



# Parent Handbook

TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF WONDER

*“I sincerely believe that for the child and for the (adult) seeking to guide him, it is not half so important to ‘know’ as to feel. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. The years of early childhood are the time to prepare this soil. Once the emotions have been aroused - a sense of the beautiful, the excitement of the new and the unknown, a feeling of sympathy, pity, admiration or love - then we wish for knowledge about the object of our emotional response. Once found, it has lasting meaning. It is more important to pave the way for the child to want to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not yet ready to assimilate.”*

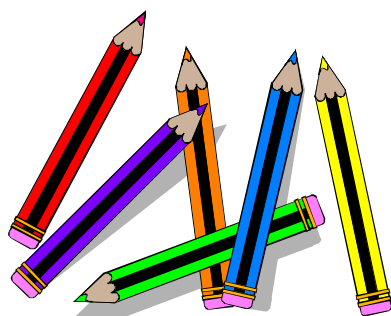
*From the “Sense of Wonder” by Rachel Carson*

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## WELCOME AND HIGHLIGHTS

### **ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS**

Academy Child Development Center, Inc. is a local, not-for-profit child care provider and educational organization founded in 1981. We offer a wide variety of program options for children 3 months to 12 years of age at several locations in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Children are our focus and our staff make up the foundation of our programs. The experience, education, and low turnover of teachers and assistants ensure continuity of quality programming from year to year. Ongoing professional development through Academy Training Institute and college courses funded by the Judith P. Hoyer Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grant keeps staff up to date on current research and issues and expands their educational credentials. Child/staff ratios are kept low to facilitate a child-centered approach.

All centers share a common mission and are licensed by Maryland's Child Care Administration. Because of the uniqueness of each community we serve, different centers may maintain additional affiliations. In partnership with families, community and early childhood experts, Academy continues to grow and develop within the scope of our "Building Blocks for Life" philosophy.

- Accredited by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) @Cold Spring
- Accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education since 2005
- Approved by Maryland State Department of Education, non-public division (MSDE)
- Licensed by Maryland Dept of Human Resources/Child Care Administration (DHR/CCA)

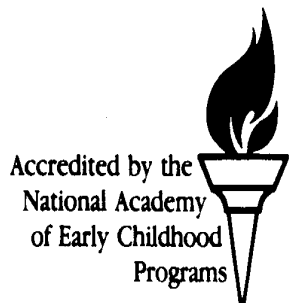
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DHR/CCA

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## **BACKGROUND**

Academy Child Development Center, Inc. was founded in July 1981 by Marilyn Fleetwood. The Center's first location was a kindergarten classroom at Montrose Elementary School on Academy Way in Rockville, MD. Mrs. Ellen Goeden was appointed Director, and with two senior staff teachers, opened the center on September 8, 1981 with 13 children enrolled. When the public school closed, Academy moved to Rocking Horse Road Elementary School. Initially, two classrooms were leased and within a year, Academy had grown into four classrooms. We had begun a decade of service to the Rocking Horse community. Academy opened two new centers in 1988 at Cold Spring Elementary School in Potomac and Stone Mill Elementary School in North Potomac. The Dufief center opened in 1990, Charles Drew center in 1991, Georgian Forest center in 1992 and Academy Hills center in 2003.

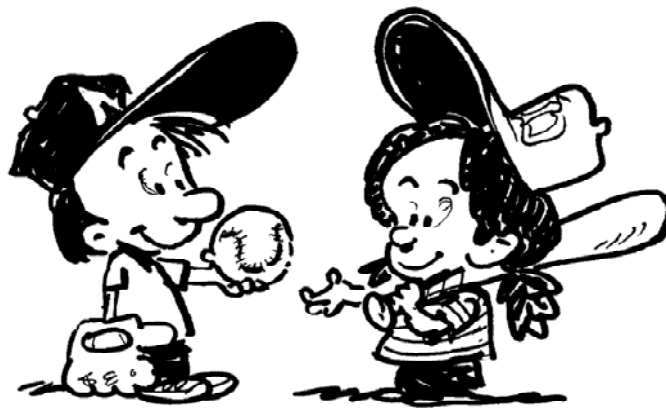
Soon after opening our center at Stone Mill, enrollment peaked and Academy parents and administration began planning for the impending space crunch. In response to this critical situation for working families, Academy applied for and received an IBM Initiative's grant to build an institutional grade modular adjacent to the elementary school. Funding for this project was provided through the IBM Funds for Dependent Care Initiatives, administered by Work/Family Directions Corp. Academy began offering programs for infants, toddlers, preschool and school-age children in September 1991. The modular included space for a recuperating room for mildly ill children. The program also expanded to the multipurpose room within the Stone Mill school facility for before and after school care. An additional free standing facility was opened on the grounds of Cold Spring E.S. in August 2001 and Academy Hills of Rockville opened the doors to a new facility in 2003. With increased capacity we are now able to serve a greater number of families in the community as well as add programs for infants and toddlers. Due to teamwork and commitment, NAEYC accreditation was awarded to the Stone Mill Center in 1995 and Dufief Center in 2003. As we celebrate more than two decades of service, Academy continues to provide outstanding programs for over 500 Montgomery County families. We are proud of our dedicated professional staff, high quality programs, and our supportive families. With the new millennium, Academy looks forward to the challenges of being a recognized leader in the rapidly growing field of early childhood education.

## **BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LIFE PHILOSOPHY**

Academy offers the "Building Blocks for Life" philosophy - the foundation from which all learning takes place for the future. Children grow in a nurturing environment that promotes safety and security. When children are guided to live and play together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support, they develop positive character values. By encouraging creativity, exploration, and discovery children acquire a love of learning and a sense of self. Specific MSDE educational goals are published in our "Curriculum Objective and Themes" flyer. Academy is dedicated to the world's future - its children.

## **MISSION AND PURPOSE**

- ❖ To offer developmentally appropriate early childhood/school age programs.
- ❖ To provide safe, healthy and reliable child care options for working parents.
- ❖ To maintain a dedicated, professional staff through competitive salaries, benefits and ongoing professional development training.
- ❖ To develop and maintain partnerships with parents, staff, community, local, state and national organization.



# Academy Child Development Center @Galway

## PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

**GROUPINGS** Availability varies at different locations.

- Infant/Toddlers/Twos (starting at 3 months): 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- Nursery/Preschool, (3-4): morning or afternoon sessions (extended care available)
- Pre-Kindergarten (4/5): 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (extended care available)
- MCPS Pre-Kindergarten (4/5): wrap-a-round morning or afternoon sessions and/or before and after care
- School-Age KAVE Club (Grades K-5th): Before and After School

## **SCHEDULES**

Students may attend on pre-determined days only. A limited number of part week and part day spaces are allotted. Priority is given to 5 day per week requests. Children under 3 years of age are enrolled full time only.

