Our Little Hands Early Learning Center



Parent Handbook 2023

Tuition Rates and fees

* Annual Registration Fee…………………………………$150.00 (per child)
* Annual Registration Fee……………………………….$175.00 (per family)
* Infants……………………………………………………………..$200.00 (weekly)
* Ones………………………………………………………………..$200.00 (weekly)
* Twos…………………………………………………………………$200.00 (weekly)
* Three’s…………………………………………………………….$200.00 (weekly)
* Four’s……………………………………………………………….$175.00 (weekly)
* Five’s……………………………………………………………….$175.00 (weekly)
* Special Needs…………………………………………………..$275.00 (weekly)
* Late Fee…………………………………………………………….$75.00

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center reserves the right to change our rates and fees at any time. A Thirty-day advance notice will be given.

## Welcome to Our Little Hands Early Learning Center!

Thanks for choosing us!

It is our commitment and goal to provide high-quality care for children in a safe, secure, and positive environment.

The vision of Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is to be the most sought out childcare center, for providing the highest quality of childcare services to children 6 weeks of age to five years old in Muscogee County. We will provide our parents with an exceptional experience from beginning to end. By doing so, we will maintain an environment that exceeds our families’ expectations and hire a professional, friendly staff that is knowledgeable and experienced in the childcare field.

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center strives to prepare children for a life of learning, through many enriching opportunities in developmental, social, educational, physical, and emotional.

We provide quality childcare within a developmentally appropriate program. We operate year-round, Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Center Director Ammie Lindsay

Director's Name Ammie Lindsay

Director's Email Ourlittlehands.elc@gmail.com

Address: 6125 Macon Rd Suite E

 Columbus, GA 31907

Introduction To Our Little Hands Early Learning center

OUR VISION

The vision of Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is to be the most sought out childcare center, for providing the highest quality of childcare services to children 6 weeks of age to five years old in Muscogee County. We will provide our parents with an exceptional experience from beginning to end. By doing so, we will maintain an environment that exceeds our families’ expectations and hire a professional, friendly staff that is knowledgeable and experienced in the childcare field.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide the highest quality of care and education for young children in Muscogee County. Our role is to encourage and support each child in all areas of development, therefore creating a positive self-image and realistic opportunity for success. By maintaining our Quality Rated Accreditation, it provides the framework for us to remain a highly qualified childcare facility in Muscogee County.

OUR PHILOSPHY & GOALS

Each child is a unique and valuable treasure. At Our Little Hands Early Learning Center, our experienced staff provides the opportunity for children to grow, to learn, and to realize their fullest potential. Each child is accepted as a very special individual having a unique timetable for growing and learning. We believe that children should be provided with an environment in which they can explore, wonder, create, investigate, ask questions, and enjoy the world in which they live. The cognitive, emotional, physical, and social potential of your child will fulfill your fondest hopes. Our staff consists of warm, kind, caring individuals who are committed to your child’s superior growth.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center affords equal opportunity to all employees and prospective families regardless of family structure, socioeconomic status, race, religion, cultural backgrounds; gender, abilities; or preferred language are invited to be included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities.

Remember we are here to assist you in the care of your child so that you can attend to your workday with comfort and security knowing your child is being nurtured, developmentally challenged, and enjoying the companionship of friends in a safe and loving environment.

Thank you for allowing Our Little Hands Early Learning Center to serve your family!!

## Insurance

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center does not carry liability insurance coverage sufficient to protect your child(ren) in the event of any injury, etc.

## Our Little Hands Early Learning Center’s Staff

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center strives to recruit dedicated, caring Professionals who support our philosophy and program. All staff must meet the requirements for certification as childcare providers in a group setting, and must participate in ongoing staff development programs, classroom meetings, and outside continuing education seminars.

All staff members must provide a criminal history record/background check in order to be cleared through licensing.

Our Center has a Director and/ Two Assistant Director’s available to assist children, teachers, and parents at any time. Our Little Hands Early Learning Center meets or exceeds State-required child/staff ratios in all classrooms. All staff members are trained in pediatric CPR and First Aid soon after they are hired.

Compliments, comments, or concerns relating to Teachers should, if possible, be addressed directly to the Teacher. The Center Director should also be informed regarding staff performance, both positive and negative. Parents are encouraged to visit and actively participate in their child’s classroom.

