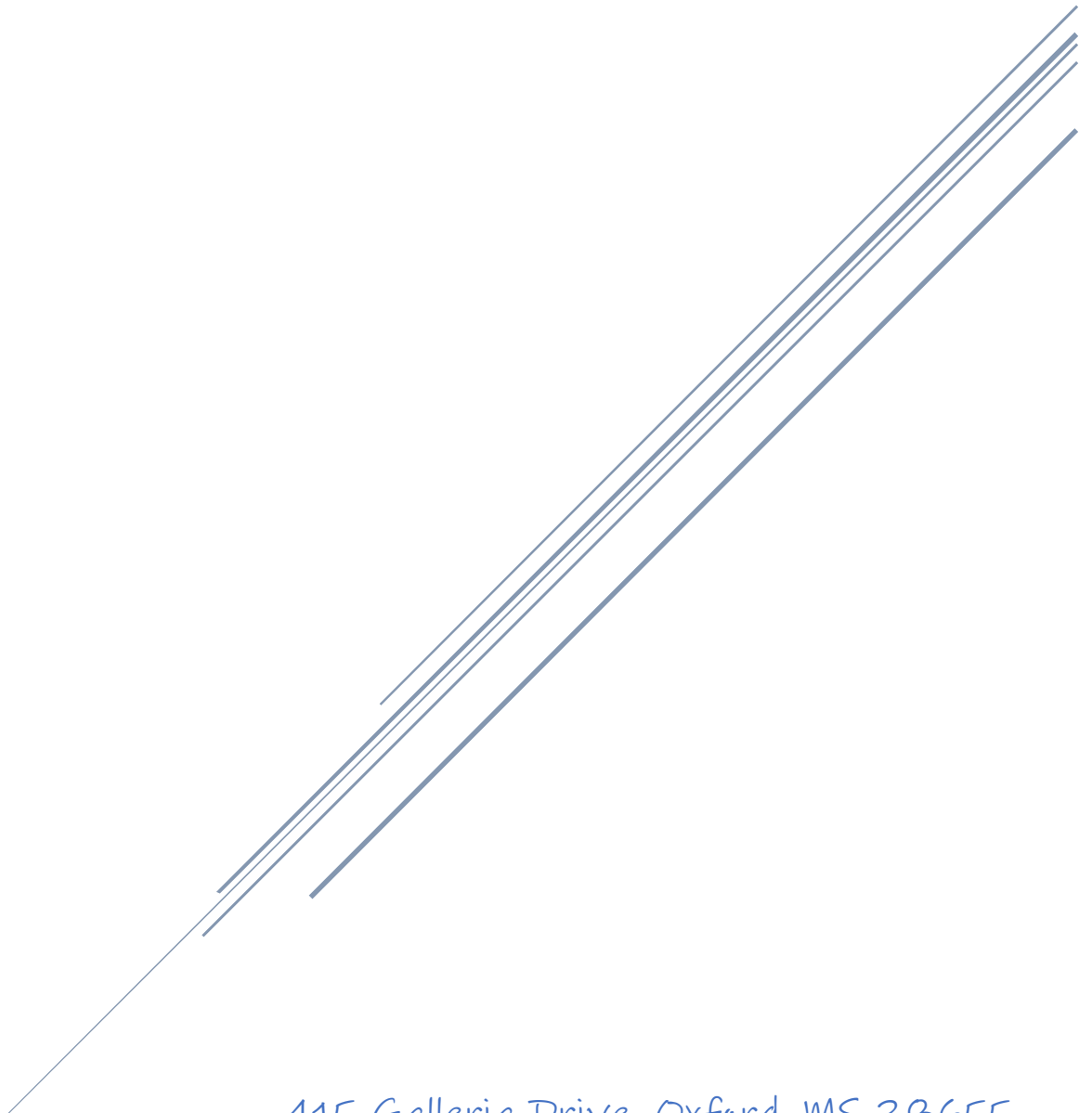


THE CHILDREN'S ACADEMY OF OXFORD

Parent Handbook



415 Galleria Drive, Oxford, MS 38655
662-871-6255

MISSION STATEMENT

The Children's Academy of Oxford (hereafter sometimes referred to as "TCA") was established to provide a creative learning, imaginative study and play, and take-your-child-to-the-stars-and-moon child care center for parents in our community.

PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

Young children are learning all the time! At TCA each experience in the life of a child is seen as "curriculum" or an opportunity to learn new concepts and to gain new skills and ideas.

Daily experiences are tailored for each individual child to reach optimal development and success.

Through play, active participation and decision-making, and learning centers, young children:

- enhance their self-concept

- increase their awareness of the world around them
- build skills for positive and healthy interactions with peers and adults
- gain foundational skills in literacy and mathematics needed to be successful in school learn to care for and respect materials and property.

Developmentally appropriate activities are designed to meet children's physical, social, cognitive, and emotional needs.

Physical development highlights good health and hygiene practices and appropriate nutrition; activities that enhance each child's body coordination of large muscles through running, jumping, climbing, dancing, bike riding, ball playing, etc.; fine motor skills develop hand/eye coordination through such activities as block building, lacing, connecting and disconnecting interlocking blocks, and handling crayons, markers, scissors, and bean bags.

Social development highlights working and playing together through small and large group activities, as well as the creation of friendships through effective dialogue and interactions, negotiation and problem solving, appropriate turn-taking, role playing, and involvement in community life.

Cognitive (or intellectual) development highlights language and literacy activities, reading readiness, recalling events, processing information and following directions. Cognitive development also includes math readiness, sorting and classifying, comparing and counting; science, sensory, and carpentry activities include using one's five senses to understand, explore, and investigate the environment, hypothesize, and draw conclusions.

Emotional development highlights interactions with staff and children that build self-confidence and self concept. It includes the ability to identify and express one's needs appropriately and assist others, self reliance and trust in oneself and others; includes the ability to venture to try new experiences, separation, transition, flexibility, and adaptability to daily routines and schedule adjustments; incorporates freedom of expression through dance, music and movement, creative art, and dramatic play.

GOALS OF THE CHILDREN’S ACADEMY OF OXFORD

- I. **Goals Related to Staff**
 - A. To provide adequate training and skills development
 - B. To provide opportunities for continual training to enhance the skills and knowledge of the staff
 - C. To involve staff in all aspects of the program.
- II. **Goals Related to Children**
 - A. To provide a safe, healthy, and happy environment
 - B. To provide adequate stimulation for physical, mental, emotional, and social growth.
 - C. To help develop the child to become himself or herself
 - D. To give each child the opportunity for self-growth and happiness.
- III. **Goals Related to the Program**
 - I. To have a program led by qualified teachers.
 - II. To have a balanced curriculum that seeks to develop the total child
 - III. To have a program that meets the needs of each individual child.
- IV. **Goals Related to the Community**
 - I. To provide a service for families in need of child care.
 - II. To assist other child care providers in any way possible.

These are the goals of The Children’s Academy of Madison as related to the staff, children, program, and community. These goals are the end results desired for The Children’s Academy of Madison.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Board of Directors: Andrea Criddle and Jay Criddle (Owners)
Olivia Archie (Director)

BUSINESS ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, WEBSITE, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS

The Children's Academy of Oxford
415 Galleria Drive Oxford, MS 38655
Oxford, Mississippi 38655
(662) 871-6255
childrensacademyofoxford.com
tcaoxford@gmail.com

TCA STAFF

TCA is licensed by the State of Mississippi. Each employee has been fingerprinted and checked for crimes against children by the State of Mississippi. Each employee maintains a minimum of 15 continuing education child care credit hours per year, along with monthly staff meetings that are geared towards the improvement of TCA and the quality of care we provide.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

TCA offers limited liability insurance. All accidents will be handled on a case by case basis. We adhere to strict fire and safety procedures to ensure our building is safe and secure, including a doorbell entrance and emergency monitoring system.