- Full Week (Monday through Friday)
- Part Week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday **or** Tuesday and Thursday)
- Part Day
  - Nursery- (3 hours)
  - Pre-kindergarten instructional day- (6 hours)
- Infant/Toddler/Two- 8 hours
- Extended care- before and after

## **HOURS/CALENDARS**

- 7:00 A.M. — 6:30 P.M.
- Part-day programs meet 3 or 6 hours, Monday - Friday and follow the MCPS Kindergarten school calendar.
- Year Round for full day students
- Limited part day summer spaces
- New tuition year begins July 1st

## **SCHEDULED CLOSINGS**

- Independence Day
- Two days prior to MCPS fall opening/ Professional Days
- Two days prior to Summer program
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas Holiday
- New Year's Holiday
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Easter Friday
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day Holiday
- Friday after MCPS closes in June/ Professional Day
- One additional MCPS Holiday

Part-day programs follow the MCPS kindergarten schedules. After School programs operate only when MCPS is open. You will be notified of any updates or changes to the Academy calendar as we receive information from Montgomery County Public Schools, Interagency Coordinating Board, Maryland State Department of Education or Montgomery County.

## ADMISSIONS / APPLICATION / ENROLLMENT

### ADMISSIONS POLICY

Academy has a nondiscriminatory admissions policy. Our centers are open without regard to race, creed, color, disability or gender. Academy Child Development Center, Inc. complies with all the conditions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992. Priority placement is given to current students and their siblings and five day per week schedule requests. Students with any health, physical, emotional, mental or other needs requiring special attention or accommodations must have all forms completed and a reasonable and appropriate plan developed by parents and center prior to admissions into the program. Academy reserves the right to discontinue enrollment or refuse placement to students whose needs cannot be met in the group setting.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Schedule an interview and tour with center director.
2. Review Parent Handbook and other materials. Call director with any questions or for references.
3. Submit wait list request or application as appropriate.
4. Selection for wait list and/or admission will be determined by Academy's ability to meet your family's needs.
5. You will be offered placement when an appropriate space becomes available.

### ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

1. Receive an application packet from the center director at the time of the tour and interview.
2. Return the following completed items as soon as possible or by date specified by center director:
  - \_\_\_ Application
  - \_\_\_ Enrollment Agreement
  - \_\_\_ Acknowledgment card from back cover of "Making A Difference..." booklet
  - \_\_\_ "All About: \_\_\_\_\_" form
  - \_\_\_ Student Information Form
  - \_\_\_ \$100 Non-refundable Application fee
  - \_\_\_ Security deposit for child care programs or June's non-refundable tuition for part-day programs
  - \_\_\_ Student Directory form
3. Attend mandatory Parent Orientation.
4. Academy will review application materials and send a confirmation letter
5. To allow for review and planning and to comply with Maryland law, **parents must return the following completed forms at least one month prior to start date. Children will not be permitted to attend without a complete file.**
  - \_\_\_ Emergency Form/Medical Condition form
  - \_\_\_ Health Inventory (Part I and II)
  - \_\_\_ Immunization Certificate
  - \_\_\_ Health Inventory Addendum (Lead screen for all children under six years)
  - \_\_\_ Medication Order Form (Release to administer medication and must match prescription container)

### PLACEMENT CRITERIA

Children are grouped by age as required by regulatory agencies. Other factors that are considered include licensed capacity, group size and child/teacher ratios. If parent, teacher and program director feel that a developmental placement would better meet the child's needs and space permits, a written child care plan will be formulated. Vertical articulation/transition plans are established for each child in preparation for the next class program.

Academy strictly adheres to Montgomery County Health Department guidelines for diapering. Children in the classes for 3-5 year olds need to be toilet trained (unless they have an ADA identified physical disability). A child is considered trained when they independently, successfully and consistently toilets, cleans, and dresses self. For success, elastic waist pants are strongly recommended. Tiny Tot classrooms (two year olds) are designed to assist children and families with "potty" training and parents must be consistent at home with the training plan.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

### **ACADEMY'S 'IDEAL' CURRICULUM:**

#### **INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCES for ACTIVE LEARNING**

Academy was founded on an integrated, theme-based curriculum which is developmentally designed to enhance physical, emotional, cognitive and social growth. Students become ready and eager to learn through encouragement to explore, experiment, and experience developmentally appropriate activities approved by MSDE and NAEYC.

Academy is using the curriculum framework from **The Creative Curriculum for Preschool 4<sup>th</sup> edition** supplemented by the **Maryland Model for School Readiness** (MMSR), the **Voluntary State Curriculum**, and the **Core Knowledge Curriculum** for children ages 3-5. Children under 3 years of age will be receiving the **Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers**.

In place of the conventional choice assessment tests Academy is utilizing the "Work Sampling Assessment System" for ages 3-5 and the *OUNCE Scale* for under 3 years of age, as a means for capturing each student's growth and development. This system is a comprehensive means for monitoring children's social, emotional, cognitive and physical progress through teachers' observations within the context to the daily learning environment and for documenting the students work samples in a portfolio. The curriculum objectives address the seven content areas of learning - Personal & Social, Physical Development & Health, Language & Literacy, Scientific Thinking, Mathematical Thinking, Social Studies, and the Arts.

### **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

The teachers and staff are organizers and directors of learning. They observe, guide, and report. Classrooms are child-centered and planned according to developmental needs. Both large and small group activities and learning centers provide opportunities for children to interact, problem solve and be imaginative and creative. After assessing individual learning styles and interests, teachers will use this information in program planning.

### **TYPES OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

Activities are experiential, hands-on and designed to enhance physical, emotional, cognitive, and social growth. Developmentally appropriate activities will give children the opportunity to play, learn and relax in the following centers: blocks, board games, manipulatives and puzzles, outdoor play, music, woodworking, dramatic play, computers, dance and large muscle activities, arts and crafts, math, science, cooking, library and quiet corner. Literacy activities are integrated into all aspects of the program. Field trips and on-site cultural arts experiences will expose students to the world around them and help develop an appreciation for and sensitivity to others. Our goal is to create an environment that embodies the Character Counts! values of caring, respect, trustworthiness, responsibility, citizenship, and fairness.

