

**Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC**

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**





# **Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC**

*Bringing A<sup>+</sup> Quality Learning to Early Childhood!*

**Latorie Lloyd Walker, M.A.**  
**Owner**

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**West Columbia, SC 29169**

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# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Mission Statement
- 1.2 Owner
- 1.3 Changes in Policy
- 1.4 Family/Center Relationship
- 1.5 Grievances
- 1.6 Curriculum
- 1.7 Schedule

## **SECTION 2 – HOURS OF OPERATION**

- 2.1 Hours
- 2.2 Holiday
- 2.3 Professional Development Days
- 2.4 Inclement Weather
- 2.5 Arrival Time

## **SECTION 3 - ENROLLMENT**

- 3.1 Admission
- 3.2 Withdrawal/Denial of Service
- 3.3 Confidentiality
- 3.4 Part-Time Enrollment
- 3.5 Non-Discrimination Policy

## **SECTION 4 – FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES**

- 4.1 Registration
- 4.2 Tuition
- 4.3 Sibling Discount
- 4.4 Tuition Increase
- 4.5 Returned Check Fee
- 4.6 Late Pick-up Fees
- 4.7 Vacation/Reservation Policy
- 4.8 Field Trip Fees
- 4.9 Enrichment Programs

## **SECTION 5 – BEHAVIOR POLICIES**

- 5.1 Discipline Policy

## **SECTION 6 – CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

- 6.1 Child Illness & Exclusion Policy
- 6.2 Administration of Medication
- 6.3 Academy Safety
- 6.4 Reporting Abuse and Neglect
- 6.5 Emergency Preparedness & Evacuation Plan

## **SECTION 7 – PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

- 7.1 Open-Door Policy
- 7.2 Volunteer
- 7.3 Parent Meetings
- 7.4 Birthday Parties & Celebrations
- 7.5 Fundraising
- 7.6 After-hours Activities

## **SECTION 8 – ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS AND INFORMATION**

- 8.1 Free and Full Access
- 8.2 Release of Children
- 8.3 Tracking of Children
- 8.4 Liability Insurance
- 8.5 Provisional Employment

## **SECTION 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC is here to provide quality learning to young children under the age of five. As educators, we believe that it is our responsibility to facilitate an effective environment that is conducive to children learning and developing at a unique pace that is developmentally appropriate. We strive to build a strong foundation for each child enrolled to ensure that all children are prepared for kindergarten.

Through a variety of experiences in creative learning, music & movement, art, science, and language development, our students will grow to develop self-confidence while striving for success and excellence.

#### **1.1 MISSION STATEMENT**

At Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC, we are dedicated to providing every child with quality learning in a safe and effective environment. Each child will have an opportunity to prosper and develop at a pace that is individually developmentally appropriate. The academy will support the right of each child to play, learn, and grow in an inclusive early childhood program that will foster success. We are committed to ensuring that every child receives the best opportunity to produce a strong foundation for a fruitful, educational experience.

#### **1.2 THE OWNER**

Latorie Lloyd Walker, owner of Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC, has over 20 years of Early Childhood professional experiences. Her experience includes head start, early head start, public schools, corporate, private, and religious centers. Ms. Walker's educational background includes Early Care and Education, Child Care Management, Business Administration, Human Resource Management/Development, and Management and Leadership Development. Ms. Walker is a Certified Trainer and TA for South Carolina Child Care Career and Development.

She has an open communication policy where families are always welcome to contact her by email and/or mail. Her business mailing address is: 100-A Central Avenue Suite 205, Goose Creek, SC 29445 and direct email address is: [Latorie@AspireEarlyLearningAcademy.com](mailto:Latorie@AspireEarlyLearningAcademy.com).

#### **1.3 CHANGES IN POLICY**

We strive to maintain consistency for our policies and procedures throughout all Academies. However, there may be occasions where policies and procedures must be changed to accommodate state laws & regulations or the needs of the academy. We will notify all families of these changes by form of email and/or postings on the Parent Boards. The Academy will determine the effective dates of change; after those dates all superseded policies will be null.

