



# PARENT HANDBOOK

Southern Hills United Methodist Church

8200 S. Pennsylvania Ave.

Oklahoma City, OK 73159

405-681-2575

[www.kidsacademy.life](http://www.kidsacademy.life)

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## Welcome to the Kids Academy at Southern Hills United Methodist Church

Under the guidance of our Kids Academy Administrator and Southern Hills United Methodist Church (SHUMC), the following policies and regulations have been developed for our weekday program. These policies are subject to change or revision as needed by these entities.

### Childcare

A full day, five-day a week program for children, ages 6 weeks through 12 years who need all-day childcare or before and after school childcare.

### Philosophy of the Kids Academy at SHUMC

We believe that every child is a unique individual, a sacred entity from birth. Each child has his/her own personality, learning style and pace. Therefore, beginning with our infants, our program is designed to encourage the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of each child. We do this by using a child-centered approach to learning rather than a teacher-directed one. Group activities are an important part of our program, but most of the children's time is spent working individually.

We believe that children desire to grow and learn and that they will seek out opportunities or materials to promote learning. Many activities are available to encourage decision-making and much of the curriculum provides "hands-on" experiences for the child because learning happens through a process of doing an activity rather than the result.

We believe that during the early childhood years children are learning self-control. We will endeavor for them to do this by setting clear, consistent, age and developmentally appropriate limits. Teachers who guide with sensitivity and skill help children understand why some behavior is inappropriate without damaging a child's self-esteem.

We believe that a clean, orderly, and safe environment is part of teaching children to be responsible for themselves. Our administration and staff are responsible for maintaining this environment.

We value the interactions between our staff and children and believe these are the central part of development for our infants. As such, we strive to provide continuity and consistency in our teachers, knowing how important a consistent caregiver is at this age. We believe infants are capable of much learning and benefit greatly from appropriate levels of stimulation with a focus on developing their cognitive motor and language skills.

## Purpose Statement for the Kids Academy at SHUMC

The purpose of the Kids Academy at SHUMC is to provide a creative learning experience for children in a Christian environment. We seek to provide an atmosphere in which children can grow spiritually, socially, mentally, physically, and emotionally to his/her fullest potential and support parents as they provide the same atmosphere at home.

Our Kids Academy offers a developmental program designed to help children develop to their fullest. Our philosophy is that a child's growth, emotional and mental well-being is best promoted by teachers who love, teach and care for children in a way that demonstrates God's love and care. This concept is more than just a religious ideal; it crosses all denominational lines.

In a supportive and loving atmosphere, we observe that children quickly respond, showing love and care for each other.

### 1. To help a child grow spiritually:

- A curriculum based on a Christian foundation for younger children will be an integral part of all weekday ministry programs.
- The child will be introduced to the basic concept of faith that is appropriate for the child's age.

### 2. To help a child grow socially:

- Children will come from all walks of life without preference for any one race, creed, or socio-economic group.
- Children with special needs will be accepted whenever possible to give them the experience of being with other children and give the child who has no exposure to special needs children an opportunity to develop understanding that we are all different and that each of us is special.

3. To help a child grow mentally:
  - Teachers will have prior training or experience in early childhood development so that they might understand each child's individual development and abilities to learn and apply this knowledge to their classroom work.
  - Teachers will be required to continue their training and update their skills on a regular basis.
4. To help a child grow physically:
  - Quality nutritional meals and snacks will be served.
  - Good health habits and nutritional responsibilities will be integral part of the program curriculum.
5. To help a child grow emotionally:
  - Special attention will be given to the hiring of persons to work with the children who present the model image we wish to provide for the children, and to give each child several models from which to learn.
  - Special attention will be given to promoting positive self-concepts in each child.
6. To reinforce the quality of family life:
  - Parent enrichment programs will be conducted.

## Enrollment Records

All enrollment forms must be filled out and signed before a child can be left in the program. We use the Brightwheel App for parent communication. Once we receive your child's paperwork for enrollment, they will be put into the system, and you will be notified by text or e-mail to download the App. Once you are on the app, you will have the ability to update your parent profile, contacts, and your child's information. We do not do same day enrollments. There will be 24-48 hours before a child can enter the program after enrolling. Notify the office immediately of any changes in address, phone numbers, health problems, child custody arrangements or other emergency numbers

and information. Please keep your child's records current for his/her safety and well-being.

## Authorization for Pick-Up

If there are occasions when someone other than those listed as Approved Pick-ups will be picking up your child, please give us a signed written permission slip to release your child to that person. In case of an emergency, a phone call or Brightwheel notification will suffice, but if by Brightwheel we will verify by a phone call. All persons picking up any child, who are unfamiliar to our staff, will be required to present a photo I.D. to the Kids Academy desk representative upon arrival.