### **SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS (grades K-5) K.A.V.E. Club (Kids ActiVe Enrichment)**

Academy's school age childcare provides developmentally appropriate programs for children and support for their families when school is not in session. K.A.V.E. Club is available during the ten-month school year and summer sessions are offered when space is available. You can select Before School Only option or After School Only option which operate on days when MCPS is in regular session. Extended days (Before **and** After program) offer full day child care coverage when Academy is open. Refer to Academy's scheduled closings in this handbook and this year's Academy Calendar.

Students need an environment that's relaxing, fun, safe and motivational. Before and after care supports opportunities for children to form friendships, develop interests, skills and to experience an environment of companionship and guidance. Academy encourages academic achievement and provides a quiet 45 minute homework period. If a student has not completed the homework, he/she may opt to complete homework or to participate in the planned daily activities. Staff does not tutor individual students but will assist with directions and encourage students to assume responsibility for their assignments. Resource materials are available. Group time, snack, outdoor play, recreational and club activities will be scheduled daily. Field trips round out the program. Ratios are at least 1:15 and usually lower.

**K.A.V.E. Club-Only Option-** Students can sign up for a variety of after school clubs which are scheduled by sessions. These clubs are only available when Galway Elementary School is in regular session.



**NURSERY, PREKINDERGARTEN, (ages 3-5)**

Our programs are play based and experiential (see program description section). Physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth are stimulated through hands-on, real life experiences. Developmentally appropriate practice is the foundation of the curriculum and daily schedule planning. Phonological awareness, science and math activities are important aspects of the program and are integrated throughout the day. Our staff support children so that they feel safe and secure, give them responsibility, model empathy and respect for others, and encourage them to explore and discover the world around them. Teacher biographies are distributed at the beginning of each school year and are available from the director.

Part-day sessions may be included in the full day programs. Average class size is twenty children with at least one teacher and an assistant. Full day and extended day programs operate according to the Academy calendar. Refer to Academy’s scheduled closings. Part-day sessions are approximately 3 or 6 hours and include a lunch period and outdoor play. Part- day programs are open during the school year for at least 170 to 180 days and follow the MCPS kindergarten calendar (no class on late openings, early closing, holidays, inclement weather days, teacher in-service days, kdg. field trips, conference days, orientation, etc.). Maryland State Department of Education approved “Curriculum Objectives and Themes” are described in a separate flyer.

**Sample Daily Schedule for Nursery and Pre-kindergarten Programs**

**7:00-9:30**            WELCOME/GATHERING Child Selected Activities  
Breakfast Snack/Transition Activities (Clean Up)

<b>9:30</b>	<u>CIRCLE TIME</u> Theme discussion, music/movement related activity, Routines- Calendar, Weather, Birthdays
<b>9:30-10:30</b>	<u>LEARNING CENTERS</u> (MSDE Standards) Academic readiness activities (MMSR and VSC objectives and standards) Teacher Directed and Student Selected Centers Clean up activities
<b>10:30- 11:30</b>	<u>TRANSITION</u> (bathroom and hand washing) <u>OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES</u>
<b>11:30- 11:45</b>	<u>LITERATURE- Story Time</u>
<b>11:45- 12:00</b>	<u>TRANSITION</u> (bathroom, hand washing)
<b>12:00- 12:30</b>	<u>LUNCH</u>
<b>12:30-</b>	<u>HALF DAY STUDENT DISMISSAL</u>

**REST TIME**            AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM BEGINS  
**2:30- 3:30**            TRANSITION TIME/ SNACK  
**3:30- 3:45**            MUSIC AND MOVEMENT  
**3:30- 4:30**            LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITIES  
**4:30- 5:00**            OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES (GROSS MOTOR)  
**5:00-5:15**            TRANSITION ACTIVITIES (bathroom, hand washing, clean up)  
**5:15- 5:45**            STORY TIME ACTIVITIES  
**5:45-6:30**            CHILD DIRECTED CENTERS/ Clean-up/Departure            Have a great evening!

**INFANT/TODDLER/TINY TOTS PROGRAM (3 months- 3 years)**

Academy offers carefully designed environments for our youngest children, starting at three months of age. Specially trained staff nurture and guide the little ones through these formative years. Continuity of care and secure, loving relationships prepare children for their emerging independence. The Tiny Tots staff will assist with “potty training” for two and three year olds. Staff ratios are excellent and usually exceed recommendations. A 1: 3 ratio is maintained in the Infant/Toddler room and a 1:6 ratio in the Tiny Tots. Staffing for each classroom depends on the ages of the children, the number of children in the group, and the individual classroom size. All teachers maintain current infant/child CPR and First Aid. To help maintain a healthy environment for all, parents must furnish documentation of immunizations, medical conditions, and medication orders according to schedule.

Staff members are selected according to Academy policies, DHR/ CCA licensing requirements, and NAEYC accreditation guidelines. In addition to early childhood credentials, all teachers have completed course work specific to children, birth to age three. Each infant and toddler will be assigned a primary care provider who will be responsible for working with parents regarding their child’s activities, growth and development. Every two months, parents need to provide the center with an updated written daily schedule for their child.

The program will be individually developed according to NAEYC child development standards, individual needs, and center constraints. Developmentally appropriate activities are child-centered, directed toward the natural interests and inclinations of children. The activities

are also need-centered, directed toward the physical, emotional, cognitive and social abilities of children as determined by normal expectations.

Parent communication will be on a daily basis via the completion of a daily log and through morning and afternoon dialogue between parents and teachers. Parents are strongly encouraged to share information with staff and should put important information in writing. Staff will complete the log indicating feeding patterns, diapering schedules, sleeping and daily highlights. The OUNCE Scale will be used to document children's growth in the 7 domains of learning. Parent meetings and workshops will be held periodically to give parents the opportunity to meet with the staff and with other parents who have children at Academy.

*Food Guidelines:* Parents and staff will develop a feeding plan which indicates the time of the feeding, amounts of food, and the kinds of food to be consumed. All food is to be provided by the parent to accommodate various diet plans. However, health and safety requirements will only allow Academy staff to serve food that is:

- Commercially pre-bottled formula.
- Breast milk, formula, juice and water that has been pre-bottled at home and brought in by parent.
- Commercially packaged baby food that is opened at the center and used the same day (unused portions will be sent home)
- Developmentally appropriate foods for snack or lunch prepared by the parent and consumed by the child the same day.
- Academy provides breakfast snack and afternoon snack for children 2 years and older.
- If appropriate, food will be heated. Only Infant/Toddler food will be refrigerated.

*Equipment/Furnishings/Materials:* All children have individual cots or cribs. Cribs meet the standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Each crib has Plexiglas ends, a snugly fitting sheet and a moisture proof covering. Cribs and sheets are washed daily; weekly for Tiny Tots. The cleaning of other bed coverings is the responsibility of the parents. Furniture and equipment will be purchased with safety in mind. Walkers are not permitted. Ample toys and materials are available to stimulate language, motor, cognitive, and social development. Infant room toys are sanitized daily and at least weekly, or more, in the Tiny Tots room.