## **1.4 FAMILY/CENTER RELATIONSHIP**

We believe that it takes a village to educate our children. We strongly encourage families to develop and maintain professional relationships with the academies personnel. This will show our enrolled children that their parents and teachers communicate and care about their wellbeing together. Family-center relationships are imperative to the overall development of a child in their early years.

## **1.5 GRIEVANCES**

Parents are always welcome to speak with the Academy Director at any time to express a grievance. Should parents have a concern, you are encouraged to speak with your child's direct teacher first. If your concern is not resolved, or you are not comfortable speaking with the teacher first, we encourage you to address the concern confidentially with the Director. The next course of action would be to contact the owner and/or request a meeting with the owner.

## **1.5 CURRICULUM**

Our primary educational tool is the nationally-recognized Creative Curriculum. This curriculum is a practical approach on how to organize the environment to support children's social development and active learning. It is based on child development theory. By continually changing and enriching the environment, teachers can support learning and creativity in children. It emphasizes establishing partnerships with parents and offers practical ideas for explaining the curriculum to parents.

We also use the guidelines of The SC Early Learning Standards which support the readiness of young children through nurturing early care and education environments and developmentally appropriate practices through the development of voluntary guidelines as required by the Good Start, Grow Smart Initiative. The assessment tool that we use is the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – 3.

As practical tools for educational and social development, we will also incorporate, the following age-appropriate practices: Kindergarten Readiness, life-skills, leadership, organization, etiquette, healthy living, reading, social studies, mathematics, early writing, etc.

## **SECTION 2**

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

#### **2.1 HOURS**

Aspire Early Learning Academy days of operation are Monday through Friday. The hours for your Academy are provided in your parent packet and on the Academy's website.

#### **2.2 HOLIDAYS**

The Academy will close to observe the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving Day, and one full week during the Christmas Holiday; in respect towards which day Christmas falls upon. The dates will be included in the academic calendar that is issued each August during annual registration.

#### **2.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS**

The Academy may close one day throughout the calendar year for professional development. Families will be notified ninety days in advance through parent newsletters, emails, and signs posted throughout the academy.

#### **2.4 INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of inclement weather, the Academy will close/release early at the discretion of the Owner. The Academy may follow the decisions of the local public-school districts. We will notify all families by posting closings on the local television news station (WLTX), email, website, social media, and/or parent portal.

#### **2.5 ARRIVAL TIME**

As educators, we are responsible for preparing our students for their next endeavor, which is kindergarten. In order to be successful, structure and routines are very important. Children are welcome to arrive at the Academy upon opening and before 9:30am. After 9:45am, children will not be allowed to enter for the day without a doctor's note and/or prior phone call notifying the academy of the child's attendance. We understand that occasionally families may run behind. However, it is the Director's discretion to determine when it becomes excessive.

## **SECTION 3**

### **ENROLLMENT**

### **3.1 ADMISSION**

Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC admits all children without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, or disability. When the parent or legal guardian of a child identifies that a child has special needs, the Director and the parent or legal guardian will meet to review the child's care requirements. Our program will not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The Academy will accept children with special needs as long as a safe and supportive environment can be provided for the child.

Children are enrolled in Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC according to spaces that are available. If space is available, parents/guardians will complete all forms required by the Academy, DSS, DHEC, CACFP, and all governing agencies before beginning. A copy of at least one of the parent's photo ID will need to be submitted with registration forms. Upon admission, it is mandatory that parents provide the Academy with a current DHEC Immunization form for each child with all requirements met.

If space is not available, your family has the option to be placed on the waiting list. A waiting list form will need to be completed for each child. It is recommended that the registration fee is paid along with submission of the waiting list form. The waiting list does not guarantee a specific date for an available space, only an approximate time frame based on your needs and our projected availability. When space is available, we will contact the families that paid their registration fees first in submission order, all others will be called according to the date of submission on their form.

### **3.2 WITHDRAWAL**

Enrolled families are free to withdraw from the academy at any time with a written two-weeks' notice to the Academy Director.

The Academy reserve the right to withdraw your child from our Academy. If we see where the relationship between the child, parent, and/or Academy is not positive, we will provide families with a two weeks' notice as well. Before proceeding with withdrawal, our team will do our best to work with the child and family members to rectify the challenges we are presented with.