## Hours and Late Departures

The Kids Academy at SHUMC is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday except for the noted holidays and professional development days recognized by this facility (See Holidays.) The weekly tuition fee or Child Care Subsidy covers the stated business hours. After 6 pm a LATE FEE of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each child. The late fee must be paid by the following Monday. Time computation or late fee charges will be based on the IPAD located at the Kids Academy entrance. Frequent failure to pick up your child on time may result in stiffer late fees or termination of enrollment.

## Child Custody

For parents who are separated or divorced, Kids Academy at SHUMC **MUST have a copy of any legal documentation, ON SITE**, concerning the visitation and custody and any subsequent changes in that status. Kids Academy strives to exercise reasonable control in not turning the child over to someone who has no right to the child. The custodial parent **MUST inform** Kids Academy Administration of visitation rights or changes in the legal document as soon as they are put into place. All custody paperwork can be copied or sent directly to Debbie Shultz at [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org). We take your child's safety very seriously.

## Suspicious of Child Abuse and Neglect

This statement is serving as a notice to all our prospective and enrolled families that any employee of the Kids Academy at SHUMC is required by law to report any suspected Child Abuse or Neglect.

## Insurance

Our center is in compliance by securing and maintaining Liability Insurance as required by law.

## Tuition and Deposit

Any child may be placed on the Kids Academy waiting list for a non-refundable fee of \$55.00, once the child is enrolled the fee will count as the Registration Fee which is also \$55.00. This fee must be paid in Cash or Money Order. This fee is also charged at the discretion of the Center Director, so please ask at enrollment if the fee is currently being charged, we do run enrollment specials quite often.

## Payment of Tuition

Tuition is due and billed on the Brightwheel App in advance of each week. Every account is billed on Sunday for the next week. Payments are due on Monday and a late fee will be assessed on Wednesday if left unpaid. We accept Cash and Check or Money orders in person. You can pay by Checking Account or Credit/Debit Card through the Brightwheel App for a small fee. If an account becomes one week past due, your child's enrollment will be subject to termination unless special arrangements have been made prior to the time the account becomes delinquent. The late fee is \$25.00. There is also a \$25.00 late fee for returned checks. If you have a co-payment through DHS Child Care Subsidy, they are due on the first business day of the month. A late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed if not paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.

## Admittance Policy

First, all efforts will be made for siblings of currently enrolled students of the Kids Academy at SHUMC. Secondly, SHUMC members will be given priority and finally the public. All openings are subject to availability in the program and every child, including siblings, must be placed on the waiting list and secured by a \$55.00 deposit. While we strive to provide siblings and the public with childcare when requested, we cannot guarantee a spot will open at the time requested. Infant spots become available when current children in the infant rooms are both age and developmentally able to move to the next class. When an opening becomes available and is confirmed for your child, you will receive notification by phone and any further paperwork will be completed at that time. Your deposit will then move to cover your \$55.00 registration fee. We admit children without regard to race, sex, religion, or national origin.

## Family Orientation

Before a child starts in our program we like to complete an orientation with the family. This includes a tour, completing required paperwork, handbook receipt and acknowledgement, submitting immunization records or filing an exemption with the state, filling out any medical documentation for allergies or medications to be given on site (including diaper cream), Brightwheel set up, and making sure billing is set up for private pay or DHS Subsidy. At that time, a child can enter the program.

## Curriculum and Assessments

You should have received a curriculum schedule in your welcome packet. Each week we cover a Letter or Number and a Theme. Each month we concentrate on a Color and Shape. Each classroom makes a lesson plan that is age appropriate. They are individualized to meet the needs of all children in our program. If your child receives outside services such as speech or Occupation or Physical therapy we would love to know that so that we can work as a team to meet the goals they have set for your child.

We have partnered with All Heart Pediatric Therapy LLC to provide free speech screenings for all 2-5 year olds in our program. If your child qualifies for a speech referral and you choose to have those services provided they can be done on site here.

We perform ASQ3 and ASQ SE screenings on all the children in our program under the age of 5, these are generally completed in the fall, unless you share other concerns with

us at another time. If you have any concerns about your child's Development or Behavior please let your child's teacher know so we can do our best to help. If your child does show a delay based on the ASQ screening, we can work with you to facilitate a referral to either Sooner Start or the Public School depending on your child's age.

We also do assessments on the children throughout the year This is so we can ensure we are meeting the learning and development needs of each child in our program.

