



# Parents' Handbook



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## Introduction

Welcome to Kids First Academy! We are committed to providing an excellent quality preschool education and childcare program in a secure, nurturing and exciting environment.

The following contains detailed information on Kids First Academy. Please take the time to read all the pages to help you better understand our program and philosophy. Should you have questions, please feel free to approach us. We would be more than happy to help you.

## School Philosophy & Goals

It is our philosophy in Kids First Academy to partner with parents and keep you involved in your children's early education and preschool-preparedness development.

We aim to guide each child in the growth of their overall personality without compromising their safety and providing a nurturing environment that promotes your child's physical, mental, emotional and social development.

Kids First Academy, then, curriculum is made for the whole class and then modified based on individual capability touching on creativity and analytical thinking, while honing children's abilities through play-based instruction.

We have able and caring teaching staff that through keen observations and participation help a child succeeds in areas that need improvement to develop positive self-images. We like to make sure that your child has the very best early childhood experience possible.

## Get to know Kids First Academy

### Curriculum

Kids First Academy curriculum is a discovery and play-based learning experience that gives each individual child the opportunity to move through specially designed learning areas of his or her own level of interest and ability.

The curriculum focuses on five (5) major areas namely **development communication, problem solving, gross and fine motor skills**, and **social skills**. Children are taught basic concepts and skills through hands-on experiences and activities, while some learning areas are designed to develop large and small motor skills while others are more academically oriented. Through our program, each child is given the tools needed to encourage the growth of the whole child.

### Goals of the Curriculum

- To provide a positive sense of identity and emotional well-being
- To develop age-appropriate social, physical, language and literacy skills
- To encourage your child's thinking, reasoning, questioning and experimentation
- To expose your child to the arts and encourage creative expression
- To demonstrate proper health, safety and nutritional practices
- To respect gender, age and cultural diversity
- Overall, to prepare the child for school kinder level

### Admission Policy

Kids First Academy welcomes children and families of diverse backgrounds. We are happy being able to reach out to these families and meet their child care needs. Children must be between 2-5 years old in order to enroll. Our administrators and teaching staff are more than able to assist in concerns regarding admission or re-admission of children.



## Tuition Policy

Tuition in preschool is just the same as tuition in college, you pay in the beginning of the semester for your spot in class; and you don't get credit for absences, illnesses, holiday, emergency closure, etc. But since this is preschool, you have the option of paying weekly or monthly.

- Tuition is **always** due at the beginning of the week or month (Monthly due date is 1st day of attendance. If 1st day is 15th of the month, then tuition is due every month on the 15th)
  - If the hours the child attends change in any way, parents will notify the center immediately so appropriate staffing may be arranged.
- The full tuition fee is still expected even if my child is absent for one or more days; however, for each full calendar week my child is absent, the tuition fee will be discounted 50% as a reservation fee.
  - Parents will receive four (4) reservation weeks per year and the payment for reservation fees is due in advance of the absence. The center requests a two-week notice of an intended vacation.
- All tuition is due in advance of services rendered. In-center tuition payments are due on the first day of weekly or monthly attendance.
- If tuition is not paid within 3 days of due date, a **late fee of \$20** will be charged.
- The terms of this agreement, including the fees, are subject to change in whole or part by Kids First Academy with 30 day notice. This agreement may be terminated by Kids First Academy at any time.
- A **nonrefundable registration fee of \$100** is due at the time of enrollment. If a child has withdrawn from the program and subsequently re-enrolls, a new registration fee is due at that time.
- An additional charge (\$2 per minute) will be imposed should there be extenuating circumstances that would prevent you from picking up before the center closes at 6pm.
- If tuition is subsidized by a state or county agency, payment will have to be received from the agency by the 25th of each month or you would have to personally be financially responsible for tuition payment. If receiving assistance, please make sure to provide a Child Care Certificate from your Child Unit Worker.

## Vacations & Observed Holidays

Kids First Academy is closed on the following holidays/staff development days:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

- There is no tuition credit allowed for these days as they are federal paid holidays.

## Additional School Holiday (can change anytime with 2 weeks notice):

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve to New Years Day Week

5 Staff Development days (To be Determined)



## Sign in & Sign Out

Every child must sign in via fingerprint each morning in the classroom. If the sign-in computer is down, parents will sign in manually. Upon greeting the child, the teacher will check the child's wellness.. An approved adult must sign out your child in the classroom before the child leaves the premises. This is a state requirement .