The following are grounds for immediate withdrawal:

- Behavior of child, parent, family guest, or legal guardian that is endangering to self or other persons, materials, building structure, and/or classroom environment.
- Chronic disruption of a positive environment from a child's behavior.
- Delinquent tuition of one week.
- Repeat delinquent tuition and fees.
- Continuous late pick-ups.

### **3.3 CONFIDENTIALITY**

We recognize the importance of keeping all children, family, and employee files confidential. All files are kept locked in the Director's office. Children's files will be accessible only to the parent/guardian of that child, owner, director, director's designee, DHEC and DSS Child Care Licensing. Parental permission must be obtained to use photographs of children on the internet, social medias (ex: Facebook), and in any and all publications.

### **3.4 PART-TIME HOURS**

The Academy may offer a limited number of part-time spots at each academy. If space is available, you may choose three set full days or five part-time mornings. Families are not permitted to continuously switch between full time and part time enrollment statuses. An additional charge of \$30.00 per day OR \$8.00 per hour will be placed on your account if your child attends an additional day or over five hours.

### **3.5 NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Enrollment is based upon availability of space without discrimination, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or any other protected characteristic as established by law.

The Academy Director has overall responsibility for this policy and maintains reporting and monitoring procedures, as applicable. Parental and employees' questions or concerns should be referred to the director and/or owner.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee willfully violating this policy.

## **SECTION 4**

### **FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES**

#### **4.1 REGISTRATION**

A non-refundable registration fee of \$80.00 is due upon enrollment and annually. Once paid upon initial enrollment, the next non-refundable registration fee will be due by August 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year and each year thereafter while enrolled. (*examples: enrollment October 2017 – next registration fee is due August 2018 / enrollment March 2018 – next registration fee is due August 2019*) The registration fee will automatically be placed on your account on August 1<sup>st</sup> in the parent portal if your child will be attending for the current academic year.

## 4.2 TUITION

Tuition payments are due each Monday for the week that you are receiving services. All accounts with a balance at closing on Tuesday, will receive a twenty dollar (\$20.00) late payment fee. The balance will need to be paid in full before returning the next week.

A tuition box is located at the entrance for your payment convenience. Only members of management has access to the box. If the Director is not available, cash payments are to be placed in an envelope with the child's name, date, and the enclosed tuition amount written on it. Check payments can be placed directly in the box (without an envelope). A receipt will automatically be produced for all cash payments; however, receipts for checks/cards will be written upon request.

Adjustments in tuition are not made for sickness, inclement weather, holidays and/or any unanticipated situations that would hinder full attendance. If your child will be absent for a full week, then we will provide you with a reservation credit of half of your normal weekly tuition. If your child attends at least one day, you will be responsible for the full tuition rate.

Tuition payments are accepted by form of cash, check, money order, credit/debit card, and on the website through our Parent Portal (online accepts credit/debit cards only).

Families who refer another family to any one of our Academies may receive one free tuition week tuition for each family has been enrolled for a minimum of three weeks. It is the families' responsibility to notify the Director to receive a credit on their account.

After one full year at the academy, with no breaks in service, families will receive one (1) free vacation week where they will not have to pay the reservation fee. The child/children must be absent the entire week to receive this credit. It is the families' responsibility to notify the Director to use their free vacation week.

**TUITION EXCPETIONS:** Two weeks out of the year, we make an exception to the tuition policy.

- **THANKSGIVING:** The week of the Thanksgiving Holiday, full-time families will only be responsible for the part-time rate if their child attends at least one day. If your child does not attend at all during this week, you will only be responsible for the reservation fee of half of your normal tuition rate.
- **CHRISTMAS:** There will be no weekly tuition charges for all families when the Academy closes for the week of Christmas. However, if there is a recurring past due balance from the previous week on the account at 6:00pm on Tuesday during this week, a \$20.00 late payment fee will be charged to the account.

### **4.3 SIBLING DISCOUNT**

The Academy offers a sibling discount of ten percent (10%) to families with two or more children attending within the same household. The discount is applied to the oldest child's tuition and for full-time enrollment only.