## Our Curriculum

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center has chosen Fun Shine Express, along with GELDS for all children who are enrolled, an award-winning, research–supported curriculum to use in your child’s classroom. Each Learning Scope and Sequence” model for full- day care, providing visual, auditory, tactile, fine/gross motor skills, emotional, social, and intellectual stimulation. The program promotes STEM, creativity, family involvement, and development of the whole child. Daily experiences capture and support the learning of important skills and concepts.

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center strives to reach a balance between “academic” structure and creative social interaction. A mix of quiet and active play takes into account that the children are participating in group activities all day.

The goal of the program is to encourage children to make simple and appropriate choices emphasizing planning, working, and evaluating which establishes personal responsibility. The teacher’s questions and suggestions set the stage for key experiences that stimulate the child’s thinking processes, language development, and social development. For further information about the curriculum, check out [WWW.Funshineexpress.com](http://WWW.Funshineexpress.com).

Every classroom room daily schedule consists of circle time, artwork, outside time, music and movement, and so much more. We take pride in learning and our belief is to get all children Kindergarten ready. Ages 3-5 will be given homework folders every Monday. All homework must be completed and turned in every Friday. Weekly lesson plans are posted inside each classroom. If you have any questions about the curriculum, you can ask your child’s teacher, or the director.

We track each child’s progress and development. Quarterly progress reports will be given to each child. Open house is every October, where you meet your child’s teacher, and we discuss our plans for the school year. Parent teacher conferences are available upon request.

## Hours of Operation

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is open between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We ask that children arrive by 10:00 a.m. so that they may have a smooth transition into the day’s activities. No morning breakfast will be served to children arriving later than 8:30 a.m. If your child is arriving late due to a doctor’s appointment, please call the center and give his/her approximate time of arrival, children will not be admitted during nap time 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m., we highly recommend that parents schedule doctor’s appointment during the early morning hours so that the child can return to school by 11:30 a.m. No child may be at the Center prior to opening time or after closing time, and children can ONLY be at the center for a maximum of 10 hours per day. No child will be admitted after 10:00 a.m. without a doctor’s note. No child may enter during naptime regardless of a doctor’s note. If a child has a doctor’s note they may come to daycare before or after naptime.

*NOTE: If a child is administered shots during a doctor’s visit, the child may NOT return to school due to potential complications from the shot and/or fever-like symptoms associated with the medicine that could cause the child to be irritated and uncomfortable.*

Visitation

Parents/guardians have the right to access our facility anytime your child is in our care, however, you must make your presence immediately known to the center director. All other persons who wish to access our facility must check in at the front office and receive a visitors pass before they are allowed to access the facility, photo ID is required. Parents are invited to review The Rules and Regulations from Bright From The Start. The rules are in the white binder up front. Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns and questions with the director.

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is closed on the following holidays/training days\*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| January 1, 2024 | New Year’s Day |
| January 15, 2024 | MLK |
| February 2024 (TBA) | Teacher planning day |
| February 19, 2024 | President’s Day |
| March 29, 2024 | Good Friday |
| May 27, 2024 | Memorial Day |
| June 19, 2024 | Juneteenth |
| July 1-5 2024 | 4th of July/Staff summer break |
| September 2, 2024 | Labor Day |
| October 2024 (TBA)  | Teacher planning day |
| October 14, 2024 | Columbus Day |
| November 11, 2024 | Veterans Day |
| November 27-29 2024 | Thanksgiving Break |
| December 24-26 2024 | Christmas Break |
| December 31, 2024 | New Years Eve |
| January 1, 2025 | New Years Day  |

Closing dates are subject to change, and a thirty (30) day notice will be given. Please note that if a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday the center may be closed on the following Monday. Please remember to always read the weekly newsletter, and memos.

## About Religious Holidays

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is not a religious school, therefore; we do not single out any one holiday to celebrate, to respect the differences of our various community religious practices.

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center does celebrate the different cultures represented at Our Little Hands Early Learning Center. Please feel welcome to bring in special foods, traditions, etc., to help us celebrate and teach our children about other cultural traditions. Let us know if there are other traditional festivals that you celebrate so the Center can participate in observing them with your child. Our annual Multicultural week is held in March.

Teachers participate in two professional development-training days during the year. Dates will be announced as much in advance as possible. The center is closed for teachers’ participation and all training activities. Tuition is not discounted or refunded for these training days.

## Inclement/Emergency Closings

The first concern for deciding to close the center operations is for the safety of our children, parents, and staff. IF MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSYTEM CLOSES, OR DELAY SCHOOL OUR FACILITY WILL FOLLOW.