*Diapering/ Toilet Training:* Each parent will furnish disposable diapers/training pants, diaper wipes, and diaper creams or ointments (with completed medication order). Staff will follow Health Department approved hand washing, diaper changing, disposal, and bleach clean-up procedures which are posted above each diapering table, sink, and toilet. Universal precautions are practiced. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and put in the child's cubby. All supplies will be conveniently located for easy accessibility. No child will be left unattended in the bathroom or on the changing tables at any time.

## **GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **TRANSITION AND CONTINUITY OF PROGRAMS**

To ensure the most appropriate placement for a child, transition planning must be undertaken. Progress reports and individual student recommendations, parent conferences, portfolios, classroom visits, and orientations for parents and students are all necessary for successful transitions to new classrooms.



### **FIELD TRIPS**

Beginning with Tiny Tots, all classes will go on field trips. These trips are important learning experiences and are an integral part of the curriculum. A blanket permission statement on the Enrollment Agreement gives your child permission to participate in these events. Notices will be posted before each trip for your information and to coordinate parent participation. It is important that your child be at school in plenty of time to join the class for the trip. Unfortunately, due to staffing constraints, parents of children not joining the group for scheduled field trips must make alternative child care arrangements. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for field trips because it is an excellent way to share and participate in their child's program.

The minimum bus charge for each trip is \$8 per child. Admission price and additional charges will be added if necessary. Staff make every effort to keep costs down. Contact the center director if financial assistance is necessary.

### **BUS SAFETY**

Academy employs our own drivers and maintains Academy school buses. Staff practice and plan for emergency evacuations. Buses are equipped with seat belts. We recommend that any child under age four (4) or who weighs forty (40) pounds or less use an approved car seat (safety restraint system) provided by parents.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

A completed Medical Condition form, found on the back of the Emergency Form, is required. If a child has life



threatening or extensive food allergies, it is advisable to supply all food from home. Academy will work with parents to plan in the best interest of the child.

### **MEALS & SNACKS**

A nutritious breakfast snack and a late afternoon snack will be offered to children over 2 years of age who are enrolled in full day programs. Monthly menus are posted in each classroom. When the center opens at 9:00 A.M., breakfast snack will not be served. Meals are not provided.

Parents need to furnish a nutritious lunch for their children each day. Academy will provide fresh milk with lunch. However, due to limited space, lunches **cannot be refrigerated or heated**. Plan your child's lunch accordingly by using thermos-type containers or ice packs. For young children, avoid foods that present a choking hazard such as nuts, popcorn, fresh carrots, uncut grapes and apples. Please do not send candy, gummy 'fruit' snacks, soft drinks or other "empty calorie" foods to school. Learning good eating habits is important at an early age.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Whenever possible, birthdays will be celebrated on or close to a child's birthday. Parents may furnish light refreshments. All arrangements are to be made with the teacher in advance so that your child will enjoy a smooth, organized and special day. Parents are encouraged to join in the celebration.

### **NAPTIME**

All children through Pre-Kindergarten will have a daily nap period. Academy furnishes cots and sheets which will be washed weekly. Parents need to supply a small blanket, soft slipper socks, and if helpful, a small snuggly toy. For comfort and health, children will remove shoes for napping. Please label these items. They will be sent home every week for cleaning. Kindergarten children will have a short rest and relaxation time.

### **MOVIE AND VIDEO POLICY**

Movies may be used to enhance the curriculum. Teachers will carefully select titles that are appropriate and topic related. Some classrooms may schedule a "fun" movie day. Academy will allow children to view "G" rated movies for limited periods. On occasion, and only with parental written permission, will an appropriate "PG" movie be selected for school age students. Academy has purchased a copyright permit.

### **COMPUTER AND INTERNET POLICY**

Academy has established and posted rules for children and staff regarding the appropriate use of the computer and Internet. Safety precautions have been outlined to protect children from inappropriate Internet access and programs.

### **CLOTHING**

Send your child to school in play clothes appropriate for the day's weather and for messy activities. The clothes will probably be dirty by the end of the day. Please do not reprimand children for this, as it will inhibit future participation. Every child should have spare clothing in their back pack. All extra clothing must be plainly marked with the child's name. Please return any emergency school clothing your child wears home so that we have it available for the next time. Safe and sturdy footwear is needed for climbing, running, and jumping.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

The Center recognizes the importance of giving all children the opportunity to play outside 2-3 times each day. We will go outside in cold weather. Hats and gloves are necessary. Only heavy rain or ice will keep us inside. During hot weather, sunhat, light tee-shirt, and sun block will help protect your child.

### **TOYS & VALUABLES FROM HOME**

Unless it is a designated sharing day, please send your child to the center with a naptime snuggly only. Personal items can be disruptive to classroom activities and may be unsafe. Academy can not assume responsibility for the replacement of items that are lost, stolen, or broken.

### **NECESSARY DAILY SUPPLIES**

Label everything except your child!

- Nutritious lunch
- Necessary medications with physician's orders
- Small backpack containing:
  - Spare clothing

- Small naptime blanket
- Specific classroom requirements received at orientation

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS**

### **PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING**

An initial meeting of parents, child and teacher is necessary. At your **Parent Orientation** you will have the opportunity to meet the center director and teachers, receive teacher biographies including their educational credentials, get information about curriculum and classroom procedures, and have all your questions answered. The success of your child's development and education depends on cooperation between home and center. We invite every family to fully participate in Academy programs. The center hosts functions throughout the year. In addition to numerous opportunities within each class, every family is strongly encouraged to complete a parent questionnaire for each child every year. These questionnaires are reviewed by the Academy administration and the voluntary parent committee to help enhance Academy's future programs.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Academy believes that parent involvement is vital to the success of your child's program and subsequent development. Consequently, the relationship between staff and parents must be an integral part of providing an appropriate program for children. Staff demonstrates the value of this relationship by acknowledging:

- The influence of the parent on the developing child as the child's first teacher
- The importance of the family's goals for the child
- The lifestyle of each family and unique styles of child rearing
- The unique beliefs and value system of each family
- The family's ethnic, cultural, and religious background
- The desire of parents to learn about their children
- The pride parents take in their children and their children's accomplishments
- The value of parental input and contribution to the Academy program

### **PARENT/CENTER COMMUNICATION**

Communication forms the basis of any relationship. Our partnership with families is dependent on the sharing of information. Academy periodically offers parent training opportunities through Academy Training Institute on such topics as toilet training, calming and coping, making friends, discipline (setting limits), etc.