### **4.4 TUITION INCREASE**

A standard 3 to 5% annual tuition increase will effective the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in August of each year. Families will be notified of the new rates the first week in August with the annual registration packet.

### **4.5 RETURNED CHECK FEE**

There is a \$40.00 charge for all returned checks. After two NSF checks have been received from one family, cash or money orders will be required for payment.

### **4.6 LATE PICK UP FEE**

The Academy closes promptly at 6:00pm. A late fee will be charged for families that pick up after closing. After one hour, we will notify the proper authorities. More than three late pick-ups within a thirty-day period may result in a notification of withdrawal. The late pick up fees are due by closing on Friday of the week that the late pick-up occurred. The late fee schedule is as follows:

1-10 minutes	\$10.00 per child
11-20 minutes	\$15.00 per child
21 – 30 minutes	\$20.00 per child
31 – 45 Minutes	\$25.00 per child
46 – 60 Minutes	\$30.00 per child.

### **4.7 VACATION/RESERVATION POLICY**

If within one service week, your child attends at least one day at the Academy, families are responsible for the full weekly tuition. If your child is absent the entire service week, for various reasons, it is the families' responsibility to pay half of the normal tuition cost. The reservation fee is due by Tuesday of the respected week to avoid the late payment fee.

Once your family has been enrolled for one full year, with no breaks in service, you will receive one free vacation week. It is the parents' responsibly to notify the Director of the dates you would like to use your free vacation week.

#### **4.8 FIELD TRIP FEES**

Parents and guardians will be notified well in advance of upcoming field trips and fees. All fees are due on Mondays of the week of the field trip to ensure that their child attends the trip. Field trip fees are not inclusive in tuition cost and registration fees. Field trip fees must be paid separately in the form of cash/check only.

#### **4:9 ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS**

We hope to be able to offer a variety of enrichment programs for our students. If you wish for your child to participate, there will be a small additional fee for this service. The programs and fees will be provided to parents in advance. Payments must be made directly to the program.

### **SECTION 5**

#### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

##### **5.1 DISCIPLINE**

Praise and positive reinforcement are the most effective methods of behavior management with children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from the adults in their lives, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief we use a positive approach to discipline and practice the following discipline and behavior management techniques.

It is important to know that at Aspire Early Learning Academy, we DO NOT use corporal punishment of any form to discipline our students.

##### **WE DO**

- ◆ Communicate to children using positive statements.
- ◆ Communicate with children on their level.
- ◆ Talk with children in a calm quiet manner.
- ◆ Explain unacceptable behavior to children.
- ◆ Give attention to children for positive behavior.
- ◆ Praise and encourage the children.
- ◆ Reason with and set limits for the children.
- ◆ Apply rules consistently.
- ◆ Model appropriate behavior.
- ◆ Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.
- ◆ Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity.
- ◆ Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.
- ◆ Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.

- ◆ Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires and feelings.
- ◆ Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.
- ◆ Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

### **WE DO NOT**

- ◆ Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.)
- ◆ Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child.
- ◆ Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.
- ◆ Use food as a form of reward or punishment.
- ◆ Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.
- ◆ Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.
- ◆ Embarrass any child in front of others.
- ◆ Compare children.
- ◆ Place children in a locked and/or dark room.
- ◆ Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision.
- ◆ Allow discipline of a child by other children.
- ◆ Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

Conferences will be scheduled with parents if particular disciplinary problems occur. If a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her, then the Director has the right, after meeting with the parents and documenting behavior problems and interventions, to terminate child care services for that particular child.

Time out will be used as a last resort. If time-out is used, the child will not be isolated from the group. The child will only sit minutes that are identical to his/her age.

We understand that biting could be a challenge with younger children. In the event that your child is a biter, we will document the incidents, with two separate documentations (one for both families). Both sets of parents will be notified. Families of biters will be conferenced and a corrective action plan will be put into place for the biter, teachers, and parents. If the incident continues over the documented period of time, the family will receive adequate notice to withdraw from the academy for the overall safety of the all children enrolled.