HOURS OF OPERATION

7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

CURRICULUM

See "Exhibit B" on Page 19 and 20

AGE REQUIREMENTS

Preschool: All pre-school students must be the appropriate age by September 1st

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Holidays: These days will be approximate and announced in advance

- New Year's Day Good Friday
- Memorial Day July 4th
- Labor Day Christmas
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after

If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the closings will be observed on the preceding Friday or following Monday. Parents will be notified in advance of which day the holiday will be observed. There are no adjustments in tuition for any of the above holidays/closings as they are taken into account at the time rates are established.

Inclement Weather:

In case of inclement weather, we will follow the Oxford School closings. If the schools close during a school day, parents agree to make arrangements to pick their child up at TCA as well within one (1) hour of notification. There is no refund or credit against tuition charges for such a closing.

CHILD CARE REGULATIONS SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

A license to operate a child care facility has been required by law in Mississippi since 1972. In the 1990 regular session of the legislature, the law was revised to provide regulations of child care up to age 13 for any part of a 24-hour day.

The new regulations which went into effect May 15, 2003, require that parents be informed with a summary of the licensing standards. These standards include the following:

1. Purpose of child care licensure
2. Legal authority, legal action and penalties
3. Types of licenses and their display
4. Inspections, sanitation
5. Food service, nutrition
6. Staffing ratio – number of teachers to the number of children
7. Program of activities – daily schedules
8. Building and ground requirements
9. Infant and toddler care and children with special needs
10. Night care
11. School age care
12. Preschool half-day programs
13. Summer day camps
14. Hourly care facilities
15. Facility policy and procedures
 - a. Administration
 - b. Personnel requirements
 - c. Parental involvement
 - d. Records and reports
16. Health and Safety
 - a. Staff and child health
 - b. Excluding sick children and exclusion guidelines
 - c. Medication records and documentation
 - d. Discipline and guidance (corporal punishment prohibited)
 - e. Transportation policies

The child care center must have a copy of the regulations available for parents to review upon request. Contact the Mississippi State Department of Health if you have any questions, problems, or complaints by calling toll free 1-866-489-8734. Our local licensing official is named Tamika Pratcher and her telephone number is 662-562-4428. Complaints must reflect a clear violation of the regulations.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

No child will be denied enrollment on the basis of his/her race or religion. We do retain the right to deny enrollment if all spots for a particular child's age group are filled. We do not make it a policy to deny enrollment on the basis of a child with special needs; however, if after talking with the parents of such a child we realize that we do not have the training, equipment, facilities, etc. to handle their child, we will not accept the child. This is in the best interest of the child since our goal is to meet the needs of each child. If we are not sure whether or not we can handle a special needs child, we will be willing to try. The parents and we would have to evaluate whether or not this arrangement is working as we go along.

There are certain records we must have on file before your child can attend our center. They include the following:

1. Completed registration form with the following information:
 - a. Emergency contacts

- b. Authorization for Pickup *
- c. Medical Information
- 2. "Received Handbook" form, Photography Authorization, and Field Trip Permission
- 3. Form 121 Immunization Record

*Pursuant to State regulations, we are not allowed to release your child to anyone other than you and the persons listed on the Authorization for Pickup. **Verbal permission is not enough.** TCA must have written permission from you in order to release your child to anyone other than those listed.

These forms will be given to you before enrollment and must be returned before your child actually begins attendance at our center.

WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

We require two weeks notice before withdrawing your child from TCA. The two weeks must be paid before your child's last day. If you withdraw your child during the year, you are not guaranteed a space if you want to return.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is billed on Sunday and due on Monday of each week.

If your account becomes past due for two weeks, your child will be dropped from enrollment. Tuition must be paid whether your child is present or absent.

Please make all checks payable to The Children's Academy. There will be a \$30.00 return check fee for all returned checks. After the second returned check, we will only accept cash payments.

All fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable. Fees include all registration, activity, curriculum, and supply fees.

Yearly tax statements for tax purposes will be available by the end of January for the previous year.

Registration:

- **\$100.00** for each child

Pre-School Weekly Tuition: as of October 1, 2023

- Infant class **\$185**
- 1 and 2 year old class **\$180**
- 3 and 4 year old class **\$170**

Pre-School Fees:

- Supply Fees
 - **\$75** due in September
 - **\$75** due in January
- Curriculum Fee
 - **\$75** for all classes aged 2 and up-due when preschool starts

Pre-School students pay regardless of attending or not. Tuition will remain the same during the entire year regardless of child's birthday.

Fees in this handbook are subject to change at any time.

IMMUNIZATIONS

We must have a Form 121 Certificate of Immunization Compliance on each child before your child can attend the center.

The following is a list of required immunizations. Each time your child receives shots, we must have an updated Form 121.

Age Required	Vaccine				
2 months	DTaP #1	Hib #1	PCV7 #1	IPV #1	HepB #1
4 months	DTaP #2	Hib #2	PCV7 #2	IPV #2	HepB #2
6 months	DTaP #3	(Hib #3)*	PCV7 #3		
6-18 months	HepB #3	IPV #3			
12-18 months	DTaP #4	PCV7 #4	Varicella #1		
12-15 months	Hib #3 or #4*		MMR #1		
4-6 years	IPV #4	DTaP #5	MMR #2	Varicella #2	

*The number of recommended doses of Hib vaccine will vary according to the age at which a child receives the first dose of Hib vaccine administered.

HEALTH

You are urged to keep your child at home if there seems to be any signs of illness. You may not give him/her Tylenol or Motrin to mask a fever before bringing him/her to the center. This is for your child's own good and the protection of the other children in the center. Parents will be called to pick their child up if they have any of the following:

- A. Fever of 100 degrees under the arm
- B. Two diarrhea bowel movements
- C. Severe coughing
- D. Labored or rapid breathing
- E. Vomiting
- F. Tearing, irritation, and redness of eyelid lining, followed by swelling and discharge or oozing of the eye
- G. Head lice

You will be expected to come pick your child up immediately if he/she becomes sick while at the center. If you fail to pick your child up within one hour of the time you are called, we will begin calling the persons on your emergency contact list. If no one is available to pick your child up, the local police department will be called. If your child has a communicable disease, the director should be notified as soon as possible. When returning to the center, a statement from the doctor should state that the child is no longer contagious. Your child must be fever/symptom free for 24 hours before he/she may return to the center. For cases of strep, your child must be out 24 hours after receiving a shot or 48 hours after starting oral antibiotics. For flu, your child must be out a minimum of 3 days before returning with a doctor's excuse. Head lice does not require a doctor's excuse. Head lice must be treated before the child can return to the center.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

TCA will not administer any medication except for life saving or rescue medications such as EpiPen's and inhalers. A plan of action from your child's pediatrician will be required.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR INJURIES OR ILLNESS

As a licensing requirement, every TCA staff member is certified each year in infant/child/adult CPR and basic first aid. CPR/first aid by staff shall be limited to that necessary to preserve life or prevent further immediate damage and shall be administered within the boundaries of the approved training. In emergencies requiring immediate attention, EMS (911) will be called and thereafter the parents will be notified. We will have the child transported to the nearest hospital and the ER physician will be given the medical information contained on your child's registration form. If the injury is not life threatening, we will call the parents to pick the child up. If you fail to pick your child up within one hour of the time you are called, we will begin calling the persons on your emergency contact list. If no one is available to pick your child up, this is considered neglect by State regulations and the local police will be called.

If your child is exempt from medical care on religious grounds, this information needs to be in writing and also specifically brought to the attention of the director and Board of Directors of TCA prior to your child's first day of school. Enrollment will not be denied on this basis; however, the staff of TCA will need to know how you would like for us to proceed should an emergency situation occur where medical treatment is needed.