## Dress Code

### Do's

Children must be fully dressed in appropriate school clothes when they arrive at school. **Clothing should be practical and comfortable. We prefer shoes that are closed-toes, and has no shoe laces**

**Every child must have a complete change of clothing at all times, including socks and underwear.** If your child has changed clothing during the day, please take home the soiled items and replace them the next day

If potty training, gartered pants like leggings or sweat pants works great since your child can easily pull down for potty training.

All clothing items must be labeled with the child's full name. Tape and markers are available in the front desk to label your child's jacket/backpack, etc.

If your child wears diapers, please bring your child to school with fresh diaper \_\_\_\_\_(Initial)

### Don'ts

No open-toed shoes, sandals, jellies or cowboy boots are permitted. Little toes are easily hurt and children have a difficult time on the playground.

We also prefer that children do not wear jewelry. If unsafe, do not allow the child to wear jewelry in class

No tight fitting clothes that restricts the child from freely moving about.

No onesies, overalls, bodysuits to make it easier for your child to go to the bathroom.

## Meals

Good eating habits and positive attitudes toward food should be established at an early age. Kids First Academy participates in the USDA Food Program. You will be required to complete a separate enrollment form for the food program. The food program monitors the portions and the quality of food that we serve everyday. There will be surprise visits throughout the year.

**We eat 4 times a day, every 2 hours, breakfast,AM snacks, lunch and early dinner..** We serve only healthy and well-balanced meals. 1 % Milk is provided with every snack or meal. Meals are prepared in the facility and the menu is posted in the lobby and the website. If you prefer to pack meals for your child, please make sure to always label the food items with your child's name. If the child is hungry in between meals, we offer fruits or snacks. Water is available and accessible at all times.

## Toilet Training

Kids First Academy accepts children that are not yet potty trained; we only request that parents provide pull-ups that opens on the side for potty training, as well as stock of wipes for your child's personal use. It is also very important to dress your child in appropriate potty training clothes that are easy for your child to pull down and up, like sweat pants and leggings. Please do not dress up your child in overalls, bodysuit or onesies.



## Nap Time

There is a rest period during the day from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM for all children. Each child is assigned his/her own cot to sleep on. Please provide a small blanket and pillow, or a small and not too bulky sleeping bag for your child's personal use. The beddings will be sent home every other Friday to be washed.

## Parking

Please use caution when driving into our facility parking. The parking lot is situated within a residential area as well, and residents will be in the vicinity. Visitor's parking space is first come, first serve along the fence. There is a designated short-term parking right in front of the main entrance to the school. **PARK ONLY along the fence, and right in front of the gate. If you pull up in front of the gate, please make sure you leave enough space behind you so other parents can park behind you.** DO NOT park in any of the other parking spaces or your vehicle might get towed.

## Pick Up

Children can only be picked up by authorized persons listed in the child's enrollment forms. The authorized person must be over 18 years of age and present a photo ID. Please remember that your child must be signed in and out each day.

- The late pick-up fee does not constitute an agreement to provide after hours service, nor will the late fee be applied toward tuition.
- Chronic lateness at closing time may be grounds for termination of service.
- A late pickup fee will be charged as follows: \$2 per minute
- if the staff smell alcohol or marijuana on the adult picking up, the child will not be released. We are mandated by the state to ensure child's safety. We can be held liable if the person is under the influence of alcohol/drugs gets in an accident after picking up from Kids First Academy. We will take action to protect a child if we suspect that the person picking up is under the influence of alcohol or marijuana. **We have ZERO tolerance and we will not release the child if we smell alcohol or marijuana on the person picking up the child.** You will need to send someone else to pick up the child or we will call the police.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are special and important occasions. You are welcome to bring ice cream or cookies to share with your child's class. Please make sure there are no peanuts on any food items. We encourage non-edible treats for giveaways.

## What your Child May Bring From Home

Share day is every Friday at which time your child may bring one toy to share with his/her class. Books are welcome at any time. Please do not allow your child to bring items on other days. Violent toys, videotapes, guns and swords may not be brought to school.

## Disaster Preparedness

Kids First Academy has an emergency disaster plan in place. We practice earthquake and fire drills, and staff members are First Aid and CPR certified and prepared to handle an emergency.