## **SECTION 6**

### **ILLNESS, MEDICATIONS, & SAFETY**

## 6.1 CHILD ILLNESS & EXCLUSION POLICY

*Our child illness policy is based on the Health Care Policies that were developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Department of Health and Environment.*

We understand that it is difficult for parents or guardians to leave work and/or miss work. It is recommended that preparations are made in advance for occasions where children must remain home or be picked up due to illnesses. Exclusion from the center, for a certain period of time, may become necessary to reduce the transmission and spread of an illness. The center may not be able to adequately meet the individual needs of mildly ill children, it will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may require a note from the pediatrician.

Minor illnesses are common in children; exclusion serves no purpose for minor illnesses as long as it does not represent any harm to other children.

**Children will be excluded from the childcare setting for the following reasons listed below.** This list covers most common illnesses, but is not inclusive of all reasons for exclusion:

- Any illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than our employees can provide without compromising the health, safety, and security of other children.
- Fever that is 101.0 orally, 102.0 aural (ear) or 100.0 under the arm (without the added degree).
- Diarrhea – More than 2 loose stools within 24 hours; stools with blood or mucus; or uncontrolled stools that cannot be contained in a diaper, underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – Green or bloody; 2 or more times during a 24 hour period.
- Rash – with fever or behavioral changes (unless written excuse is provided by a physician).
- Purulent conjunctivitis – pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge around the eye; may return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Ring worm – may return 24 hours after treatment has begun and soars have crusted over.
- Impetigo – may return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Strep Throat – may return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Head Lice – may return 24 hours after treatment has begun and all nits are removed.
- Scabies – may return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Chickenpox – may return when all lesions have dried and is crusted (appx. 6 days)
- Pertussis (whooping cough) – may return after 5 days of receiving treatment with appropriate antibiotics.

- Hepatitis A Virus – may return one week after the onset of the illness and after immunoglobulin has been administered.

Children who have been excluded may return:

- ✓ When they are free from fever, vomiting and all other symptoms without medication, prescription or over-the-counter, for a full 24 hours.
- ✓ When they have been treated with antibiotics for a full 24 hours.
- ✓ When they are able to participate comfortably in all usual program activities, including outdoor time.
- ✓ The child must be free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless a note from a pediatrician specifically states that the child's condition is not contagious and the involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

For your child's comfort and to reduce the risk of transmission, children are to be picked up within one (1) hour of parent notification. Children are to be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to the Academy. In the case of a suspected contagious illness or continuing symptoms, a note from a pediatrician stating that the child is well enough to return to school may be required to return to the Academy.

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, we request that you notify the Director so that we may inform our family and monitor the other students for similar symptoms.

The final decision whether to exclude a child from the program will be made by the Director.

## **6.2 MEDICATION POLICY**

We understand that there may be occasions where medication must be administered to a child. If the prescription is required to be administered 1 or 2 times a day, we request that it is administered at home.

We will administer medication that is required 3 or more times a day at the Academy. We reserve the right to refuse to administer any medication that is not in compliance with the policy. We administer medications such things as prescription medicine in the original bottle with a label, diaper rash ointment, Neosporin, sunscreen, bug spray, and other similar products. We will not issue over the counter medication for fever reduction purposes.

Should medication be administered the following conditions will need to be met:

- Medications must be left at the front desk and/or with the person in charge for proper handling.
- No medications (including topical solutions, such as diaper creams and sunscreen, etc.) can be left within the reach of children.

- Parents will need to complete the medication log before medication can be administered. A completed form includes: times to be dispensed, dosage amounts, last time administered.
- Medications must be in original containers and labeled with the child's name and current date. We cannot give medication that is not in the original container or is prescribed for someone other than the child. Medicine will be dispensed as directed on the container. **The first dose of the medication should be given at home in case there is an allergic reaction.**
- If your child needs special medical procedures (ex: nebulizer treatments), we need a signed note from your physician stating the types and amounts of medication to be given, times and any other specific information.
- If your child has severe allergic reactions to certain foods or insect bites, you may keep a prescribed Epi-pen at the academy. Written instructions from the physician on when to administer will be kept on file, as well as written permission from the parent for us to administer it in an emergency. These forms will need to be updated every six months.
- The Director or Director Designee will administer all prescription medications.
- Information will be logged immediately following the administration of the medication and a copy will be provided to the child's parent or guardian.
- If there is an error in administering the medication, parents/guardians will be notified immediately and it will be documented in writing. If the error requires medical attention the Department of Social Services- Child Care Licensing will be notified.