Sometimes Our Little Hands Early Learning Center must close because of emergencies or inclement weather. If you are not sure about the closing of the center, please check the Bright-wheel app, or Facebook page for updates. Tuition fees are still due during emergencies and/or inclement weather closings. Refunds or credits will not be given.

When severe weather watch and safety threats are announced, immediate emergency procedures are adhered to for safety of the children, while at the facility. Emergency plans have been developed and are posted for parent viewing.

Fire Dills and Tornado Drills are conducted once a month.

## Birthdays and Celebrations

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center celebrates birthdays and other parties in the child’s classroom during afternoon snack. The party must be planned and approved by your child’s teacher and the Director. Please fill out a birthday request form and submit it to the teacher no later than 7 days prior to the party. Please pay close attention to the healthy food’s guidelines for parties. Birthday celebrations are from 2:45 p.m.-3:45 p.m. only.

## Positive Guidance

We use positive guidance, redirection, and encouragement, for example:

“It works best if…” instead of “Don’t do it that way.”

“You can do it….” “You did that well.”

When people hear demands, they react by resisting, no matter what their age. Adults often call this behavior in children “not listening.” Instead of demanding, we frame all requirements as requests or suggestions:

“Wouldn’t that work better if….”

“How about trying it another way….” “Let’s think about what will work…” “Would you help us clean up…?” “We need you!”

“Why don’t you and (friend) try doing this another way…?”

Just as we don’t have “bad” children, we do not have “bad” behaviors! Sometimes behaviors “work” or “don’t work”; when a child’s behavior does not work, there are consequences. Make sure the child understands the consequences, but do not use the consequence as a threat: “if you can’t stop running, you will have to take a seat for five minutes and read a book”. We give children choices and leave it up to them. Making choices empowers them! Choosing behaviors that work gets recognition and encouragement; behaviors that don’t work have other consequences.

A consequence may be a rest period away from the activity or withdrawal from the Center. Consequences are not punishments. Consequences flow naturally from choices. We want children to learn to choose for themselves to do what “works” because they see that it really works, not just to avoid being “bad” or to be “good.”

* Teachers will redirect the child(ren) to another activity.
* The teacher will give the child(ren) his/her undivided attention to try to discuss the matter.
* Disciplinary steps. A written letter of notification will be sent home to the parents informing them of the incident. A second written notice and a conference with the parents via telephone or in person will be conducted. After 3 referrals your child will be dismissed.
* Children who are hurting themselves or others and/or chronically disruptive to the extent that they are not benefiting from the program may be dismissed from the center.

# Parent’s Roles

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center believes that the parent is the child’s first teacher; therefore, we respect the parent’s role and influence they have. We strive to work in partnership with home by strongly encouraging parental involvement in our center. Daily communication is most important to both parents and teachers. If you don't have time to speak with the teacher or director, please send an email or drop a note in the suggestion box. We encourage all parents to sign up to become a classroom mom, and help us with events, parties, etc.

## Open-Door Policy

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center always has an open-door policy.

Parents may visit the Center and child’s classroom at any time, to observe, evaluate and assist! Parent volunteers are especially welcome on field trips!

Parents may call the Center during the day to ask how their child is doing, but please remember that teachers are busy in the classrooms. The Director will check on the child and report back. Teachers are available to speak directly with parents from 12:30-1:30 p.m. daily. We prefer you contact your child’s teacher through the Bright-wheel app.

Parents are encouraged to attend Back to School Night held in October. This is an opportunity to meet your child’s Teachers at the beginning of each new school year. Special programming at Back to the School Night gives parents a chance to experience their child’s day! Progress reports will be given out, and light refreshments will be served.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will occur twice a year. These are “progress reports” for both parent and teacher to discuss your child’s developmental progress, and any other situations regarding your child. Again, this is a good opportunity to develop a working relationship with your child’s teacher.

## Parent’s Responsibilities

Parents are responsible that any changes in address, phone number, etc. is updated in our records. Someone 18 years or older escort your child to and from the facility. You are responsible for making sure payment is received on the due date. You are responsible for making sure your child has all the items needed for the day. You are responsible for completing and submitting all required paperwork. Failure to comply with the following rules may result in temporary or permanent termination of childcare services.

Parents are responsible for dressing children appropriately for the season and weather. Our Little Hands Early Learning Center will make sure all children are comfortably dressed at all times, and in particular, dressed warmly during cold weather when outside.