#### **What we do to keep parents informed:**

- Meet and greet families at arrival and departure.
- Post monthly plans, menus, newsletter, parenting tips, schedule, field trip/party notices, etc.
- Place notices, tuition receipts, accident reports, completed "projects," etc. in child's folder/cubby or in "traveling folder" for kindergarten students.
- Place and return phone calls.
- Offer Parenting Workshops through Academy Training Institute
- Schedule parent/teacher conferences annually and more often as necessary.
- Provide written student assessments twice a year.
- Maintain community resource information board and parenting media collection.
- Schedule parent and student orientation visits for new and continuing families.
- Coordinate parent visitation days, back to school nights, etc. with MCPS and PTA.
- Hold at least two evening family functions per year.
- Invite parents to participate in center's Parent Teacher Exchange Committee and PTA liaison.
- Have an open door policy — parents of registered students are welcome to visit anytime.

#### **How parents keep us informed and stay involved:**

- **KEEP EMERGENCY INFORMATION AND PHONE NUMBERS UP TO DATE**
- Greet teacher at drop off and pickup
- Ask questions and share thoughts
- Give us a note or send one pinned on your child's shirt.
- Return "traveling folder" in kindergarten students' backpack

- Make written entry in class log book
- Call us and leave a message
- Volunteer to spend time at the center
- Attend Academy Training Institute's Parenting Workshops.
- Attend annual conference and request another if you feel that it would be helpful
- Complete and return annual parent survey/ questionnaire.
- Read Parent Handbook and ask about other resources.
- Join the Parent Teacher Exchange committee.
- Please remember, it is unreliable and unfair to expect children to relay important information.
- Requests for changes in procedures involving the health, safety, or security of children must be in writing.

### **ANNUAL PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Annual parent surveys are used to validate program components that are meeting or exceeding expectations as well as to make annual recommendations that address any significant issues. This is a powerful tool for self study and action. Please be sure to complete your questionnaire when it is sent home and volunteer to join the Parent Teacher Exchange committee to assist with collection, tabulation, meetings, reports and implementation of new ideas.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Positive guidance techniques will be used to establish discipline. Academy will endeavor to discipline children to help them develop internal self-control of their behaviors while building self-esteem. The staff will provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for each child to practice making good choices. It is imperative that the adults, both staff and parents, have consistent responses to the children and model positive behavior. **Corporal punishment is never used.**

**Prevent discipline problems.** The first and most effective strategy for creating a cooperative learning environment is to encourage positive behavior.

- Set realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations and limits.
- Consistently enforce a few (3-5) rules with known consequences.
- Arrange the room to encourage positive behavior.
- Establish a consistent routine with a balance between teacher and child directed activities.

**Positive Reinforcement:** All children want attention. By encouraging positive behavior the child will learn to be a more cooperative member of the class. *The behavior that gets the attention will be repeated!*

**Ignore** some inappropriate behavior which is attention seeking and not harmful to the child, other children, or the program.

**A Peace Place** provides a separate cozy area in the classroom away from the flow of activity for a child to calm down. The goal is for a child to learn when he/she needs to go to the Peace Place. After the child has regained control, the teacher asks the child if he/she is ready to return to the group.

### **Bully- Free environment**

**Time out** is a last resort and is used only when a child has done one of the following:

- Willfully hurt another person physically or emotionally.
- Endangered himself by not following a safety rule.
- Destroyed Academy or another child's property.

Time out takes the child away from friends and classroom activity for a short time (not exceeding one minute for each year of age). Time out is not appropriate for a child younger than three years old. The child is reintroduced into the class activities after a short conversation with the teacher.

**Follow-up:** If the behavior persists, a behavior modification plan will be implemented with regular parental communications. Parents will be asked to cooperate with Academy support staff and the teacher in developing a program to change the inappropriate behavior. Should the socially unacceptable behavior persist in such a manner that is harmful to the well being of the child, other children, or the staff in spite of efforts at remediation, Academy reserves the right to give the parents notice of termination of services for the child.

### **PROBLEM SOLVING WITH PARENTS**

What to do if you have a concern:

1. Schedule an appointment to discuss the concern with your child's teachers.

2. Observe the class. Academy has an open-door visitation policy for parents of enrolled students.
3. Develop a plan of action with the teachers. A written monitoring and evaluation time frame will be established and signed by the parents and teachers.
4. Not satisfied? Contact the center director to set up a conference to discuss the concern with parents, teachers and director.
5. If unresolved, the center director will contact Academy's Early Childhood Specialist to discuss the issue with parents and address the concern in the most appropriate and professional manner. Outside professionals may be contacted for assistance in developing the best plan for a successful relationship.
6. Still not satisfied? Parent will be invited to present the concern to the Academy Board of Directors.
7. If the issue is still unresolved, the parent may wish to present their concern at the next Academy Parent Committee meeting.
8. Academy is happy to work together with families to address concerns; however, we must take into consideration the impact any decision will have on other children, families, staff and program integrity.

**CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Academy will not, without written permission, give out or discuss information about a child or their family to anyone other than appropriate staff members and representatives of certain health, safety and welfare agencies as required by law.

Upon written request from a student's parent or guardian, the director may be authorized to release copies of a student's records to a specified recipient. Cumulative records are maintained for each student enrolled. These are retained for two years after the student has left Academy and will be destroyed at that time. Records are confidential and kept in a secure location.

**Photographs of program activities are taken and may be used for educational research or publicity (web, brochures, mailings, flyers, etc.).**

Early Childhood Education majors from area schools, such as the University of Maryland, may be placed at Academy centers for supervised training and observation.

**TUITION, FEES AND RELATED INFORMATION**

**FEDERAL TAX ID**

Academy Child Development Center, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3), not-for-profit organization. Donors may deduct contributions. Our federal tax identification number is **52-1228660**.

**CHILD CARE PROGRAM TUITION is a monthly charge and is due on the first day of the month.**

If you enroll in the middle of the month, a pro-rated tuition charge will be due prior to the enrollment date.

A \$10 per week fee is charged for late payment. Tuition payments are non-refundable.

**Security Deposit** is required to enroll in child care programs. The security deposit is refundable if:

1. The child attends the new program (according to the most recent application) at least one month and
2. The director receives a one month written notice of withdrawal and
3. There is no outstanding balance.

**PART-DAY PROGRAM TUITION is an annual fee that is due prior to the start of the school year.** A 5% discount is included when paid in full by July 1st. The Application Fee and June's Tuition is non-refundable and due upon enrollment. The balance of the annual tuition is due by July 1st. A \$10 per week fee is charged for late payments. There is no refund of tuition or application fee for any reason including early withdrawal.