## Vacation Policy

After your child has been enrolled in the center for a full year, you are eligible to have one-week vacation. During this week your tuition will be at no charge. Advance written notice by either letter or email to [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org) is required. Each year after you will be eligible for the same discount one week a year while enrolled in the program. During this week the child is not eligible to attend.

## Snow and In-climate Weather Policy

All decisions to close due to impassable roads or threat of weather are made by the Executive Board for Southern Hills UMC, we do try to follow Moore and Oklahoma City public schools regarding this issue, but that is NOT always the case. This decision will be made as soon as possible, and you will be notified through the Brightwheel App. If it is decided that we will close early due to in-climate weather you will be allowed an ample amount of time, usually 2 hours, before we will close. Closures and delays will also be posted to the Kids Academy Facebook Page and Southern Hills UMC Facebook Page. We will attempt to also reach you by phone if there is no response through Brightwheel, so please make sure your contact information is up to date on the app. We will post closures to local news channels as allowed.

## Arrival

We will accept children up to 10:00 am without notification from the parent. Any child coming after 10:00 am must have reported the late entry on Brightwheel, called the Administration at 405-681-2575 or emailed [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org) to report late arrival, this must be due to an appointment, we cannot accept children late just because. All children who have not arrived by 10:00 am and have not reported a late arrival will be

counted absent. You can also let staff and administration know your child will be absent or late through notification on Brightwheel. That is greatly appreciated. We prefer children arrive prior to 9 this way they can be included in group time activities and learning activities.

## Holidays

Kids Academy at SHUMC will close one day for each of the following holidays. If the holiday falls on Saturday or Sunday, the workday nearest the holiday will be the holiday. (Please note THANKSGIVING and CHRISTMAS)

**New Year's Eve (Closing at Noon)**

**New Year's Day**

**Memorial Day**

**Fourth of July**

**Labor Day**

**Thanksgiving Day and the Day After**

**Christmas Eve**

**Christmas Day and the Day After**

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

We will also close for professional development 4 days a year. These days are set aside for staff development, training, and deep cleaning of the facility. These days are as follows:

**President's Day**

**Good Friday**

**The Third Friday in July**

**The Friday prior to Labor Day**

Full Tuition will be charged for full time enrollment during the months with a holiday or special day designated.

## Staff Training and In-Service Days

Following a careful selection process, each staff member received training before beginning to work in the classroom. All teachers will receive New Staff Orientation, and must complete an OK DHS Entry Level Childcare Course, Safe Sleep Training and First Aid/CPR, and CACFP Civil Right Training as a new hire. Upon entering the classroom, training is done on a continual basis for staff. The Kids Academy at SHUMC has carefully identified the skills and abilities staff must have to meet the developmental and educational needs of the children in our care. The administration regularly observes and conducts feedback conferences to ensure the competence of each staff member.

In-service days allow our Kids Academy staff to review any changes in policies as well as plan curriculum. We also bring in outside speakers and trainers to tailor staff training to meet the specific needs of the program.

## Daily Health Checks

At arrival every child is subject to a daily health check that will be documented by your child's teacher. These are kept and evaluated as needed for any patterns that may arise. Documented on this are any visible marks or injuries to your child, symptoms of illness or general overall appearance of the child.

Due to COVID-19 we are also requiring you to stay with your child while their temperature is taken. Once we have confirmed they do not have a temperature or physical symptoms of COVID they will be allowed into the building from the entry area.

## Emergency Care

In the event of an emergency, the person in charge at Kids Academy will contact you, if you cannot be reached, they will contact the emergency numbers you have provided on the enrollment application. If we are unable to contact anyone all efforts will be made to transport the child to your preferred hospital listed. Should your child need immediate emergency care, they will be transported by ambulance (subject to the condition of the child which is determined by the administration) and taken to the ER chosen by the emergency personnel. All attempts will be made to contact you at the numbers provided so please make sure the numbers are updated regularly. Please remember to stay calm to avoid hurting yourself when meeting us at the hospital. All our staff are trained bi-annually in CPR/First Aid.

## Illness and Dispensing of Medication

These are policies and guidelines set in place by Kids Academy to ensure the utmost safety regarding illness and medication administration. Please DO NOT bring your child to Kids Academy if he/she is running a fever, which is determined at 100.4 or above, or has the possibility of a contagious disease. Children must be 24 hours without fever or symptoms, without the use of medication, provided that the child feels well and is able to participate in all the Kids Academy activities including outside play, before returning to Kids Academy.

These guidelines are set forth by Kids Academy under the guidance of The Oklahoma State Health Department and the Good Health Handbook. We do not assume the responsibility of illness or the care of sick children. The following criteria, stated by the Oklahoma State Health Department directly has been laid out in this parent handbook below as guidelines, they will be used but completely responsible for the determination of excluding children from care at Kids Academy, that decision will be made by Administration.