In the case of an injury to the head, no matter how slight, a phone call to the parent will be made by the director. A determination by the parent can then be made about how to proceed.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our center opens at 7:00 a.m. Children should not arrive before 7:00 a.m. TCA will close at 5:30 p.m.

You are responsible for signing your child in and out each day.

Only adults will be allowed to pick up children. If someone else is picking your child up, you need to notify the office in writing. The person picking your child up must be listed on your pick-up permission list. The person picking up must stop at the front office and show proper identification before picking up the child.

Please monitor your children closely in the parking lot when entering and exiting the building. Fast-moving vehicles cannot always stop. Parents should always park in our parking lot to drop off or pick up your children. Parking on the street creates an enormous hazard to the safety of our children. Also when leaving the center, parents are asked to properly buckle children in the back seat. Lastly, we will not release a child to an intoxicated parent.

DIVORCE/SEPARATION

TCA wants to serve all our families in the best way possible, especially during difficult transitions. If shared custody agreements are in place, we would appreciate a written notice of your family's plan to make arrivals and departures for your child/ren an easy event. Unless we have a legal document, TCA cannot presume one parent has more or less rights than another.

LATE PICK-UP

The center closes at 5:30 p.m. All teachers are ready to leave at 5:30 p.m. and should be able to leave at the predetermined time. The following late fee will be assessed for late pick-up:

- A. After 5:30 p.m. \$25.00 (per child)
- B. After 5:35 p.m. \$1.00 per minute (per child)

This late fee must be paid in cash before your child is allowed to return for his/her next scheduled day. If you are late three times within a one-month period of time, your child will be dropped from enrollment from TCA. Prior to dismissal, you will receive a third late notice with a warning attached thereto.

If you are more than 30 minutes late picking your child up, we will begin telephone calls to reach you or someone on your emergency contact list. If after one hour, we are unable to reach you or anyone provided on your registration form, the Madison County Sheriff's office will be notified.

RELEASE OF CHILD TO PARENT(S) UNDER THE INFLUENCE

If you are under the influence of any intoxicant or medication upon arrival at TCA, State regulations require that we contact someone on your emergency contact list to pick your child up. If no one from your emergency contact list is available to pick your child up, the local police department be notified. Under no circumstance will your child be released into your custody while you are under the influence.

ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the office by 8:30 a.m. This also applies to school age children.

REASONS FOR TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT OF A CHILD FROM TCA

Immediate Termination: TCA may terminate a child's enrollment effective immediately if any of the following conditions arise:

1. At the third parent conference for a child's misbehavior or if, in the judgment of the director, a child's behavior becomes threatening to the other children or staff.
2. If your tuition remains past due for two weeks.
3. If for some reason, all attempts have been made to prevent or stop biting and nothing seems to help, we may require the temporary removal of your child. This step will only be used if we cannot manage it in any other way.
4. If you are late picking your child up four times within a one-month period of time. A third late notice will be given with a warning attached thereto.
5. The child is ill when brought to TCA more than three times within a month.
6. A parent fails to pick their child up when called and the Oxford Police Department has to be called.
7. Physical or verbal abuse of staff or children by a parent or child. All complaints are to be discussed with the director in private.

Two-Week Notice: TCA may terminate a child's enrollment with a two-week notice if any of the following conditions arise:

1. The program does not meet the developmental needs or special needs of a child, or the special needs of a child cannot be adequately met with the current staffing patterns.
2. Necessary items (such as all completed or updated forms, clothes, diapers, food, etc.) are not provided as described herein.
3. Such terms and conditions of this Parent Handbook are not abided by.

Appeals: Families shall have the right of written appeal with regard to settlement of controversy or disagreement with a decision of the director. The director will be given a copy of the written appeal and will set up a meeting with the Board of Directors. The decision of the Board will be final.