**PART TIME ENROLLMENT**

Part time will be on a "space available" basis only. The policy for accepting children on a part time basis is with the understanding that if we receive any full time applicants we will give the parents of the part time child the option of increasing their schedule or withdrawing the child after a two-week notice.

**SESSION CANCELLATION**

Academy reserves the right to cancel any session due to insufficient enrollment.

**OTHER FEES**

*Wait List-* \$25 non-refundable fee will be applied toward the initial application fee.

*Enrollment Fee-* Waived for Galway 2008-09.  
*Materials Fee-* Waived for Galway 2008-09

*Late Payment Fee-* Tuition is due on the first day of the month. After the sixth day of the month, a \$10 per week late fee will be charged.

*Returned Check Fee-* \$25 in addition to the original amount due. If a check is returned for any reason, all future payments must be made by certified check or money order.

*Late Pick-Up Fee-* A charge of \$1 per minute or any portion thereof, if a child is picked up after closing or dismissal, including inclement weather/ emergency closings. Two dollars per minute if a fourth time occurs. **IF WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM A CHILD'S PARENTS WITHIN THIRTY MINUTES AFTER CLOSING AND HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO REACH EMERGENCY CONTACTS FOR PICK-UP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE WILL BE CONTACTED TO CONTINUE THE CARE OF YOUR CHILD.** The non-emergency police number is (301) 279-8000. You may be asked to find other child care if your child is picked up late on four occasions.

*Drop-In Care-* May be available for children who are currently enrolled in part week/part day programs. Parents are advised to contact the Director as soon as possible to verify availability and pre-pay fee to reserve the space. See current year fee schedule.

*Field Trips-* The minimum bus charge is \$8 per child. Admission price and additional costs are added if necessary. Because reservations are necessary for the bus and site/ program, charge is non-refundable.

*Replacement Fee-* If a child purposely loses or damages equipment or other property through inappropriate use; parents will be informed and charged for repairs or replacement.

#### **METHODS OF PAYMENT**

Payments may be made by check, money order, or voucher and mailed or delivered in person to the center director. DO NOT SEND PAYMENTS WITH CHILDREN. The center will not be responsible for payments lost, stolen, or mislaid before delivery to the center's director. Your canceled check serves as a receipt for payments. **ACADEMY IS UNABLE TO ACCEPT CASH PAYMENTS FOR TUITION.**

#### **DISCOUNTS**

A family paying for one five day per week tuition will receive a 10% discount on additional 5 days per week tuition for siblings. (Except Before School Only Program). Discounts will be applied to the least expensive program. This is not available if a family qualifies for and receives other tuition assistance or discounts. No other tuition assistance or discounts apply.

#### **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

Academy accepts vouchers from Montgomery County Working Parents Assistance (WPA) and Social Services child care subsidy (POC) programs with the understanding that parents will adhere to the policies and procedure outlined by either of those programs and Academy. It is also understood that parents are financially responsible for tuition to be kept current in the event of delays in the initial or the re-certification processing from the WPA or POC programs.

#### **TUITION INCREASES**

Academy is a not-for-profit, 501(c) (3) organization and must be self-supporting. Rates are set so that all costs can be met and no profit made. For this reason, periodic tuition increases will be necessary. Parents will receive a minimum of two weeks notice, if an increase is necessary.

#### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial Assistance fund helps qualified families meet tuition requirements.

Requests for alternative payment plans must be requested in writing and submitted to the main office for consideration. Please contact your center director for assistance.

#### **SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION FOR LATE PAYMENT**

If the Center has not received monthly tuition payment by the sixth day of the month, the Center will refuse to admit your child to the Center until payment is made. If the Center has not received your payment by the thirteenth day after payment is due, your child's enrollment will be terminated and his/her space will be offered to another child. Any tuition or deposits will not be refunded and unpaid balances will be due to Academy.

**VACATIONS/ABSENCES/CLOSINGS**

It is financially impossible for Academy to hold a child's space, without previous payment, when absent for any reason, including vacations, trips, or illness. No vacation time is provided. Additionally, we are unable to refund or credit your account for inclement weather or emergency closings. If you will be out of town or unable to pay on the first of the month, please be sure to make tuition payment in advance.

**PROGRAM CHANGES**

If the requested schedule is unavailable, you may submit a wait list request and have the fee waived. When increasing program an additional security deposit and tuition is required. If a change in program is needed which reduces the number of days or hours, a one month written notice must be received by the center director and a new application and \$100 application fee will be required. Each center has an allotted number of part time and full time spaces. If you wish to change to part time/full time and the space allotment is full then you will be placed on a waitlist for the next available space.



## HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

### INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY/CLOSING POLICY

We realize the difficulty and inconvenience when Academy is closed. However, the decisions are made with the safety of the children and staff in mind. Due to our lease agreement, Academy must base our emergency closings on the decisions of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) or when conditions are judged to be unsafe.

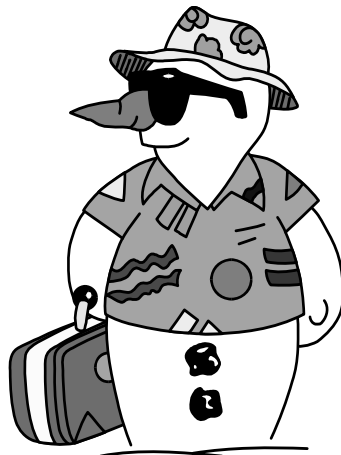
- 1) If MCPS Central Administrative Offices are closed, Academy will **CLOSE**.
- 2) If MCPS Central Administrative Offices are delayed, Academy will open at 10am (unless otherwise indicated).
- 3) If MCPS closes for the day but their Central Administrative Offices are open on time:
  - Academy opens at 9 A.M. for child care only.
  - There is no Academy Part- Day (9-2:30) Pre-K/KindeReady.
  - Please call or arrive with your child by 10 A.M. Staffing for the day will be determined at that time.
  - Bring lunch
- 4) If MCPS openings are delayed:
  - Academy opens at 8 A.M. for child care.
  - Academy Part-Day (9-2:30) Pre-K/KindeReady students may be signed in by their authorized escort when MCPS opens. Please make certain that someone is responsible for your child's safe arrival at Academy. All students should bring a BAG LUNCH.
- 5) If MCPS closes early:
  - Part-Day (9-2:30) Pre-K/KindeReady students must be picked up early at MCPS early release.
  - Academy child care will close early at 5 P.M.
- 6) If other emergency closings are necessary, such as when MCPS is not in regular session, call your center after 6:30 A.M. or after 1 P.M. if conditions are questionable. Closing decisions are made in consultation with the main office. Parents will be notified in person, by telephone message or by radio announcement.