Upon parent notification, Children must be picked up at Kids Academy within an hour. As a reminder the child cannot return to care until they are symptom free, without medication, for 24 hours.

- · Fever of 100.4 degrees or more- Children will be sent home with a fever of 100.4 degrees or more and may not be readmitted until they have been fever-free without medication for 24 hours provided the child feels well and is able to participate in all Kids Academy activities. Children with a fever above 99.0 but under 100.4 degrees that show other signs of illness will be sent home at the discretion of the Kids Academy Administration.
- · Vomiting and/or Diarrhea (with or without fever)
  - Diarrhea will be considered contagious. Any child with diarrhea cannot be readmitted until the diarrhea is gone for 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as watery stools that cannot be contained in the diaper. If your child has 2 instances you will be notified and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> you will be required to pick them up. If there are already other children in the class or center with similar symptoms you will be contacted on the first instance and the child will be sent home on the second.
  - Vomiting children will be sent home. Vomiting will be considered contagious. Any child with vomiting cannot return to Kids Academy until the symptoms have been gone for 24 hours, provided the child feels well and is able to participate in all Kids Academy activities. Children who

return to the center 24 hours after being sent home and continue to have symptoms will be sent home immediately and cannot return without a doctor's note.

- Colored Nasal Discharge with Fever-Children with green, yellow, or bloody nasal discharge with fever must be sent home. Children cannot return until the symptoms have been gone for 24 hours, provided the child feels well and is able to participate in all Kids Academy activities.
  
- Severe cough with or without discharge and/or distressed breathing-Children with a severe cough accompanied by high-pitched whistling sound and difficulty breathing, will be sent home. A doctor's statement will be required to return. Children cannot return until they are symptom free for 24 hours, provided the child feels well and is able to participate in all Kids Academy activities.
  
- Any communicable disease or condition-head lice, chicken pox, strep throat, measles, impetigo, pinworms, roseola, conjunctivitis (pink eye), sore throat, tonsillitis, open sores, hand foot and mouth, or an undiagnosed rash. Any child with these listed conditions cannot return to Kids Academy without a doctor's statement determining they are no longer contagious.
  - Strep Throat-Children must be on medication and symptom free for at least 24 hours provided the child feels well and is able to participate in all activities.
  - Flu-Children may return when he/she has been fever free and symptom free for 24 hours provided the child feels well enough to participate in all activities.
  - Impetigo, MRSA and Ring Worms-Child can return if the infected area(s) can be covered at all times. Parents must provide a doctor's note regarding the diagnosis. Kids Academy staff cannot change any coverings or bandages to the infected areas.
  - Roseola, Fifth's Disease and other Skin rashes (with or without fever)-Children who break out with any type of skin rash will be considered contagious until a doctor's statement is received, determining that it is not contagious. Children cannot return until all rash is gone for 24 hours and the child is well enough to participate in all activities. This is not including diagnosed Eczema or Diaper Rash.

- Chicken Pox-Children must not return until 6 days after the rash appears and only when all blisters and sores are scabbed over.
- Measles-Children must be home at least 4 days after the rash appears and the child is symptom free.
- Scabies-Children must be on medication and symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning provided the child feels well and is able to participate in all activities.
- Hand, Foot and Mouth (HFV)-Children will be sent home when they show signs of HFV. Blisters can appear on the hands, feet, buttock and/or mouth. This is a highly contagious illness. To prevent the spreading of HFV, children must be excluded from our care until their fever has been gone for at least 24 hours and all sores and blisters are scabbed and dry, provided that the child feels well enough and can participate in all activities. In addition, children who are excessively drooling and have open sores in their mouth will need to be excluded until those symptoms are gone and are able to eat and drink as normal.
- Conjunctivitis and inflammation of the eyes-Children with these conditions must be seen by a physician and provide a doctor's note upon returning. Children may be readmitted 24 hours after the child begins medication.

Upon parent notification, the child must be picked up within an hour. If medication of any kind is required to treat medical conditions, the child must have taken 24 hours of prescribed medication before returning to our care.

Any communicable diseases will be reported on Brightwheel to the parents in the classroom of the infected child or staff member. This is to let parents know of the threat of exposure and the signs and symptoms to look for. In the event of an infestation exposure, information will be given regarding signs and symptoms and resources for treatment. At no time will any child's personal information be given out.

Following an illness, a doctor's statement must be presented to Kids Academy Administration either in person or by email to [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org). When doctor's notes are required, children must still be fever and symptom free for 24 hours and able to participate in all activities.