Coats, hats, and mittens will be put on children before going out in cold weather, however, children sometimes discard heavier clothing as they play and get overheated. Teachers supervising children outdoors will make every effort to make sure children are appropriately dressed at all times. All personal clothing must be clearly labeled to avoid loss.

Teachers are not responsible for identifying clothing that is not labeled.

Children grow rapidly, and clothing provided at the time of enrollment may soon be outgrown. Please provide current sizes as necessary. The following items of clothing should be at the Center for your child’s use: undershirt, shirt, underpants, pants or shorts, socks, shoes.

These additional clothing items should be labeled and brought in when indicated by staff or indicated on the calendar:

Bathing suit, towel, sandals

Raingear

Extra hat and mittens

Children go outside during the winter unless the temperature is below 30º F. The Center Director determines whether children and staff will have outdoor play. The Office of Childcare requires that all children are to go outside unless directed by a doctor.

The following personal items are also required and must be labeled:

cot sheets - crib size only

Light cover - crib size only

These items, which are used during nap/rest times, will be sent home weekly on Friday for washing; please return them each Monday morning.

Due to sanitary precautions, pacifiers and/or bottles are not allowed in classrooms other than the infant rooms. Sleeping bags or pillows are also not allowed.

Please note: If your child does not have a clean cot sheet, light cover, and an extra change of clothing, you will be asked to bring in required items or pick up your child immediately. Failure to do so will result in a charge of $15.00. This charge will be used to purchase a cot cover for your child.

## Custody Concerns

In the case of families where parental custody is an issue, the Center must retain on file a notarized copy of any court-ordered custody settlement and/or visitation agreement for either parent. Should any changes occur in the status of custody or visitation, a copy of the new agreement or court order must be provided to the Center for the file. It is the custodial parent’s responsibility to provide this information to the Center. Non-custodial parents coming to pick up their child according to a visitation agreement must produce a photo I.D. Non-family members cannot pick up children unless written permission from the parent is on file.

Please remember that your child needs to feel secure and comfortable at the Center, particularly when home life has been disrupted. Please do not make the Center the drop-off or exchange site.

## Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedures and Bright-Wheel Management System

Your child must be signed in and out of the center by using our computerized childcare system, “Bright wheel.” Each child is assigned a child identification number (CIN). Parents must enter this CIN into the keypad daily to admit and pick-up their child. The parent, guardian or a designated adult are the only ones allowed to pick up your child. They must accompany your child to and from their classrooms. If you have information for your child’s teacher, you are encouraged to write it in the Bright Wheel App.

Your child will not be released to a person not previously authorized by a parent to pick up a child. We must have written or verbal authorization for changes, and if the parent has not notified us of the change, the child will not be released until we have spoken with the parent and received proper authorization. In addition to the above authorization, picture identification must be shown to the center staff for safe release of a child.

If your child is brought to or picked up from the Center by a private bus, transport service, school bus or taxi service, friend or relative, the person responsible for bringing your child must walk your child into or out of the building and classroom and sign your child in or out through our Bright Wheel System. Please give them your access code.

## Diapers and Toilet Training

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center accepts children in diapers and cooperates with parents when toilet training begins. Parents should involve the staff in the decision to begin toilet training. Since children spend most of their day at the Center, staff may have some concerns and suggestions as to readiness and the method of training to be used.

It is important that toilet training be a pleasant, non-stressful, successful experience for the child, parent(s), and staff. Our Little Hands Early Learning Center will provide your child with All-inclusive diapers and wipes through our Cuties Program.

## Toilet Training

When you or your child’s primary caregiver see signs of readiness for toilet training, we will discuss the subject and agree on a mutually acceptable time to begin. It is our experience and belief that training usually proceeds smoothly for most children if not started too soon and if treated lightly. Accidents are part of the process and will be handled casually. Please be sure during this process that your child has plenty of extra pull-ups, training pants, clothes, socks, etc.

## Personal Objects Policy

Children may not bring toys or other special items from home unless it is specifically for a “Show and Tell Day.” Toys from home create tensions when owners are unable to share, and/or toys become lost or broken. On “Show and Tell Day “Special items will be stored in your child’s cubby or with the teacher until your child leaves. We are not responsible for any personal toys, or special items brought into the center unless it’s show and tell day.

## Biting Policy

Children often bite, particularly prior to developing large vocabulary skills. The frustration of not being understood or of being provoked by another child often manifests itself in aggressive behaviors – especially in children under the age of three.