### MCPS INFORMATION

MCPS Cable Channel 34  
MCPS Recording (301) 279-3673  
AM Radio: 630 and 1500  
Internet: [www.schools-out.com](http://www.schools-out.com)  
[www.mcps.k12.md.us](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us)

### ACADEMY INFORMATION (After 6:30 A.M.)

Business Office: 301-424-6282  
Academy Office: 301-762-8206



Updated 1/5/05

## **SICK CHILD POLICY**

We need your help in keeping the outbreak of illness to a minimum. Our sick child policy is based on Montgomery County Health Department guidelines. Certain symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children who have symptoms listed below should be excluded from the child care setting until:

- 1. A health care provider notes the child can return to the program without danger to himself or other children and staff.**
- 2. The symptoms have been gone for 24 hours.**
- 3. The child is well enough to participate fully in the child care's daily routine.**

If a child has any of the following signs and symptoms of illness, they should be kept/sent home from child care. If symptoms are severe or persist, parents should contact their private source of medical care.

### ***Appearance/Behavior***

Child looks or acts differently than usual: unusually tired, pale, loss of appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken plus has oral temperature of 101° F or above.

### ***Cough***

See respiratory symptoms below.

### ***Diarrhea***

An increased number and/or abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours.

### ***Eye/Nose Drainage***

Red or pink appearing eyes/thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose.

### ***Fever***

Remember that temperatures taken under the arm are one degree lower than oral temperatures. Therefore, one degree Fahrenheit should be added to the armpit reading. Any child with an oral temperature of 101° F or above is considered to have a significant fever. Children should not return to child care until they have been fever free for 24 hours.

### ***Respiratory Symptoms***

Difficult or rapid breathing, severe cough, high-pitched croupy, wheezing or whooping sound after cough.

### ***Skin Problems***

Undiagnosed skin rashes are possibly contagious. Be alert to rashes or sores with crusty, yellow or green drainage. Rashes with fevers can be serious and need to be discussed with the child's health care provider.

### ***Sore Throat/Earache***

Sore throat and/or difficulty swallowing, especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present.

### ***Unusual color***

Eyes or skin – yellow (jaundice)

Stool – gray or white

Urine- dark, tea colored

The above symptoms can be found in hepatitis and should be evaluated by the child's health care provider.

### ***Nausea/Vomiting***

Two or more episodes of vomiting within the previous 24 hours, diarrhea, vomiting, undiagnosed rashes, fever, pallor, irritability, excessive sleepiness and change of behavior are signs of illness that must be noted.

Parents will be notified when a child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the facility as described below:

- A. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities
- B. The illness requires more care than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children or
- C. The child has any of the following conditions:
  - 1) Temperature: Oral 101°F or greater; axillary (armpit) 100°F or greater; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
  - 2) Signs and symptoms of possible severe illness (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing or wheezing)
  - 3) Uncontrolled diarrhea, that is, increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper.
  - 4) Vomiting illness: two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours.
  - 5) Rash with fever or behavior change.
  - 6) Identified disease that requires exclusion.

When a child is sent home, he/she should remain at home for at least 24 hours or submit a written statement, from the health care provider, approving the return to the program. Parents are advised to arrange a plan for backup care when the child is ill.

If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. A parent/legal guardian or authorized designee should pick up the child within an hour. If the child's condition warrants immediate medical attention, 911 will be called.

The director cannot re-admit a child to the center after an absence of three or more days due to illness, without first receiving a written statement from the parent or physician stating that the child may return to a regular schedule. If a child sustains a serious illness or injury or is hospitalized for any reason, a doctor's readmit certificate is required.

## MEDICATION

**MSDE Programs- Medication will be administered to children within guidelines of Maryland law.**

**All CCA programs will administer medications within the guidelines of Maryland law and according to the policies outlined below.**

**As a health and safety precaution and in compliance with regulations, Academy requires that a physician and parent sign and fully complete a DHR Medication Order Form giving the Center permission to administer any medication.** This applies to oral, topical and over the counter medicines. Sun block is excluded from this requirement. If your child needs to keep medication at the center for emergencies, your child's doctor must complete a standing order with appropriate instructions. Make certain that the medication order form matches the container label. Pay special attention to brand or generic names and dosage amounts.

Emergency injections of epinephrine will be administered by non-health professionals according to the DHR Medication Order Form completed by a physician. Parents are required to teach staff how to give these injections. For this reason, only pre-measured doses of epinephrine may be given. Academy staff members are not health professionals and therefore can not observe for the development of symptoms before giving the injection.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

**All children must be fully immunized and records on file at the center prior to is the parent's responsibility to provide ongoing documentation of compliance regulations. Academy will furnish a Summary of Immunization Requirements. If documentation is not presented by the due date, children must be suspended the day.**



**enrollment. It with next school**

## HEALTHY PRACTICE

**The single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease is to WASH HANDS frequently and well.** Children will be taught, supervised and expected to WASH HANDS at appropriate times. Please help practice this at home. All persons entering the building must wash hands upon arrival (staff, parents, children)

## IN CASE OF SERIOUS INJURY

**First Aid and/or CPR will be given. If necessary, 911 will be called and your child may be transported to the hospital. Parent will be called.**

#### **MEDICAL/ DENTAL INSURANCE**

Parents are responsible for their child's health and dental insurance and/or financial liability in relation to illness, injuries and related expenses, which may occur at the center during the normal course of activities.

#### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Staff maintain current First Aid and CPR. Fire drills are practiced regularly. Each center has an emergency/crisis plan that coordinates with their elementary school.**

**In case of a local emergency that requires vacating the facility, staff will evacuate children to a designated emergency location for pick up. Transportation may include school bus, private vehicle, or walking.**

**Galway Center to: Charles Drew Elementary School**

**In case of a national or regional crisis, staff will follow directions of emergency management authorities. Listen to local emergency radio.**