There are NO EXCEPTIONS! No doctor's statement, No admittance. We will not be accepting doctor's notes from family members.

## COVID-19

Kids Academy always follows CURRENT CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19. If you are curious as to what they are currently please feel free to message on Brightwheel for clarification from Administration or contact Debbie Shultz directly at [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org). However, upon admittance into the building all children will have their temperature taken. Children with a temperature reading 100.4 or higher will not be allowed to stay and cannot return to care until they are fever free without medication for 24 hours.

If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 everyone who has been in direct contact with the infected person will be contacted. We will go off current CDC guidelines regarding quarantine guidance.

## Dispensing Medications

Medication must be accompanied by an official Medication Form. These forms are available at the desk, please ask the person in charge. We can not administer any medication without one, including diaper cream. Medication can only be given up to 2 times a day here at Kids Academy, unless it is a life saving medication such as, nebulizer, inhaler or diaper cream. We can only give prescribed medication, NO over the counter medication can be given, except pain medication (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) We will no longer be administering any cough, cold or allergy medications. Pain medications will only be administered with a doctor's note stating dosage and reason for the medication. Any over the counter pain medication brought from home must be in its original container, marked with the child's full name.

No medication should be left in your child's bag, for any reason. Any medication found in the child's bag will have to be disposed of for safety reasons, and you will be contacted.

A doctor's statement must be on file for us to administer any medication, this statement must include the dosage information and the reason we are administering the medication. This includes Tylenol, Motrin, etc. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy.

Sunscreen and Insect repellent do not require a doctor's statement but must be provided by the parent for the child. Please put your child's full name on the product. It will be kept on site and administered as needed. You will be notified if used, we do recommend all children have access to sunscreen, especially in the warmer months. .

Diaper Creams do not require a doctor's statement but do require Medication Authorizations.

Approved Medication with a doctor's statement:

- Over the counter pain medications (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.)
- Prescription medications
- Ointments and Creams
- Benadryl as part of a plan of action/treatment for those with allergic reactions as prescribed by a doctor.
- EpiPen
- Inhaler and Nebulizer

Any medication that requires a syringe, needle or lancets must be accompanied by a medical waste disposal container.

Prohibited Medications:

- Medications that cause drowsiness; including those prescribed by a doctor.
- Cough and Allergy medication; including those prescribed by a doctor.

When dispensing medications, we make sure we have the medication form for the medication being given to THAT child. We document each dose at the time it is given on the medication form. If you have more than one child in our care, we cannot give one child's medication to another child.

Kids Academy at SHUMC is an advocate for your child and the families we serve. These policies are followed strictly by our facility. We reserve the right to exclude any child that potentially could be a health risk. Repeated abuse by parents of the illness and the dispensing of medication policies will be documented and reported to Child Welfare. Full cooperation is expected.

## Allergies

All reported allergies must be accompanied by a doctor's note along with a treatment plan.

If an EpiPen is required for an allergy, we must have one on-site that remains here while the child is in our care. This EpiPen must be in the original packaging with the child's name and doctor's note stating why the child may need the EpiPen.

We will make every effort to reduce the risk of exposure, but it is never possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any service that is open to the general community.

To start, we do not allow nuts of any kind into the facility. We also do not allow outside food or drinks other than a water bottle.

All allergies to food or medication are posted in each classroom as well as the kitchen and documented on your child's profile on Brightwheel. They are, however, kept confidential by a cover sheet, to those in the classrooms.

## Immunizations

The health department requires that your child have all listed immunizations at the appropriate ages to be eligible for enrollment. These are as follows:

AGE	TYPE OF IMMUNIZATION
Birth	HEP B
2 Months	HEP B, Rotavirus, DTAP, HIB, PCV 13, IPV
4 Months	Rotavirus, DTAP, HIB, PCV 13, IPV
6 Months	HEP B, DTAP, PCV 13, IPV
12 Months	HIB, PCV 13, MMR, Varicella, HEP A
15 Months	DTAP
18 Months	HEP A
4 Years Old	DTAP, IPV, MMR, Varicella
11 Years Old	TDAP

Please contact Kids Academy Administration after your child receives an immunization so our records can be updated. Please send updated records by email to [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org), faxing to 405-681-5516 or give it to the desk attendant at drop off. Records that are not current are documented by the Health Department. Should

your child be unable to have an immunization at the designated time, a doctor's statement must be provided and kept in the child's records until it is received.

Kids Academy and DHS require that we keep up-to-date records. We are authorized by the OSIS database to obtain immunization records with your signed consent, which is included in our enrollment packet.