Because of health and safety concerns, children who bite will remain in the classroom, but separated from the group for a short period of time immediately after the biting incident. Parents of both children (the biter and the one bitten) will be notified. Teachers will observe the child(ren) involved closely and will implement developmentally - appropriate practices to redirect aggressive behaviors. If three incidents do occur within a short period of time, the child may be terminated at the discretion of the Center Director. Parents will be notified of all incidents and will be given every opportunity to work with the teachers and Center Director to prevent other biting incidents.

## Discipline Policy

Our primary responsibility is always the health and safety of the children and staff at the center. Staff members will use positive methods of discipline, which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-reliance, self-esteem, and cooperation.

This policy applies to all children enrolled at Our Little Hands Early Learning Center.

 Children’s feelings about themselves and their self-worth are a reflection of adults’ expectations, attitudes, feelings, and behavior toward children. Teachers must provide a caring, supportive, structured environment, allowing children some responsibility for the daily program with established boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable social behavior.

No child may hit or harm another child intentionally or not. Incidents of repeated biting or hitting by children will be discussed with parents. Parents will be notified if their child has been injured and will be given a copy of a written Incident Report, copies of which will also be kept on file at the Center.

Classroom policies regarding behavior will be developmentally appropriate for each age group. Children unable to meet all classroom behavioral objectives will be encouraged to meet as many as possible with continued encouragement and support from the teachers.

Negative behavior will be noted and discouraged using various techniques appropriate to the developmental and social needs of the child and group. These techniques may include but are not limited to the following: verbal signals, forms of time out, removal of the child from certain activity areas, loss of privileges, and in the most extreme cases, removal to the Director’s office for immediate pick-up.

Parents will be informed at all times of any behaviors that persist or are detrimental to the child or group. Parents and teachers may initiate conferences at any time to discuss concerns. Parents should view these conferences as opportunities for concerned, caring, supportive dialogue.

Enrollment at Our Little Hands Early Learning Center may be suspended or terminated at the request of the Director due to continued inappropriate or negative behavior by the child. Persistent negative behavior may indicate a child is unable to adjust to the program and/or is developmentally unready to accept responsibility for behavior. Every attempt will be made to prevent termination. However, in some instances, it may be the only recourse.

No staff member may discipline a child by slapping, hitting, or spanking, or using abusive language. Any staff member who violates this policy is subject to immediate dismissal. Our goal is positive reinforcement of positive behavior.

## Illness, Accidents, Emergency Care, Sick Child Policy

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is not licensed or responsible for the care of sick children.

Children in this age group are highly susceptible to illness and infection. Please be considerate of other children, teachers, and most importantly, your own child’s need to recover completely before returning him/her to the Center.

If your child becomes ill during the day with a fever of 101 degrees or higher, or appears ill upon arrival, you will be required to pick him/her up immediately. If you are unable to pick up your child within one hour, the next person on the Emergency Contact Form will be called. Emergency cards must be kept current with current phone numbers and emergency contacts. Your child will be taken to the Director’s office where a cot is available for resting, pending a parent’s arrival.

## Common Indicators of Illness

Green, runny mucus from the nose, ears, or eyes, is generally a common indicator of infection. If your child is congested, coughing, and generally not feeling well, he/she will not benefit from being at the Center. We realize that children may retain a “runny nose” longer than the actual virus. Please take into consideration your child’s general condition before bringing or returning him/her to the Center. The child may not return without a physician’s note.

Vomiting may or may not be illness related. Please note your child’s general condition, and if there are two or more episodes of vomiting in a one-hour period, a “stomach virus” or influenza (“flu”) may be present. We require that you keep your child home for 24 hours after the last episode. If a child vomits once at the Center, parents will be called to pick up their child immediately. After having Diarrhea twice, you will be called to pick-up within one hour. Help avoid the unnecessary spread of infection by keeping your child home for 24 hours after the last episode.

If a child develops diarrhea at the Center (2 runny stools especially within a one-hour period), parents will be called to pick up their child immediately. Ear infections are not contagious, but the virus or bacteria causing the inner ear blockage is infectious. We require that you keep your child home for 24 hours after diagnosis to allow medication to take effect.

Pink eye is highly contagious to those encountering the infected person. Children diagnosed with pink eye must stay home for a full 24 hours (1 full day) after diagnosis to allow medication to take effect.

