

I'll Be Your Best Friend



Academy

PARENT HANDBOOK

and

Policies and Procedures

2011-2012

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Visit our website at

<http://www.illbeyourbestfriend.com>

OUR PHILOSOPHY

INTRODUCTION

The Administrators and Staff would like to welcome you to I'll Be Your Best Friend Academy. We have been open since August 16, 2006. Our goal is to provide state-of-the-art quality childcare for our community. The center is genuinely interested in maintaining open channels of communications with parents in order to better understand and care for their children. We hope that you will always feel welcome to share your thoughts, suggestions, and/or ideas with us. We want to know how you feel about the care we provide to your child(ren). Also, we encourage you to visit the center and spend some time observing your child(ren) as they grow, learn, and play.

We are currently going through accreditation for the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA). NECPA is a nationally recognized organization responsible for reviewing and evaluating childcare centers to ensure that all local, state, and national requirements regarding early childhood services are met. The teachers will be required to have either a CDA (Child Development Associate) or a TCC (Technical Certificate or Credit) credential in order to teach at I'll Be Your Best Friend Academy, therefore, the teachers will be taking online classes in order to achieve our goals. We will be going through many exciting changes in the months ahead and we look forward to your continued support as we grow.

MISSION STATEMENT

"I'll Be Your Best Friend Academy" promises to provide state-of-the-art, secure, and quality childcare at a competitive price for children four (4) weeks through the age of twelve (12). We will provide a nurturing and loving environment where children are encouraged to be creative, a place where learning is fun as well as challenging. **"I'll Be Your Best Friend Academy"** encourages all parents/guardians to become actively involved in the school and their child's education. We believe that children need the support of their family, teachers, and community in order to achieve their dreams.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We will be open from 6:00 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, twelve (12) months a year. We understand that sometimes due to circumstances beyond your control, i.e., traffic, etc., you may be unable to pickup your child by 6:30 p.m. If this happens please contact our office immediately. If we have not been contacted by 6:40 p.m., we will call the emergency number on file in your child's records. Late pick-ups will result in late charges in the amount of \$1.00 per minute after 6:30 p.m., if not notified prior to your arrival.

ACCEPTANCE OF CHILDREN

I'll Be Your Best Friend Academy is open to all children between the ages of four (4) weeks and twelve (12) years old. Children with special needs are accepted if we can meet the needs of the child and family.

We do not discriminate against any children because of race, greed, handicap, or special disabilities, sex, national or ethnic origin.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Center will be closed:

Memorial Day - May 28, 2012

Labor Day - September 5, 2011

Thanksgiving Holiday - November 24 & 25, 2011

Christmas Holiday - December 22 @ 2:00 and **Closed** December 23-26, 2011

Fourth of July - July 4, 2012

You will be required to pay regular weekly tuition for all holidays.

VACATION /SICK LEAVE POLICY

All children will be allowed five (5) days beginning August 1, 2011 through July 31, 2012 for vacation, and three (3) sick days. You may use it whenever you wish without having to give notice. You will be required to pay full tuition for all other absences (except for hospitalization). **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

ABSENCES

We request that if your child will be absent to please notify us as soon as possible. Absent without notification for more than three (3) days may result in being dropped from the program.

DAILY SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT

All children must be signed in and out at the reception desk. If an individual other than the parent/guardian is picking up the child, the parent must notify the office, and the person picking up must sign the visitor log book. If the person is unknown to our staff a Driver's License or other photo I.D. will be required. Children may only be signed in and out by a person listed in the child's records. **Class begins at 9:00 a.m. for the three (3) and four (4) year olds, please have them there by that time so they won't miss what the class is learning in order to progress to the next level.**

NAPS

All children between the ages of one (1) year up to five (5) years of age are required to rest after lunch for at least an hour or more. **Please do not bring your child during naptime from 11:30 - 2:30.** Those children who do not wish to sleep are encouraged to quietly read a book or play with quiet toys..

FEE SCHEDULE

Registration fees:

Infants through After School \$100.00

Infants through two (2) year olds (unless potty trained) need to bring two (2) packs of diaper wipes a month.

All yearly registration fees are due upon enrollment and are **NON-REFUNDABLE**. Registration will be due again on August 3, 2011.