Kids Academy reserves the right to decline enrollment for children who are not vaccinated due to religious preference, parent preference, and/or are not current on immunizations, however, we do currently participate in allowing children to attend on an exemption. Please email [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org) if you need to discuss this process. If your child is deemed exempt due to health or religious preferences it must be recertified annually.

## Nutrition and Meals

Kids Academy at SHUMC participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which is a federally funded nutrition program. To meet their requirements, every meal and snack are planned according to their specifications. All meals are prepared on-site and served at specific times to meet the guidelines. All meals must be served by our cook and/or teachers.

Meal Times are as follows:

Breakfast     7:30 am-8:30 am

Lunch            11:00 am-11:30 am (AM Pre-K will be served upon arrival)

Snack            2:00 pm-2:30 pm     (School Age children will be served upon arrival)

To comply we must allow these hours between main meals.

Meals are served in the classroom family-style (COVID-19 may affect this information) and the teachers eat with the children. During this time, we teach children the fundamentals of good nutrition and sound eating habits. As stated above, we participate in the CACFP program, and we are reimbursed for a portion of our purchases each month. We are required to follow certain guidelines, regulations, and reporting requirements. Due to these guidelines the following is true:

- Children are all offered all components of the meal. We do not make them eat any of it, but we will encourage them to try things. We do not allow any outside food or drink, except during special occasions, which are not counted as CACFP mealtimes.
- Children with food allergies must provide documentation from a doctor regarding allergy and specific details on treatment and substitution. For instance, if your child is allergic to peaches, your child will be served another fruit as substitution.
- For those children with milk allergies Kids Academy will provide the milk alternative, such as Lactaid, but only with a doctor's note stating that they have a milk allergy, and it needs to list the allowed substitution. There is an official form for this please see DEBBIE SHULTZ or email her to get the form needed.
- For infants who consume breast milk, the milk must be brought in a labeled container that has the child's full name and the date the milk was expressed.

Again, there should be NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS.

## Transportation and Field Trips

Kids Academy provides transportation to several nearby schools. These are as follows at this time, but can change due to enrollment and availability:

### Oklahoma City Schools

Southern Hills Elementary

### Moore Schools

Red Oak

Fairview

Sky Ranch

During school breaks we plan field trips, for which we provide transportation. Permission slips are required for every trip for every child.

## Behavior and Guidance Philosophy

Behavior and guidance is an on-going process. Methods are determined by the child's understanding and stage of development. Generally, our procedure is to first try to redirect the child or distract the child. We talk to the child about what limits are and

what is not acceptable as it is developmentally appropriate. At no time will a child be subjected to physical or emotional punishment, verbal abuse, humiliation, or threats.

The Administration of the program recognizes the stages of cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. However, there are occasional instances of persistent behavior by children in a group setting. These persistent behaviors as measured by the teachers and administration will be handled by but not limited to:

- Teachers using methods of natural and logical consequences, redirection, limit setting and distraction.
- The teachers meet with administration and develop strategies to help the child with the misbehavior. Administration will observe the child in the group setting to best determine the appropriate plan of action.
- The parent is notified by the teacher or administration concerning the methods being used to handle the misbehavior. Consistencies of guidance strategies are highly encouraged between home and our center.
- If the misbehavior persists, consultation will take place between the teacher, parents and administration if required.
- At the cost of the parents, further consultation with an outside professional is sought if all previous procedures are not alleviating the situation. The child may need to enter outside therapy or counseling, which can take place on site if the counselor deems appropriate.
- Parents who do not wish to work with us cooperatively and to follow our philosophy will be asked to leave the program within 10 days of written administration notification.

Behavior and Guidance is a necessary component of a healthy, successful life. Our goal is to help children learn self-control. We feel children are best helped by a firm but gentle, calm, matter of fact and consistent approach.

We do implement Conscious Discipline into our daily routines and curriculum for all children enrolled in our program. If you are not familiar with Conscious Discipline, we would encourage you to check it out by going to the website <https://consciousdiscipline.com>. There are tons of resources available online and on Pinterest or YouTube. These are not just exercises and activities that can be used in a classroom setting, they can be used anytime, anywhere.

## Continuity of Care and Classroom Assignments

Each child is actively enrolled in a home room at enrollment. This allows for the child to be familiar with their classroom and the expectations. They have the same teacher each day, unless there is a teacher absent. This allows the child and teacher to form a bond and also for the teacher to know the individual needs of your child so they can help them to learn in ways that work for them. Children remain in their assigned class for a majority of the day, every day.