If a child has been diagnosed with the “Hand, Foot and Mouth” virus, we ask parents to keep their child out for 3 days. This is a common virus similar to the chickenpox virus for young children.

Please give your child prescribed medication as indicated until finished. Please remember we do not administer medication.

Our goal is to avoid a series of needless infections that may be caused by allowing a sick child to remain at the Center. We are aware that a sick child can pose many concerns and problems for working parents, and we may be able to offer suggestions for alternative care in an emergency.

Please note that tuition is not refunded/discounted if your child is absent due to illness.

## Readmission After Illness

THERE MUST BE NO VISIBLE SIGNS OF SICKNESS WHEN YOUR CHILD RETURNS TO THE CENTER.

Return after absence due to illness requires a physician’s note in order for the child to return indicating your child is free of illness or is taking medication and is able to participate in the program’s activities.

Children may not return until free of vomiting/diarrhea/fever for a 24-hour period or have been on prescribed medication for a 24-hour period.

If your child is not attending due to illness, please call the Center to let them know your child will not be at the Center that day. Children will not be admitted after a doctor’s appointment during nap time between 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.

## Medication

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center does not administer medication for any reason. If your child is prescribed medication, you are responsible for administering the medication. You can come to the center at any time and administer medication. Our Little Hands Early Learning Center does not store medication. If you administer medication, you must take it home with you. All medications must remain at home, or with parents and cannot be stored in backpacks.

## Emergency Care Procedures

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center provides trained, conscientious, and safety-conscious teachers to always supervise your child. However, children in a group care setting are exposed to minor injuries such as bumps, scrapes, bruises, and bites. Our Little Hands Early Learning Center will attempt to prevent such injuries by always providing safe, developmentally appropriate equipment and play areas and by always supervising the children.

Should an accident occur, involving head, tooth, eye, back or bone injury, teachers will provide appropriate emergency care, call 911 and the child will be taken immediately to the nearest emergency room by ambulance, accompanied by the teacher or Director. The cost of ambulance service will be the responsibility of the parents. Each parent will get a copy of the emergency preparedness plan at the time of enrollment.

The Director or designated staff member will contact the parents immediately. We will make every attempt to take the child to the hospital of choice as noted on the Emergency Card. Parents are responsible for contacting the child’s pediatrician or other health provider.

Authorization to treat a Minor Form

Parents must complete and notarize the “Authorization to treat a Minor” form provided at enrollment to guarantee treatment in an emergency. If a notarized Authorization Form is not in the Center’s file, it is possible that a hospital will refuse treatment until a parent authorizes treatment.

## Special COVID-19 Supplement

Because of the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, Our Little Hands Early Learning Center has had to institute new practices and procedures to keep your children and our staff members safe, and we respectfully request your cooperation with the following:

Practice daily self-screening of both you and your child(ren)

Take your child’s temperature. Per guidance from the CDC, if it is 100.4 degrees or more, please do not bring him or her in.

Also, watch for the following symptoms:

Dry cough

Fever

Trouble breathing

Constant pain/pressure in chest

Bluish lips or face

Sudden confusion

Loss of smell or taste

Loss of feeling in toe

If any of those are present, you should NOT bring them to the Center. Instead you should seek medical attention as soon as possible. If your child starts to develop any of these symptoms during the day, we will notify you immediately.

Practice social distancing: keep at least six (6) feet between you and other people when you arrive to drop off or pick up your child. We will make it a point to bring in only one child or children from one family at a time into the Center.

Follow the government If you find that you or your child(ren) are experiencing any of the above symptoms, please make recommendations for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In particular, we ask that you wear a face mask when coming to pick up or drop off your child.

For the safety of all involved, please heed the directives of the CDC regarding washing hands or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol frequently. Also, if you cough or sneeze, do so into the crook of your elbow or a handkerchief or tissue.

Out of deference to individual preferences and the varying opinions about child vaccination, we are strongly recommending but not requiring vaccination for the children in our care.

If you have any questions about practices or procedures, please feel free to call us at 706-507-1873 or ask a member of our staff when you are at the Center.

# FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

After the previous requirements have been met, Our Little Hands Early Learning Center registration is based on a first come, first served basis.

An annual registration fee is payable when you enroll a child and is due each succeeding year in August. If the child is taken out and you plan for his or her return, the registration fee is to be paid at the time of re-registration. All registration fees must accompany the registration package prior to enrollment. Tuition and other fees must be current prior to the child’s enrollment in the center for the new school year. Your childcare services will be interrupted if tuition and other fees are not paid in a timely manner.

All fees must be paid whether the child is present or not as well as holidays, sick days, and vacations. Please be mindful that you are paying to secure the slot.

Tuition is due by the first day of enrollment and payable on Mondays for the week ahead. Invoices are sent out every Friday.

All payments are processed only through our automatic Tuition Express Program. We do not accept money orders or checks. You can pay cash to Ms. Ammie or Ms. Naya. You must have exact amount because we don’t carry change.

There will be a $35.00 charge for returned credit card payments or bad checks. Please give the office 48-hour notice prior to Friday, if a credit card or checking account information needs to be switched out. All tuition paid after 6:00p.m on Monday will receive a $75.00 late fee.

## Fee Structure and Payment Plan

In order to either place your child on a waiting list or to reserve your child’s place in a classroom, you must pay the registration fee to hold your child’s slot. This deposit guarantees placement within a one-to-two-month time frame depending on classroom availability.

Tuition is due every Monday by 6:00 p.m. A late fee of $75.00 will be charged if your week’s tuition is not paid by the due date and time as required in the enrollment agreement. The due date for tuition is Friday. Your grace period is Monday by 6:00 p.m. If the Center has not received your tuition by the due date and time, your childcare will be terminated until you pay the amount due including the $75.00 late fee. The Center also reserves the right to terminate your child’s enrollment for non-payment. If Our Little Hands Early Learning Center must take collection action to collect unpaid fees, you will be responsible for all accrued late charges until the date collected, and for reasonable collection costs, including attorney's fees.

Parents will be notified of any tuition increase at least 30 days and no more than 3 months in advance.

Tuition does include the following:

Required instructional materials for Infant-five-year-olds (Fun Shine Express), Diaper/Wipes, Milk, Hot/Cold breakfast, Hot Lunch, and Afternoon snack.

(Food will be provided to infants whenever they start eating table food.)

Tuition does not include the following:

Field trip fees and bus transportation.

Optional enrichment programs offered through Our Little Hands Early Learning Center. (Yoga, Spanish, Science, Dance). These programs are coming soon.

There are no refunds or discounts made on tuition for absences of any kind, including those due to illness, holidays, vacation, snow days or Center closings as listed in this Parent Handbook. The registration fee to hold a slot is nonrefundable.

Parents who choose to pay monthly tuition receive a 3% discount off the total tuition of one or more children. All tuition must be paid prior to services being rendered.

## Withdrawal/Dismissal Procedures

You must give the Center Director at least two weeks’ notice in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from the Center. If you do not give such notice, you will still be responsible for your entire last two weeks’ tuition.

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## Enrollment Agreement Forms

Please review and ask any questions at the time of enrollment. You are responsible for any part of the enrollment agreement which you have signed and agreed to, including Health Inventory, Immunization Record, Emergency Card Information, Authorization to Treat a Minor, Current Address and Phone Numbers for Home and Business, Emergency Contact Form, Custody or Visitation Agreements, Field Trip Permission Forms, and all Financial Responsibilities.

## Late Pick-Up Policy

If you are running late, you must call the center (706-507-1873) and let us know you will be arriving late. If your child is picked up after the scheduled closing time of 5:30 p.m., you will owe a late fee of $15.00 for the first minute and $1.00 for each additional minute. These late pick-up penalties must be paid immediately to the staff attending to your child. If your child is picked up more than thirty (30) minutes late two (2) or more times in any fifteen (15)-day period, the Center will terminate your child's enrollment. After picking your child up late three (3) times regardless of reason you may be terminated. If you need services longer than 10 hours a day, there is a $50.00 per week fee for longer hours.

## Damage to Center Property

Parents are responsible for any damage to Center property or equipment caused by themselves or their child. Parents must reimburse the Center for the damage.

# Accident Reports

At Our Little Hands Early Learning Center supervision is highly enforced to help the prevention of accidents and injuries. However, accidents are sometimes inevitable when children are playing. If your child is involved in a mishap that requires any type of first aid, and the director feels you DO NOT need to be called, you will be notified with an Incident report when you pick up.

Daily Report Forms

 Teachers use the Bright Wheel parent app to keep daily records concerning your child’s activities and behaviors during the day. All parents are required to download the app. Please make sure you read the daily reports because you may need to bring something for the next business day.