Weekly tuition:

Infants through four (4) year- Full-time	\$130.00/child
Before School	\$ 30.00/child
After School	\$ 60.00/child
Before and After School	\$ 90.00/child
Summer Camp	\$130.00/child
Drop-ins	\$ 30.00/a day

Families with more than one(1) full-time child will receive a 5% discount off of your total weekly tuition, i.e.,a family of two (2) will pay \$247.00 a week.

The weekly tuition is due on **MONDAY** of that week and must be paid whether the child is in attendance or not. If paying by check please include your child's name on the memo line of the check. A **late fee of \$40.00** will apply if not received by **TUESDAY EVENING**. If payment continues to be past due you will be charged \$40.00 for each week that it remains unpaid. If the past due amount accumulates for more than two (2) weeks, your child will not be allowed to return until all payments are paid in full.

There is a \$40.00 charge on all returned checks. You must pay the original amount of the check and the check charge, by cash or money order within five (5) days, after being contacted by our office. **If the cash or money order has not been received by the fifth day your child will not be allowed to return to school until the balance is paid and/or camera access will be suspended.**

DROP-INS

Drop-ins welcome when space is available.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

You must give the center two (2) weeks notice in writing if you are taking your child out of the program and all outstanding balances need to be paid in full. **IF YOU DO NOT GIVE A TWO (2) WEEK NOTICE YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TUITION FEES FOR THOSE WEEKS**. Vacation/Sick Leave can not be used as your two (2) weeks notice.

WAITING LIST

If the Center is in full capacity we will create a waiting list for each class and children will be accepted based on seniority or if another sibling is already enrolled.

NUTRITION

Our program believes that every child needs good nutrition to grow and develop. Our center provides the following:

- 1. Nutritionally balanced breakfast and lunch
- 2. Healthy P.M. snack

Parents/Guardians of infants shall provide prepared formula and baby food and marked with their full name and the date bottle was prepared. Infants and one (1) year olds will eat their meals in the classroom. All other classes will eat in the lunch room. If your child would like to participate in breakfast please have them here at their classes scheduled meal time. If you would like to join your child for lunch please let your child’s teacher know what day you will be here.

Breakfast

Lunch

Toddlers & 2 year olds..... 8:00 a.m.	Toddlers & 2 year olds..... 11:30 a.m.
3 & 4 year olds..... 8:30 a.m.	3 & 4 year olds..... 12:00 p.m.

Afternoon snack is served at 2:45 p.m. After-School students will receive an afternoon snack when they arrive from their school.

Weekly menus will be posted in the lobby and a copy is also available next to the sign in computer.

FOOD POLICY

We provide all the meals for the children throughout the day and we ask that the parents not bring food into the center. We ask that parents help us in encouraging healthy eating habits in our children by not bringing Fast Food, Donuts, Carbonated Drinks or Sports Drinks. If your child arrives early in the morning and require a snack to tied them over until breakfast please bring only breakfast related items, i.e. cereal in a ziplock bag, cereal bar, etc. The only exception will be on special occasions. **Carbonated drinks are not allowed for the children at any time.** If your child brings his lunch please make sure that it is a balanced meal, i.e. meat, vegetable, and fruit groups

BIRTHDAY’S

We welcome the opportunity to celebrate birthdays with the children. On a child’s birthday the parent may bring a treat to share with the class. When you are planning to do this, please talk with your child’s teacher and set up the time that would be most appropriate to participating in any classroom celebrations. **No latex balloons.**

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is available from Ebenezer Elementary and Rincon Elementary to our Center for our after-school program. Students who attend Blanford Elementary will be able to ride the school bus to and from the Center for before and after-school care.

Transportation Agreements and Vehicle Emergency Forms must be completed and signed before the beginning of the school year.

If your child will not be picked up from school at the end of the school day, you must notify the Center by 12:00 p.m.

Field Trip Permission Forms must be signed and dated for each trip.

HEALTH

Two or more of the following symptoms may cause your child to have to stay home:

Vomiting	Diarrhea	Sore Throat	Coughing
Chills	Ear Ache	Skin Eruptions	Red Eyes

A child will not be accepted, nor allowed, to remain at the center if the child has the equivalent of a one hundred and one (101) degree or higher oral temperature. Children need to be fever free for twenty-four (24) hours without medication before they may return to school.

