For health and safety precautions children should not appear to childcare in filthy conditions or in night clothes. Amma's Academy reserves the right to not allow children in these conditions to attend the program. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the childcare owner(s).

Transportation

Amma's Academy does not offer transportation for before or after school children currently. If this service is offered in the future, we will notify the parent(s) in writing.

Services Offered

Amma's Academy will offer:

- High quality childcare with lasting benefits from the experience of being enrolled here at Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool.
- Foster a safe, clean, nurturing and stimulating environment for children.
- Low child/teacher ratio
- Small group size
- Age-appropriate activities.
- Staff with higher education and on-going training.
- Positive teacher/child interactions
- Good health and safety practices.

Low ratios and low turnover allow teachers to respond to the individual needs of children, to give each child ample attention and to create a strong bond adding to the child's security. Higher education helps staff understand the needs and development of young children. This also helps teachers plan activities for children and interact with them in developmentally appropriate ways.

Termination Policy

Occasionally, a child will experience some difficulty in adapting to the childcare and preschool environment and abiding by the rules of behavior. A conference will be scheduled if your child(ren) should experience some difficulty. We will work closely with the parent(s) to see if the problem can be resolved. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive to the group, we reserve the right to withdraw your child from our program.

Parent(s) must give a two-week notice when voluntarily withdrawing your child(ren) from Amma's Academy Childcare and Preschool. Parent(s) will be responsible for all final tuition payments through the end of the notice period, whether in attendance or not.

If the policies and procedures set forth are not followed, we reserve the right to terminate the childcare contract at any time. In the event this happens Amma's Academy shall be paid in full through the end of the week in which termination occurs.

Childcare arrangements will be terminated immediately for any of the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to comply with the policies set forth in the parent handbook.
- Failure to comply with the contract.
- Disruptive or destructive behavior of a child that persists even with parental cooperation in stopping the behavior.

- Non-payment of childcare tuition, late fees and/or recurring late payment of tuition and fees.
- Failure to show up for 5 consecutive days without any communication.
- Inability to meet the child’s needs without additional staff.
- Blatant disrespect towards the provider and staff.
- If a parent knowingly brings their child to childcare ill.
- Consistent child rearing differences between the parent and provider.
- Amma’s Academy Childcare and Preschool may terminate at will.

If for any reason legal services are needed, Amma’s Academy Childcare and Preschool owner(s) will not be responsible for any legal or court costs incurred.

Sample Menu:

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
<u>Breakfast</u>	Eggs Bananas Hash Browns Milk	Oatmeal Peaches Milk	French Toast Sticks Blueberries Milk	Biscuit Orange Slice Milk	Rice Toast Milk
<u>Lunch</u>	Chicken Nuggets Mashed Potatoes Pineapples Milk	Taco Corn Mixed Fruit Milk	Grilled Cheese Sweet Potatoes Applesauce Milk	Chili/Ground Beef Pasta Wheat Crackers Pears Milk	Fish Sticks Mac-n- Cheese Peaches Milk
<u>PM Snack</u>	Graham Crackers Milk	Goldfish Crackers Apple Juice	Yogurt/Wheat Thins/Apple Slices Water	Strawberry Nutri grain Milk	Cheddar Chex Mix Milk

Signature Page

Acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of program policies.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Parent Name _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Parent Name _____ Date _____

Child(ren) Name:
