

Kids Come First Learning Center Parent Handbook



Parent Handbook

Kids Come First Learning Center, Inc.
9861 Old National Pike
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Nondiscrimination Statement:

Kids Come First Learning Center admits students of any race, gender, family structure, religion, color, or national / ethnic origin.

Our Philosophy of Education:

Kids Come First Learning Center provides a structured but relaxed learning environment where a preschooler can grow emotionally, socially, and intellectually at the child's own pace. Our goal is to provide a safe, positive atmosphere nurtured by people that care. Our staff has experience in early childhood and continues to develop through on-going training. We have a creative program that exposes your child to the wonderful world of learning. The curriculum has a developmentally appropriate balance of play and structured activities. With continued assessment and communication between staff and families, it allows us to evaluate and continually make improvements to our program. The experience at Kids Come First will foster the growth of the "complete" child through learning and love.

Licensing:

Kids Come First Learning is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education as a non-public educational organization.

Accreditation:

Kids Come First is currently going through the process to become accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Registration Policy:

First preference of enrollment during the month of January will be given to:

- Children currently attending KCF
- Siblings of families already attending KCF
- Alumni

All additional openings will be made available to the public in February.

The \$75.00 fee is non-refundable.

All completed forms, including medical must be on file before the child may start school. Children must be potty-trained before starting school. (Except 2's)

Tuition and Fees:

- Tuition is charged on an annual basis. This tuition may be paid in full or in nine equal payments. The first payment is due June 1st and then additional payments are due September 1st-May 1st, unless arrangements have been made with the director. A parent agreement is included in the registration packet giving the financial details.
- Tuition is to be paid in full regardless of a child's absences, holidays, and/or inclement weather.
- All payments must be made by check, money order, or cash. Checks should be made payable to Kids Come First Learning
- Tuition checks may be mailed to 13244 Jesse Smith Road Mt. Airy, MD 21771, or paid directly at the school.
- A late fee of \$30.00 will be charged for any payments made after the 5th of the month.
- Payments returned by the bank for insufficient funds, stop payments, etc. will be charged the current bank fee. Continuous problems will result in payment of cash being requested.

Arrival and Departure Procedures:

- Your child should arrive on time to school to avoid upsetting the routine of the class.
- For the safety of all children please drive slowly in the parking lot. Please have a hand on your child at all times.
- When dropping your child off for school, children must be escorted into their classroom. Children will not be allowed into the classroom before the start of class.
- Pickup is expected promptly at the end of class. If a parent is consistently late for pickup the teacher will give a reminder, if the problem continues the director will speak with the parent to resolve the problem. If the problem continues to arise, the possibility of withdrawal from the program is possible.
- If your child is going to be pick up by someone other than the parent/guardian or person named on the emergency card, please send in a note, and let the person know they will need to show Identification.
- Parent or designated caregiver must sign their child in each class day. This is a new regulation mandated by the state.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect Procedures:

The staff of KCF is required by state law to report any suspected child abuse to protective services. It is against the law for educational members to not file a report.

Emergency Preparedness Plan:

In accordance with our licensing agent and the Fire Marshall, we are required to conduct monthly fire drills, and two non-emergency evacuation drills per year.

Kids Come First has posted on our website, our emergency preparedness plan for parents to review.

Behavior Guidance Policy:

Kids Come First Learning Center approaches the area of Behavior Guidance with a positive attitude. At Kids Come First, we believe that the majority of challenging behaviors can be prevented with our well organized, developmentally appropriate program, which is truly interested in nurturing the lives of the children in our care. We view Behavior Guidance as a means of helping the children learn to control their own behavior and to act in an appropriate manner. It is our philosophy that “to be successful in teaching children positive, non-violent behaviors, adults need to take action based on what children are capable of understanding and doing at different ages and stages of development”. (ACT, 2005) Therefore our Behavior Guidance policy is based around research on positive child development.

Our staff includes the following Behavior Guidance guidelines, in their classroom, to promote a positive atmosphere nurturing the “complete” child. It is our hope, that by sharing this information with parents, they will find it helpful in creating a positive behavior guidance plan that is consistent with home and school.

Because Children are always learning, they will misbehave, therefore:

- Have rules that are age appropriate, and are put into action.
- Make sure that children know your expectations, with respect to the rules.
- Give warnings and reminders, telling the child what to do rather than what not to do.
- Follow through with praise for following the rules and consequences for not.
- Have consistent consequences for misbehaving.
- Set reasonable limits
- Teach children to STOP and THINK about ways to solve a problem.
- Adults must model good behavior.

It is our belief that “The best way to get young children to behave well is to start with a positive relationship”. (ACT, 2005) Therefore, the goal at Kids Come First is developing a positive relationship with the children and families we serve.

“Discipline at the Childcare Center & School” Retrieved Dec. 31.2009 from <http://actagainstviolence.apa.org/discipline/atschool.html>

“Discipline at Home” Retrieved Dec. 31, 2009 from <http://actagainstviolence.apa.org/discipline/athome.html>

Marion, M. (2007). *Guidance of young children* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Snow/Inclement Weather policy:

Kids Come First will follow Frederick County Public Schools as much as possible for snow or weather related delays or early dismissal. If FCPS is closed Kids Come First is closed. If a one hour delay is announced, the school will open up one hour late but dismissal times will not change. If there is a two hour delay announced, morning classes will run from 11-12:30 and afternoon classes from 1-2:30. Information about FCPS closings can be found on Public Television channel 18, fcps.org, or by listening to your local radio station. An e-mail will be sent out to all parents and a message will be on the school voice mail.