All contagious diseases, i.e. hand, foot, and mouth disease, ring worm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, thrush, etc., should be reported to the center in order that we can inform the parents. If your child is unable to return due to a contagious illness you must have a doctor's note that he/she is no longer contagious and may return.

If your child has open wounds or any contagious microorganisms, i.e. ringworm, they will be required to remain covered while at school. In case of ringworm they will also be excluded from all water related activities.

If your child is prone to diaper rash please provide cream to be kept in their baskets to be used when needed.

A certificate of immunization, form 3231, must be provided. **Parents are responsible for keeping the immunization record up to date, in order to remain at the Center.**

If a child becomes sick while in our care we will notify a parent/guardian. Please pick him/her up as soon as possible.

In case of a medical emergency and/or serious injury, we will call 911 and the staff will provide first aid/CPR until emergency assistance arrives. A parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

MEDICATION

A medication form, signed by a parent/guardian, must accompany all medication, prescription and non-prescription, to be administered to a child. Make sure all medication is in the original container and the date, child's name, Doctor's name and the dosage plainly stated is present on prescribed medication. Forms are available at the reception desk. You are required to fill out a new form every week. If your child is on the same medication indefinitely, i.e. breathing treatments, allergy medication, etc., you may bring a note from their doctor and you will only be required to fill out a medication form once a month. The medication forms will be kept in your child's file according to State Guidelines.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

If a child has noticeable adverse reaction to any prescribed medication, becomes ill, or injured, the parents/guardian will be notified and depending on the severity of the emergency, either Dr. Minkailu Sesay, Memorial Health University Physician, Rincon, Georgia or 911 will be contacted for assistance.

In the event of an occurrence of a communicable disease, written notification will be posted on the classroom door within twenty-four (24) hours.

DISCIPLINE

We will use positive reinforcement of acceptable behavior. When inappropriate behavior occurs we will explain the consequences of such behavior and offer alternatives. The teacher will redirect the child toward appropriate behavior. When necessary the child may be placed in "TIME OUT" in order to think about his/her behavior, after which time the teacher will discuss the inappropriate behavior with the child before returning him/her to the class activities. (The use of harsh language or physical punishment is strictly prohibited).

DRESS CODE

A change of clothing is required for each child. Children two (2) years of age and younger need at least two

(2) changes of clothing. **Please label your child's clothing with their full name. We can't be responsible for lost or damaged clothing.** It is the parent's responsibility to provide enough diapers or pull ups for their child daily.

Children two (2) years and up are assigned a personal space for their belongings. Please send a spare set of clothing including underwear and socks that will be left in the child's cubbies. Such clothing should be labeled and placed in a plastic bag.

School is a place for investigating and learning about many things. Some investigations become quite messy and/or wet. The staff and children will be more relaxed if he/she wears the same type of clothes that is worn at home. **Please do not dress your child in anything you do not want to be soiled.**

The center also appreciates clothing that is easily manipulated for restroom use. Children are learning to do things for themselves, and the child will receive help only when clothing is made in such a way that the child can't manage.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILDREN WITHOUT SHOES!!!!

TOILET TRAINING

We will begin potty training at eighteen (18) months, provided you're child shows an interest in doing so. In this case, we would ask that the child start wearing pull-ups instead of diapers. Otherwise, it will begin when they turn two (2) years of age. We encourage the parents to work closely with the teachers, and their children at home, to make transition as smooth and stress free as possible. You will then need to send pull-ups, plenty of underwear, and several changes of clothes.

In order to advance to the three (3) year old room a child **must** be potty trained and able to take care of themselves while in the toilet, i.e. wipe themselves.

SEVERE WEATHER/EMERGENCIES

In case of severe weather we expect the parents/guardian to pick-up their child. We will notify the local television and radio stations if we are closing and post it on our website. Any children remaining at the center will be kept indoors as far away from the windows as possible. In case of fire all children will be evacuated to the far left corner of the playground until it is determined by the fire department that it is safe to return to their classrooms. If it is not safe to return to the classrooms the children will remain on the playground if weather permits and/or moved to the front building where parents/guardian will be notified.