### 6.3 SAFETY

[Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC](#) will go above and beyond to ensure your child is safe. All doors are locked from the outside but are unlock from the inside. Everyone who approaches the building must ring the door bell to enter.

Children are tracked hourly though-out a normal day to ensure that each child is accounted for. The teachers will use an assigned Tracking Form to call each child by name and facial recognition.

If someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up your child, they will need to bring a state or government issued picture ID. If he/she is not on your approved list (on the enrollment application), a parent will be called before the child can be released. We request that parents notify us well in advance about any pick-up changes. The academy reserves the right to not release a child to any adult who appears to be intoxicated. We will notify another parent. If another adult on the pick-up list is not available, we will contact the Department of Social Services.

A court-ordered document must be on file for families who are experiencing custody challenges. We will not be able to legally withhold a child from being pick-up from a non-custodial parent unless a court-ordered document is provided and placed in your child's

file. In the event that there is an altercation, the local police department and the Department of Social Services will be notified.

#### **6.4 REPORTING ABUSE & NEGLECT**

Besides being illegal, child abuse and neglect interferes with a child's healthy developments and later achievements in life. Our State Officials requires that all Early Childhood Professionals report any suspected abuse and neglect to our local Child Protective Service office. The law requires reporting the following:

- Any physical injury, sexual or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by those responsible for his/her care, custody and control (with the exception of discipline including spanking administered in a reasonable manner) shall be construed to be **abuse**.
- Failure to provide by those responsible for the care, custody and control of the child, the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, medical, surgical or any other care necessary for his/her well-being shall be classified as **neglect**.

Parents may not be informed of reporting if such information may hinder a full investigation.

#### **6.5 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & EVACUATION PLAN**

In the event that an individual medical emergency should occur at the Academy, the following steps will be taken:

1. The designee will call 911 and the emergency medical team will transport the child to the nearest hospital. We will attempt to reach both parents and take the Emergency Form for the child to the hospital.
2. The Director will go with the child to the hospital and stay with the child until the parent(s)/guardian(s) arrive.
3. The Director's Designee will remain at the facility to remain in charge during the Director's absence.

In the event an environmental emergency should occur at our Academy, the evacuation plans are posted in each academy and a summary is provided below:

1. In inclement weather the Academy will follow the school district closing schedule in which the Academy is located. Parents can tune into the local radio station, television station and/or social media pages for weather updates.
  - a. In the event of a sudden emergency, such as a tornado/earthquake, the children will be relocated to the safest location within the building. If we loose power/electronic communication and children must be

relocated to safer location, a note will be placed on the Academy's front door to update parents.

2. In case of fire: We will follow the steps:
  - a. Children will be quickly escorted out of the building and will line up against the fence that is the farthest away from the building.
  - b. Once all children have exited the building, we will relocate to a safe location together.
  - c. Teachers will account for all children by checking attendance logs/tracking forms and reporting to the director or designee before leaving, upon arrival at the safe location, and every 15 minutes thereafter.
  - d. We will notify parents of our location by phone once we arrive safely.
  - e. The Director or Designee will provide first aid as needed.
  - f. We will not re-enter the building until permission is given by the Fire Officials

## **6.6 TRANSPORTATION & FIELD TRIPS**

Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC does not provide transportation to and from individual homes. In the event of an off-site field trip, will use state certified buses, with certified drivers, to transport children to and from field trips. Children will be tracked every 15-30 minutes by using the tracking sheet to call their names and verify it is the child through facial recognition.

Parents will be notified at least two weeks in prior to a field trip. Notices will include departure time from the Academy, return time to the Academy, dress attire, and the cost of the field trip. Written parental authorization for field trips is required and must be signed in advance. Payment is due a minimum of two days before the field trip, unless otherwise noted. All children are encouraged to participate in all field trips as this is an important part of the learning experience.

If the children are being transported a separate "check on/check off" form will be taken on the bus each time children are transported. Children will be checked on **each** time they enter the bus and checked off **each** time they exit the bus (either at a field trip site or at the Academy).