### **\*\*KEEP EMERGENCY CONTACTS CURRENT\*\***

#### **MAJOR SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PARENTS AND STAFF**

- Staff and parents will drive safely and courteously especially when near schools.
- Parents are encouraged to become involved and visit the center at any time.
- Young children will be supervised at all times.
- Academy staff will not release children to any unauthorized person.
- Anyone picking up must be prepared to show photo identification.
- Parents must ensure that all children are signed in and out by an adult each day and that children are escorted to the Academy staff.
- Parents must notify the center if their school age child will be absent after school.
- Parents must keep emergency information, medical documentation and immunization records current and on file at the center office.
- Parents will put any requests for change in pick-up or dismissal procedure in writing Requests from children or others will not be honored.
- Legal documentation is necessary to inhibit either parent from visiting or removing child from Center. Academy staff cannot accept responsibility for becoming a mediator between single parent families.
- Legal documentation is required for any custody issues.
- Fire drills will be held on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Staff maintain current CPR and first aid certification.
- Staff will carefully review and post emergency medical/special needs information.
- Staff will routinely check environment for potential hazards.
- Proper hand washing will be taught, encouraged and expected to prevent the spread of disease.
- Academy is not responsible for the child's travel to or from Academy or other programs. While in our care, kindergarten students will be escorted to/from their MCPS program. Special arrangements and releases are required to permit older school-age children to be responsible for their attendance at onsite, extra-curricular activities and return to Academy.
- If a school age child leaves the Center grounds at any time, his/her parent will be called immediately. Academy cannot be responsible for school age children who leave the site.

#### **AVAILABILITY OF ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In October 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings and implement response actions in a timely manner.

These regulations assign schools many new responsibilities. Our program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on our inspections, reinspections, response actions and post-response action activities, including periodic surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress. You can review this plan during normal business hours

without cost or restriction. If you have any questions about reviewing the management plan, please contact the MCPS Building Principal at the Public School Office or your Center Director. For new buildings, those completed after October 12, 1988; our "management plan" consists of the exclusion documentation including this notification. This means that to our knowledge there is no asbestos-containing building materials.

**STAFF RECRUITMENT and DEVELOPMENT (selection, qualifications, training and supervision)** Academy prides itself in selecting the most qualified staff in the field of early childhood education and in providing continuing education classes and college scholarships.

- Reference and criminal background checks including fingerprinting will be conducted, documented and filed, as required by law.
- All staff signs a letter of agreement outlining major job expectations including educational plan.
- All staff participates in orientation and in-service training programs which include written materials explaining Academy's policies, procedures and regulations. Staff will be aware of legal requirements and by their signature acknowledge having received, read and understand appropriate policies, standards, and code of ethics.
- Staff working with children will be provided information about the signs and symptoms of possible child abuse and neglect and the procedures for reporting to Child Protective Services.
- All volunteers are appropriately screened and supervised.
- Pre-employment medical and TB clearance exam are required for all staff.
- Universal precautions are practiced for health and safety of children and staff.
- Working interviews are conducted when time permits.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants must meet the requirements of Child Care Administration, Maryland State Department of Education and Academy Child Development Center.
- Staff are required to attend continuing education classes annually. Academy offers Academy Training Institute classes to all employees as a benefit.
- Staff receive an annual evaluation based on job expectations and continuing education plan completion. Employment will be terminated if employee does not meet the expectations outlined in the employee handbook and letter of agreement.
- Staff receive scholarship opportunities to attend college through the *Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Early Childhood Education Enhancement Program issued by MSDE.*

#### **REPORTING PROCEDURES INVOLVING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

Child abuse and neglect is a serious problem which requires the involvement of all private citizens and professionals in the community for the purposes of prevention, identification, and treatment. In Maryland, the child abuse and neglect law requires that anyone who SUSPECTS that a child has been or is being mistreated must report the matter to Child Protective Services. Any professional who knowingly fails to make a required report of child abuse/neglect may be subjected to certain professional sanctions. The professionals identified in Maryland Law include health practitioners, police officers, educators, and social workers. Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of abuse or neglect is IMMUNE from any civil liability or criminal penalty.

1. When there is suspicion of child abuse or neglect, staff will immediately inform the Director or other administrator.
2. Staff and Director or other administrator will immediately meet to discuss the incident.
3. Montgomery County Child Protective Services will be called to file a report.
4. All staff and volunteers will be sensitive to the need for confidentiality and will discuss matters only with the Director or other administrator and Child Protective Services.
5. In the event the reported incident involves an employed staff person or program volunteer, the Director or other administrator will, without exception, suspend the person from all activities involving the supervision of children. Reassignment to administrative functions may be appropriate until an investigation is completed.
6. Reinstatement of a staff person or program volunteer will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the responsible Director or other administrator and the investigating agency.

#### **SUSPICION OF DRUG/ ALCOHOL ABUSE**

1. Staff will report any suspicions of other staff coming to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the Director or other Administrator.
2. An immediate conference will be held with the Director or other Administrator to begin an investigation and staff will be placed on leave.
3. If warranted, the Director or other Administrator will require a physical examination to rule out drug or alcohol abuse.
4. If it is determined that the staff member has a drug/alcohol problem, the staff member will be placed on immediate leave and

will be referred for appropriate counseling and treatment Department of Human Resources will be notified.

5. Staff member will not return to work directly with children until:
  - a. Short term residential treatment has been completed and
  - b. Staff member attends recommended out patient treatment weekly and
  - c. Regular physical test indicates no presence of substance abuse and
  - d. Has worked in a non-child-related position for at least three (3) months at Academy
  - e. Staff member will be dismissed immediately if non-compliant.

#### **REASONS FOR DISMISSAL (of student/family)**

Academy staff work diligently with children and their parents to create a successful environment. However, since the nature of Academy is a group child care program, even with special accommodations there are times when Academy may not be able to meet all the needs of a family. Consequently, after exhausting all of our resources and without fundamentally altering the nature and scope of our group program or creating an undue financial burden, Academy reserves the right to terminate services if deemed appropriate and necessary for the best interest of all parties. Below are some examples of behaviors or concerns that effect program integrity and the safety/wellbeing of all students and staff if they can not be addressed successfully:

- Exhibiting inappropriate verbal outbursts and arguments
- Endangering the safety of oneself or that of other children or staff.
- Deliberately leaving the assigned child care area without permission (running away or hiding).
- Exhibiting inappropriate behavior.
- Needing one-to-one adult supervision that prevents the delivery of service to other children/families.
- Excessive late pick ups.
- Failure to pay tuition.
- Missing emergency/medical documentation updates.
- Inability to have family needs met by the Center program.
- If accommodations needed, fundamentally alter the nature and scope of the group child care program or create an undue financial burden.

When implementing this policy, Academy staff will take into consideration the severity and frequency of the situation. We will make every effort to help a child and his/her family to have a positive experience in our program.

**We have established these policies and procedures to achieve our mission and to maintain the best programs possible.**

**Please do not hesitate to call us should you have any questions, suggestions, or praises. We do welcome and appreciate your input and look forward to building a partnership with your family. Thank you for reading your Parent Handbook.** (revised

2008)