## Transitioning

When a child ages out of a classroom, they are transitioned to the new class by first allowing the child to visit the room on several occasions prior to their move. This generally starts 30 days before the move. This will allow the child to become familiar with the new environment, the new teacher and their new friends. This is to ensure the child feels comfortable and that the teacher has time to know the needs of the child and their learning style in advance. The new teacher or teachers will also reach out to the family to introduce themselves, so they can start to build a relationship with the family prior to the child moving classrooms. You are also more than welcome to set up a time to come and see the new classroom and speak to the teachers in person. We prefer this to be a set time so we can make sure the class has coverage so at least the main teacher can be available to talk to you and answer any questions you may have, because we do have to maintain the safety and supervision of the children at all times. When you first enter the program, we do like to allow the child to come beforehand and see the room, meet the kids and the teacher. This usually happens during the tour, or at a later date prior to starting the program. This will allow the child a chance to see things ahead of time so they know what to expect. When a child is leaving our program to go to public school, we like to have literacy and school related activities to help the child get familiar with the idea of going to a bigger school. We talk about expectations and if we know ahead of time we can show them pictures of the school and get them familiar with it prior to them starting. If a staff member is leaving the program and a new staff member is taking their place, we like to be able to have both working together for some time so that the children can get familiar with the new staff. This also allows the current staff to fill the new staff in with information about the specific needs of the children in the class.

## Safe Sleep Procedures

Kids Academy staff who work directly with infants and toddlers are all trained in the State Mandated Safe Sleep Training. We will be using the Back to Sleep method with every child in our care. There can be nothing in the cribs other than a mattress, tight fitting sheet and the infant in care. There are no blankets allowed in the crib with the child. As an extra reminder, all cribs are labeled with each child's name and a note regarding whether they can roll over or not.

## Childcare for Patrons Away from Kids Academy

Kids Academy does not prohibit staff members from providing care for children outside of Kids Academy hours. However, parents must make these arrangements outside of Kids Academy. All employees of Kids Academy are required to maintain a professional relationship and uphold all confidentiality matters of Kids Academy.

## Tobacco Free Campus

Kids Academy and all of SHUMC areas are 100% Tobacco Free environments. This includes cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco products, vaping, and e-cigarettes.

## Pick-Up and Parking Lot Safety

Parents may not leave other children unattended in their vehicles while picking up another child. No one under the age of 18 may pick up children that attend the facility. Parents must hold your child's hand while walking through the parking lot. Please do not allow your child to go outside the Kids Academy doors without you, no matter their age. Parents must maintain a speed of 5mph or less in the parking lot. Parents will indemnify and hold harmless Kids Academy at SHUMC if they fail to adhere to these rules.

## Parent Involvement and Bulletin Boards

There are many opportunities for parents to be involved. Further, many family programs are offered, and we welcome our parents to spend time with us anytime (COVID-19 may

hinder this.) Additionally, we strive to provide a monthly newsletter that tells what is coming up as far as curriculum and activities. We have a parent board posted in the entryway and parent resources are available. If there are any resources you are in need of please reach out to Debbie Shultz directly at [dshultz@shumcokc.org](mailto:dshultz@shumcokc.org) so we can try and provide those resources for you and your family. Our parent board provides you with our weekly menu, and all pertinent information concerning our facility.

As the parent or guardian you are welcome here at the Kids Academy anytime, even though our entrances are magnetic locked for the safety of our children and staff. If you would love to volunteer or help with a special activity please talk to your child's teacher to get that set up. We love having parents participate in activities. The kids also love having special visitors and doing special activities. If you have questions regarding your child's specific classroom, please feel free to contact your child's teacher via the Brightwheel App to ask questions regarding curriculum or specific class schedule.

## Parent Communication

Kids Academy welcomes parents to discuss their child's progress at any time. Administration highly encourages your input concerning policies and procedures. Communication can be in person, over the phone, or in writing. We will be conducting on-site or online parent surveys annually. Any communication will be dealt with in a timely professional manner and is essential to the program. We encourage parents to discuss any comments or concerns first with the teacher. This can be done in person, over the phone, or on Brightwheel. Appointments can be made with your child's teacher anytime. Two times a year we will conduct formal parent/teacher conferences. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss your child's progress and development and any concerns you may have. Fall conferences are an opportunity to become acquainted with your child's teacher and share any information about your family that might be important to the success of your child in our program. Spring conferences are to review screening tools and progress that your child is making.

Because your child's development is rapid between the ages of 6 weeks to 30 months, communication between parents and teachers takes place informally and much more frequently. Any observed developmental delays would be brought to your attention by the administration of Kids Academy. The Director or Administration will handle your comments as deemed appropriate. Further communication can be made in writing and given to the Director or Administrator.