We are required to have a fire drill every month and a tornado/ hurricane drill once every six (6) months.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND TOBACCO

The use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco is prohibited in the buildings and on the playground by staff, parents/guardians, or anyone visiting the Center. It is also prohibited on field trips, and in any vehicle used to transport children.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We understand the importance of family unity, however if a time arrives where upon any symptoms of suspected child abuse or neglect by a staff member or parent/ guardian are brought to our attention, we are **required by law** to report it to Effingham County DFACS. This center will abide by this law.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Our child development programs offer an "open door" to parents at all times. We encourage you to come for a visit when your schedule permits. We welcome parent involvement and we welcome your continued support. If you have a special talent or hobby that you would like to share, we would welcome your visit. Please speak to the staff to arrange a convenient date and time. The staff has an open door policy to encourage parents to communicate openly and freely regarding any questions, concerns, suggestions, and/or recommendation. Curriculum meetings for the school begin in August, if you wish to contribute please let the Director know, we welcome the input.

MONTHLY CALENDAR

Every classroom posts a monthly calendar of the learning activities your child will be participating in. Please look at this calendar in your child's classroom so that you can share the experience with you child.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The staff reserves the right to take photographs of the children for educational/curriculum purposes without out specific consent. Children are identified by first name and age only when these photographs are used at the center. No outside agency or individual will be allowed to photograph your child without parental consent. On occasion we use photographs of the center for advertising purposes No close up photographs are taken of the children and no names are given. If you do not want your child photographed for any reason, please let the Director or Administrator know immediately.

INTERNET ACCESS

By enrolling your child(ren) you are granting irrevocable permission to stream live video of your child(ren) on the World Wide Web without further consideration. I'll Be Your Best Friend Academy and KidsVision from ANY claims resulting from the video service. Although KidsVision has implemented maximum level security measures to protect against unauthorized access to the system, you as parents and guardians have the responsibility of protecting your Usernames and Passwords. Your KidsVision Username and Password provides a unique identifier that enables our system to identify authorized users. Therefore, your login information is the first line of defense against unauthorized access. As concerned parents and users of the KidsVision system, it is your responsibility to maintain exclusive control and use of your Username and Password and protect it from disclosure to others. YOU SHOULD NEVER GIVE YOUR PASSWORD TO ANYONE. Violating this policy including sharing access with a spouse or relative is considered abuse of the service and can result in termination of use.

TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM

We desire to work with children and parents in every way possible to provide a positive learning experience. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to dismiss a child from the Center for any of the following reasons:

1. Delinquent fees/failure to pay fees on time.
2. Failure to provide needed information and/or complete required forms.
3. Giving false information.
4. Inappropriate behavior by the parent, guardian, or other individuals designated by the parent to pick the child up. This includes disruptive, abrasive or abusive behavior or behavior that makes the staff uncomfortable. It is not our intent to prevent the parent from expressing their views, even angry one, but we must prevent scenes that frighten the children, disrupt our activities, or minimize the respect for and rapport between children and staff.
5. If a child's behavior becomes to disruptive to the program or becomes a problem that poses an unsafe situation for the child or other children in the class.
6. Parent's consistent disregard for the centers policies and procedures.
7. If special needs cannot be met.
8. Absent for 3 consecutive days without notification.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY

We value open communication and suggestions from parents/guardians. We encourage all parents/guardians to participate in the growth and development of their child.

Parents can help by doing the following:

- 1) Pay tuition when due and keep current.
- 2) Sign children in and out at the front desk and escort them to their classroom. Do not allow your child to touch the sign in/out computer.
- 3) Update forms when changes occur (i.e. telephone number, address, job, etc.).
- 4) Notify the Center if your child is ill.
- 5) Do not bring them to the Center if they are ill.

- 6) Keep us informed of changes in medical history (i.e. allergies, etc.) or changes that may affect their behavior.
- 7) Notify the Center if you will be late picking up your child.
- 8) Do not allow your child to bring toys. Except for show-n-tell days.
- 9) Communicate any concerns you may have when they arise.
- 10) Participate in special activities.
- 11) Attend Parent/Teacher conferences when requested.