KCF will make up snow days accordingly:

4/5 day classes- after 5 days

3 day classes- after 4 days

2 days classes- after 3 days

Allergies:

Please make sure your child's teacher and the director are aware of any food allergies your child may have. KCF will make every effort to accommodate your child's needs; however in some circumstances it will be necessary for the parent to provide a daily snack for your child.

Nut Free Facility:

To ensure the safety of all children with dangerous nut allergies, KCF makes every effort to ensure our classrooms are free of nut products. KCF trains staff to evaluate labels and asks parents to avoid bringing in items that either contain nut products or have been manufactured in a facility with nut products.

Outdoor Play:

Please send your child to school properly dressed to play outdoors. Unless it is extremely cold, windy, raining, or snowing we will plan to go outside. Please label your child's clothing (hat, jacket, sweater, mittens etc.).

Appropriate Clothing:

Please send your child to school in “play clothes”, and closed toed shoes. Please try to avoid buckles, suspenders, belts, one piece outfits, or tights. We encourage children to be self-sufficient and these items of clothing make it difficult.

Snacks:

Each parent will be asked to provide snack for their child’s class a few times during the school year. A snack calendar will be posted on the parent board along with a form of reminder. Parents are asked to follow our nut free policy.

Sick Policy:

All contagious diseases need to be reported to the school. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms of illness, he/she must be kept home.

- Fever
- Severe cough/Breathing problems
- Yellowish skin or eyes/Pinkeye
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Unusual spots or rash
- Infected sores
- Diarrhea
- Gray or white stool
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- Vomiting

You will be called to pick up your child, if they develop any of the above symptoms at school. (sick children will be separated from the class).

Permission to Photograph:

Throughout the school year parents may come into the classroom or participate in a Kids Come First activity in which they have taken pictures of another child at Kids Come First. It is understood by all parents and staff that these pictures may not be posted on an internet social site such as Face book or sent out as an e-mail without the parent’s permission

Parent Involvement

Families and schools are in partnership to help educate our children. It is important that we develop a working relationship for the well-being of the children. Kids Come First works hard to establish this relationship through open communication, collaboration and cooperation.

Visitation and Volunteers:

Kids Come First Learning Center has an open door policy. Parents are welcome to observe the class and staff at any time. Siblings are not allowed to observe as it can be disruptive to all. Volunteers are welcome and a sign-up sheet will be posted outside each classroom. Volunteers must have a release form filled out and notarized and have participated in an orientation training.

Fieldtrips:

Children will occasionally take fieldtrips. Notice will be given to parents far in advance and permission slips are required for attendance. Parents are encouraged to participate in fieldtrips as Kids Come First does not provide transportation.

Back to School Night:

The first week of school parents will be invited to a parent's meeting followed by visits to the classroom and a meet and greet with teachers. We politely ask for children not to attend this meeting as this is an informational meeting for parents.

Newsletters and Classroom Calendars:

Newsletters will be sent electronically each month. Teachers will also send their own "mini" newsletter to keep parents up to date on skills being taught in the classroom. Please inform the director if a newsletter or other materials need to be translated into your home language. Please be sure to read all newsletters so you are informed of all school happenings. Outside each classroom will be a calendar which gives parents a brief overview of what activities your child will be participating in for the week.

Lobby White Board:

Please be sure to read the white board in the lobby each day as it will contain up to date daily information.

Website/E-mail address:

Kids Come First has a website located at www.kidscomefirstlearning.com and an e-mail address of kidscomefirst@comcast.net

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parents will receive a written mid-year report from teachers in January. Conferences are not set at this time however; parents may request a conference at any time during the school year. End of the year conferences are held in May with an end of the year checklist and a portfolio of your child's work throughout the school year.

Program Evaluations:

Parents are given an opportunity to evaluate the school annually. It is a great opportunity for us to learn and for you to reflect. KCF encourages parents to take the time to complete the survey (anonymously if you choose) as it allows us to reflect on what we have done well and if necessary things that need to be changed.

Curriculum:

Kids Come First will be implementing the High Reach curriculum, a state approved curriculum for Preschools. This curriculum aligns with the state standards set forth in the Maryland Model for School Readiness. Parents will be provided with goals/objectives and an outline of units to be covered.

Birthdays:

The 4's and 5's classes have one big Birthday celebration for all, complete with birthday cake, presents and games. The children do not bring special snacks during the school year on their actual birthday, however they do get to sit in the special "Birthday Chair", and we do sing "Happy Birthday" to them.

The 2's and 3's bring a special birthday snack on their birthday or as close as we can post it on the calendar. We suggest cookies, brownies, ice cream cups, or muffins. Please no large cupcakes. Please remember that Kids Come First is a nut free facility, therefore most store bought bakery items are made in facilities with nuts and are not able to come into the building. (Please read label)

Classroom Parties and Programs: There will be various parties and programs throughout the school year. Please watch newsletters, wipe off board and sign-up sheets for information

Thank-you for sharing your children with us. Preschool is a child's first school experience, and together we can make it a positive experience for learning and growth.

Mrs. Bish/Director