A child who does not have written permission to go on a field trip will remain at the academy and be placed in another classroom.

## **SECTION 7**

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

#### **7.1 OPEN-DOOR POLICY**

We have an open-door policy where parents are welcome to visit the academy at any time during normal business hours. We request that visitations are limited during the hours of 12:00pm-2:00pm, which is scheduled for nap time.

## **7.2 VOLUNTEER**

We encourage parents to volunteer in the classrooms and on field trips. Please notify your child's teacher and/or the director if you will be available to volunteer. If someone other than a parent/guardian volunteers, you will need to notify the Director before the person visits the academy/field trip site.

## **7.3 PARENT MEETINGS**

Each academic year, we will have an Open House for all families to visit the classroom and speak with the teacher. There will be two optional parent-teacher conferences during the school year for children ages two - five. Conferences will be a time for parents to learn about their child's experiences and developmental progress at the Academy. Documentation of your child's progress, developmental checklists, and classroom portfolios will be shared at the conference. Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of either the teaching team or parents.

## **7.4 BIRTHDAY PARTIES & CELEBRATIONS**

Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC encourages parents to celebrate their child's birthday at the academy. This brings an indescribable joy for your child and his/her peers. Celebrations may be held at 3:00pm Monday – Friday. Parents and family members are welcome to attend. We have a No Nut policy in place, so please be mindful when purchasing your items. We request that all food items are store bought. Notify your child's teacher as soon as possible of your celebration plans before the big day.

## **7.5 FUNDRAISING**

The Academy will hold 2-3 fundraising opportunities a year. We encourage every family to participate. Fundraisers provides the academy the opportunity to purchase new items for the children as well as keep tuition at an affordable cost.

## **7.6 AFTER HOURS ACTIVITIES**

We may host a minimal amount of after-hours activities so that families may attend special events. After-hour activities will be posted well in advance for proper planning.

# **SECTION 8**

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS**

## **8.1 FREE AND FULL ACCESS**

Parents have free and full access to their children, unless a court order states otherwise and the visit does not disrupt classroom instruction, activities, and/or routines. We encourage parents to schedule court ordered family visits away from the academy as we strive to maintain a consistent environment for our students.

## **8.2 RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Children will only be released to authorized adults. The parent/guardian will complete a form listing any and all adults who are authorized to pick up the child from the facility. If special circumstances arise and you need someone to pick up your child that would normally not be allowed to do so, you must notify the center prior to departure, either by phone and/or written notice.

In the event of a parental emergency and we are unable to reach an emergency contact, the individual(s) will be required to provide us a copy of his/her photo identification and/or confirm knowledge of the family code word to the Director.

Any additions, changes, or deletions to the authorization form must be made by the parent/guardian. Identified biological parents will not be removed from forms or denied from picking up a child unless a court order prohibiting them is provided.

In the event someone arrives to pick up a child who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, law enforcement will be called.

## **8.3 TRACKING OF CHILDREN**

All children will be accounted for as they enter or exit the facility, enter or exit a vehicle for field trips, or move from classroom to classroom within the Academy. The location of all children will be tracked through our Tracking Form.

Parents should ensure that when dropping off their children that the caregiver is fully aware that the child has entered the room and that the parent will be leaving. **Please do not drop your child off at the front or classroom door and assume that the caregiver will see that the child arrived.**

## **8.4 LIABILITY INSURANCE**

All facilities are required by law to either have liability insurance or inform parents that they do not carry insurance. Aspire Early Learning Academy does carry liability insurance.

## **8.5 PROVISIONAL EMPLOYMENT**

Child Care facilities has the choice to participate in provisional employment which is an emergency hiring process. If the facility participates, the parents will be notified that there is a provisional worker at the academy.

The Provisional Employment process means that employees are hired using an internet SLED catch based on date of birth and social security number until such time as a fingerprint-based background check and a check of the Central Registry of Abuse and Neglect has been returned. Employees hired using Provisional Employment cannot be left alone with children until the fingerprint and Central Registry checks are complete and results are received.

Aspire Early Learning Academy only uses the provisional hire process in the event of an emergency ONLY if the applicant has previous, confirmed experience in a licensed child care center.

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