COMMUNICATION

Close communication is important as we work together to provide the best possible experiences for your child. Staff will be available for quick verbal updates about your child at drop-off and pick-up times and the director is available by phone or e-mail. We are also willing to schedule a conference with you at your request, as needed. Please keep us informed of significant changes and events that might affect your child's typical behavior patterns. We encourage your questions and suggestions and hope you will share yourself and your talents with us. Other regular communication channels include:

- monthly newsletters,
- daily notes and/or periodic memos,
- bulletin board notices, and
- parent/teacher conferences as needed.

TCA also maintains an open-door policy for parents. Parents are encouraged to participate in the center's activities as much as possible. However, unless participating in the activities for the day, we ask that you keep your conversations to the teachers at a minimum when the conversation does not involve the care your child is receiving. This is so the teachers can focus on all the children in their care and to maintain programming and safety in their room. If you feel you need additional time to speak to a teacher or any staff member, please notify the director. She will be happy to arrange a parent/teacher conference with you at your convenience. Good communication is of the utmost importance to us. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the child or children. Sensitive issues will be discussed in private outside of regular childcare hours.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is encouraged. Children love for their parents to be involved in their group activities. If you have time during the year to assist with an activity, please do so. Parents and resource materials are always appreciated. If you have any resources that relate to our units or any items you would like to share, please feel free to do so.

TCA has an open-door policy which means that parents have welcome access to the center at all times. Welcome access shall be defined as parents having access to areas of the center available to their child and non disruptive to normal daily activities. All visitors, including parents, must stop in the office.

BEHAVIOR

TCA is committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and caring environment. We speak with all children respectfully and never use any form of belittling, corporal punishment, or improper language.

TCA is a drug, alcohol, and smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted on the premises. We believe because you as parents/guardians have chosen TCA, you are also committed to these same principles of childcare. We ask that parents/guardians follow our philosophy when at TCA.

Physical or verbal abuse of staff or children by a parent or child is grounds for immediate termination of enrollment of a child from TCA. All complaints are to be discussed with the director in private.

WHAT TO BRING TO TCA

Each preschool child will need to bring the following items from home:

- A complete change of clothes (pants, shirt, underpants, socks) in a backpack brought to TCA daily for mishaps.
- If your child is potty-training, several pull-up type disposable diapers are also needed in his/her backpack.
- Children in the one-year-old room need to bring a sippy-cup.
- A small blanket for nap. On the days that school-age children are at TCA all day, they will need to bring a nutritious lunch.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO TCA

Please do not allow your child to bring to TCA:

- Money or other small objects that can be a choking hazard;
- Special toys or other personal items; other than on show-n-tell

TCA has an abundance of materials for children to use each day. Unless specifically requested by your child's teacher, we ask you to leave all toys at home. Conflicts over toys from home do not contribute to the peaceful atmosphere we try to create. Teachers will inform parents of special times when children may bring unit-related items from home. **We do not allow toy guns, knives, or other weapons in the center.** Cell phones will be taken up by the teacher and given to the director for safe-keeping until the end of the day at which time they will be returned to the person picking the child up.

MEALS

We will provide a morning, afternoon, and late afternoon snack for preschool children. A hot nutritious lunch will be served to preschool students. All lunches must meet the MS State Board of Health's nutritional guidelines (see Exhibit "A" attached hereto).

We will not serve any foods that have no nutritional value, such as:

- Soda or other high-sugar caffeine drinks; and
- Candy, including sticky fruit treats that are not 100% fruit juice, chocolate, and gummy bears.

Any of these foods will be returned home to you in your child's lunchbox.

CLOTHING AND SHOES

Children should be dressed comfortably for active play. Paint, dirt, and spilled juice can make school hard on clothes. Clothing should be easy for the child to manage him/herself and completely washable. Children are offered opportunities to use a wide range of materials including paints, pastels, chalk, and other items that may stain. Even though we have children push their sleeves up and wear art smocks to protect their clothing, stains are still common. This possibility needs to be considered when dressing your child for school. TCA will not be financially responsible for replacing children's clothing.