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## Health & Safety

### Illness

Colds, flu and other contagious diseases seem to occur frequently and spread easily among preschool and toddler children. To help protect your own child's health and to minimize the possibility of contagion at school, please keep your child at home if you observe any of the following symptoms:

- Nasal discharge that is green or yellow
- Complaints of ear pain
- Productive cough
- Severe sore throat
- Eyes that are pink, burning or itching or producing discharge
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever

If these symptoms of possibly contagious conditions or other conditions deemed contagious are observed in your child during the day, you will be called to come pick up your child immediately.

If there are any lingering signs of illness, please keep your child home an additional day. This will help to ensure that the illness has actually passed and that your child will be well enough to resume school activities. **Please make sure that your child has been fever free for 24 hours without aid of medication before returning to school.**

Doctor's release form is required for a child to return to school after contracting a highly contagious condition such as hand foot mouth disease, pink eye, ringworm, etc.

### Medication

As a service to our parents, the office staff will administer medication prescribed by your physician. All medications (prescriptive and over the counter), including topical are given as a courtesy. Medication must be in the original container with the child's name on the label, as well as the prescription number, name of the medication, dosage, and expiration dates medication permission slip is required to be completed.

### Head Lice

**Having lice has nothing to do with cleanliness!** Random lice checks are conducted by teachers. If lice are found on a child, the following steps are taken:

- Parents are notified and child must be picked up from school.
- Child's head must be treated with a product formulated to remove head lice.
- Nits must be removed with a special nit comb included in product. Nits on the scalp may be seen more easily on the hair at the back of the neck and above the ears.
- The child will be excluded from school for at least 24 hours until the lice is under control. **Upon returning to school, state health laws require examination of hair and scalp before returning to school.**
- To avoid infestation, it is important to inspect all family members for two weeks and treat if infected. Please be assured that we will do everything possible to prevent infestation.



## We Love our Kids First Parents!

### Parent Information

You will always be in the loop! As school progresses and the children adjust to their new routine, we will continue to provide you with information regarding our program at Kids First Academy.

We will keep you informed of, holidays, curriculum and other important information through regular communication verbally, by text message, and by written notes and reminders posted in our facility. We will utilize apps as well as form of communication.

### Separation from the Parent

At Kids First Academy, we also help your children prepare for going to preschool. The process of separation from the parent as the child enters and attends preschool is one of the most important accomplishments of the preschool child.

At each age level, a child will react differently. As children mature, they begin to identify themselves as independent personalities. In separating from you, the parent, your child is learning:

- To develop an interest in the activities of the preschool
- To feel comfortable with others at preschool
- To understand that his/her parent will come back and pick him/her up
- To understand that all parents leave their children and come back for them
- To understand that parents often must concentrate on their own interests and duties which are separate and different from those of a child
- To develop an acceptance and willingness to allow the parent an open-door policy

We ask parents to limit visit inside the classroom during picking up & drop off to no more than 5 minutes to not disrupt the classroom activity & teacher's task. You are welcome to observe in the hallway through the glass window or in the CCTV monitor in the front desk. Anyone who spends more than 5 minutes in the classroom will need to provide a clear TurstLine background check & TB test clearance.

### Discipline Policy

#### Positive Measures to Produce Acceptable Behavior

In order to maintain a happy, healthy, disciplined environment, the children are taught the importance of safety, care of property, good habits, rules of conduct and consideration and respect for others.

Constructive methods of discipline are used to maintain group control and handle individual behavior. Our main focus on discipline (teaching/training) is preventative in nature, as we aim to build self-discipline in the child.



## Discontinuation Policy

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Administrator to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child and other children in the classroom, including the teachers. Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- Disruptive or dangerous behavior of child or parent
- Abuse of other children, staff, or property by child or parent
- The facility's inability to meet the child's needs
- Parents refusal to participate in recommended program or assessment for the need for special needs
- Parents disrespect or distrust of the program and staff
- Parents showing up at preschool under the influence of any substance. Kids First Academy has zero tolerance for any risk of any of our student's safety. We will report to authorities , CPS or PD immediately

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the policies and procedures written in this handbook. I also acknowledge that understanding and following the said policies and procedures will help maintain our family's harmonious relationship with Kids First Academy, its administrators and teachers.

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Parents Signature

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Date

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Parents Signature

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Date

Please return the signed acknowledgment to Kids First Academy

Thank you!