## Other Important Issues

### Fresh Air and Exercise

We believe that children need fresh air and exercise daily. Outdoor play is scheduled daily, weather permitting. During the winter months, outdoor schedules are planned with limited time frames along with time to play inside in a gross motor capacity. All children will go outside unless the temperature is below 32 degrees. In the heat of the summer, playground times are scheduled for early mornings. Children do not go outside if the temperature is above 90 degrees. Children who are too ill to go outside, are too ill to be in childcare.

### What to wear to Kids Academy

Think of your child's comfort and provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Think of the messy art materials and other messy activities and provide clothing that is washable. Think of our playground and provide clothing that is durable and shoes that are sturdy, that he/she can run and play in. Think of the day ahead, does your child need a sweater or jacket, hat possibly? At Kids Academy we provide many opportunities for hands-on learning where the children are fully involved in activities. We do have smocks and stuff to protect clothing, but these are not always 100% effective, and some children refuse to wear them due to sensory or personal preference.

### Extra Clothing

Water activities, sensory play, and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate an extra set of clothing to be always kept at our facility. Each child has a cubby where these can be kept. All extra clothing should be marked with the child's name. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes the next day. Kids Academy is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing or articles. Please also put names inside of your child's coats. Many times, children will arrive in the same jackets.

## Toys from Home

Except for days that the teacher has requested something be brought for curriculum purposes, there should be no toys brought inside of Kids Academy. If an item is brought to school, we CAN NOT guarantee that nothing will happen to it. NO GUNS or war toys are allowed under any circumstance.

## Toilet Learning and Diapering

Kids Academy will participate in developmentally appropriate programs to assist your child in learning to use the toilet. If you are unclear concerning this important issue, please feel free to speak with the teacher and/or administration regarding the philosophy used here at Kids Academy.

We consider toilet learning to be a “team-effort.” Additionally, when learning to use the toilet please provide pull ups and we would like to suggest side tear pull ups, for easy access, for the occasional accident, this will help make clean up easier for your child and teacher.

When your child is enrolled here at the Kids Academy, we ask that you inform our staff members of your child’s toilet habits and the likelihood of accidents. For infants, toddlers and two-year old children please provide us with disposable diapers (unless allergic to synthetics) and extra changes of clothing, marked with the child’s name.

## Birthday and Seasonal Celebrations

Kids Academy encourages birthday parties in the classroom. These parties will be held at 3 PM after the afternoon snack time. Low sugar foods are preferred but not required.

Seasonal celebrations take place at the Kids Academy throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to watch for a sign-up sheet located in the entry to bring special goodies and favors. As before, we do encourage low sugar foods.

## Fire and Severe Weather

We are monitored 24/7 for fire and carbon monoxide. We have written policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies. We schedule and carry out all monthly

emergency drills which are documented. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. In the unlikely event that Kids Academy is severely damaged and declared unsafe, plans are made in advance to evacuate all children to an emergency area designated by SHUMC. In the event we have to evacuate the premises completely, we will be walking to St. James Episcopal Church where we will remain until all clear is given to return, or until all children have been picked up by a parent or guardian.

In the event of a Tornado warning, while we are in operation, we do have a FEMA approved safe room located directly next door in our Ministry Center. If for some reason, we have to take shelter we will be staying inside the shelter until it is safe to exit, and all threat of severe weather has passed. There will be no children released at this time.

## Security

Security is provided by SHUMC, we have installed magnetic security doors with passcodes that allow entrance only to persons employed by Kids Academy or SHUMC. If you are here to pick up your child, please wait in the entry area for the desk attendant to retrieve your child. Children are under constant supervision; NO child will be released except to persons authorized by the enrolled parent. Safety is emphasized regularly in staff meetings and in every classroom.

## DHS Compliance File

Kids Academy is required by OK DHS Licensing to have a compliance file. This is in the entry at the desk. This file is for parents to view whenever they choose. This file is also available by visiting [www.okdhs.org](http://www.okdhs.org). It is comprised of:

- Child care licensing monitoring reports including most recent reports and licensing correspondence.
- Any Notice to Comply
- Licensing complaints
- Child Welfare Investigative Summary, with confirmed findings, for one year from completion of the investigation.

## Parent Signed Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read the most current and revised Parent Handbook and I am fully aware of the educational and behavior and guidance philosophy and all other policies as set forth in this handbook. I have read and understood the fee arrangements and conditions detailed in this handbook. I agree with such conditions and will abide by the same.

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Parent or Legal Guardian

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Child's Full Name

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Date

Please remove this agreement and return it to the Kids Academy Administration to be kept in your child's enrollment record.