Nap/Rest Time

Children one and older will sleep on a cot during nap time. Parents must provide a blanket for the child to use while laying on the mat. All blankets will be sent home on Fridays of each week or as needed to be washed. All blankets must be brought back clean every Monday. A disinfected will be used to clean the cot daily after naptime. NO CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENTER DURING NAPTIME.

* Early Naptime 6:30a.m-7:30a.m
* Afternoon Naptime 12:00p.m-2:00p.m.

Child Abuse

It is our policy to provide the most professional, positive, and safe environment for all children. Any act of neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse towards any child, regardless of their enrollment in the center, will not be tolerated and will be promptly reported to the authorities without notification. Any person wo has knowledge of this kind of behavior in the center should report it to the Director instantaneously.

Smoking

Our Little Hands Early Learning Center is a smoke free facility. There is no smoking allowed anywhere on our premises, which includes our parking lot. Persons caught smoking on the premises will be given notice and may be fined up to $500.00. All diaper bags or car seats with strong smoke, or marijuana odor, etc. will be asked to take the diaper bag and car seat home.

Social Media Policy/Recording Policy

It is the policy of Our Little Hands Early Learning Center to ensure the confidentiality of our children, parents, and staff. In order to uphold this policy, we reserve the right to forbid any social networking using various mediums such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tick-Tok, email, etc without the express written consent of Our Little Hands Early Learning Center’s owner. All cell phones and electronic devise or forbidden from recording on our premises or inside of the building, especially the classrooms. Any person with information regarding violation of this policy should immediately contact the owner or director. Based on severity of the situation, the use of such medium could lead to the removal of your child’s enrollment, or termination of employment.

Clothing

Please do not let your child wear clothing that is too nice to play in. The children will participate in art activities, playing outside, learning how to feed themselves, playing in sand and water tables, etc. All children must wear tennis shoes daily due to safety reasons. Please don’t let your child wear jewelry, we are not responsible for any lost jewelry.

# Safe Sleep Practices

# It’s our policy to ALWAYS place babies on their backs during naps because SIDS is the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 12 months of age. Even though SIDS is the most common among infants that are 1-4 months old, babies can die from SIDS until they are 1 years old.

# Ga Immunization Record (GA 3231)

GA 3231, form must be turned in at the time of enrollment. All children enrolled must have a current shot record, or notarized exemption form at all times.

# Cut off time

The center has a strict cut off time, because children arriving late throws off our daily schedule. We have a strict routine during the day and it’s hard to keep children on our schedule when they are arriving at all times of the day. All children enrolled must be dropped off by 10:00 a.m. Children will only be allowed to enter the center if they have an appointment. You must notify the director if your child will be arriving late due to an appointment. You will need your doctor’s excuse to enter. We encourage everyone to schedule appointments early mornings, because regardless of an appointment no child can enter the facility during naptime (12:00-2:00) for any reason.

Food Services/ Meals and Snacks

Weekly menus, including meals and snacks will be posted in the lobby area. We encourage the children to try all the food that is placed on their plates. If your child has food allergies or does not eat certain foods due to religious beliefs, please speak to the director so that alternatives can be worked out. NO CHILD IS ALLOWED TO BRING OUTSIDE FOOD INTO THE BUILDING FOR A MISSED MEAL. IT’S UNFAIR, AND AGAINST HEALTH CODES. IF YOUR CHILD BRING IN A DONUT, HAPPY MEAL, OR SIPPY CUP, ETC YOU WILL BE ASKED TO WAIT IN YOUR CAR UNTIL YOUR CHILD FINISHES THEIR MEAL.

WE SERVE BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND SNACK AT THE FOLLOWNG TIMES.

* BREAKFAST 7:30 A.M. – 8:30 A.M.
* LUNCH 11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M
* SNACK 2:30 P.M - 3:30 P.M

Breakfast ends at 8:30 a.m., so if you will be arriving after 8:30 a.m. please make sure you feed your child. Breakfast and lunch run for one hour each so please be on time. If your child has a scheduled appointment, please call the director by 9:30 a.m. so we can include your child in the lunch count.

Confidentiality Agreement

To provide a professional and safe environment for every child, we take confidentiality seriously. It is our policy to prevent any type of gossip or discussion of any child, family, or staff member regarding confidential matters, such as personal, medical, or behavioral information with another parent or staff member. Participation in discussion on these matters will not be tolerated, regardless of severity. Any person having knowledge of such actions should report to management immediately, and termination will be the next step.