Every clothing item a child wears or brings to TCA must be clearly labeled with his/her name. A complete change of clothes for each child (shirt, pants, socks, underwear, and if needed disposable underwear) is to be brought in a backpack to TCA daily.

Clothes must be appropriate to the weather. We go outside every day. Hats, mittens, scarves, sweaters, boots, coats, and other possessions must be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Shoes must be sturdy, with a closed heel and toe and a non-skid sole to allow for traction, mobility, and safety for all activities in all types of weather. Sneakers are ideal; slippery sole shoes and sandals are not allowed.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, we will follow the Oxford School closings. If the schools close during a school day, parents agree to make arrangements to pick their child up at TCA as well within one (1) hour of notification. There is no refund or credit against tuition charges for such a closing.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS, NATURAL DISASTERS, LOSS OF UTILITIES, ETC.

Parents will be notified to pick up children immediately when an emergency situation arises such as a natural disaster, loss of utilities, etc. This would be implemented when a hazardous condition or situation presents itself and hampers the welfare of the children and staff and/or hampers the implementation of proper health and safety regulations necessary for the correct care of children. All closings not associated with the Oxford Schools are at the discretion of the director and/or the Board of Directors of TCA.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In case TCA must be evacuated due to train derailment, tornado, flood, fire, or any other major emergency, the children will be taken to Pizza Den located at 499 Heritage Drive, Oxford, MS 38655. Parents will be called to pick their children up at the alternate location. A master emergency telephone call list is maintained and updated by the director which contains the telephone numbers for each child's parents. Each teacher has a telephone list of only her students which is updated each time the master emergency telephone call list is updated. A copy of this list is also maintained at the home of Andrea Criddle should this list become unavailable at any point during evacuation. In the event that we were evacuated to our 5 mile location, located at 2002 Oxford Way, Oxford, MS 38655, we would transport them using The Domain's bus.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills, both announced and unannounced, are conducted a minimum of once a month.

RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

The center will not release names, addresses, telephone numbers, or any other personal information of a child, family, or staff member of the center.

PHOTOGRAPHY

TCA may take pictures or videos of your child during center activities. These will be kept at the center and given to you or thrown away when we are finished with them. At times we may ask your permission to publish them in the newspaper for special events.

School pictures will also be taken at some point during the year by a professional photographer. The photos will be taken here at the center and offered to you for purchase.

DAILY SCHEDULE...Class room instruction begins at 8:30 a.m.

Each classroom maintains its own schedule with a balance of:

- active and quiet activities; individual, small group, and large group activities; child initiated and teacher-directed experiences; and indoor and outdoor play.

Children feel most secure and are better behaved when they know what is going to happen next. The daily routine provides security and can flex to meet the needs and interests of the group. The daily schedule is posted on the parent information board in each classroom.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an important, integral part of our daily schedule. During time outdoors, children can actively discover their environment, explore the natural elements, develop their gross motor skills and play freely with their peers. All children are required by the MS State Board of Health to have a minimum of two hours of outdoor playtime each day. Children who are in attendance for 7 hours or less are required to have 30 minutes of outdoor playtime each day. Therefore, as a licensing requirement, we go outdoors in the morning and afternoon sessions. Please dress your child appropriate to the weather. Hats, mittens, boots, coats/raincoats need to be labeled. The delights of the outdoors are among the greatest experiences of children.

SUN-SAFE POLICY

Our sun-safe policy has been developed to ensure that all children and staff participating in this program are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful UVB and UVA rays of the sun. This policy will be implemented through the year, but with particular emphasis from March through October.

1. Encourage staff and children to wear hats with wide brims that protect their face, neck, and ears whenever they are outside.
2. Encourage staff and children to wear sun-protective clothing (i.e., tightly woven, loose-fitting, full length, light-colored and light-weight) when temperatures are reasonable.

3. Encourage staff to wear sunglasses that block 100 percent of UVA and UVB rays (broad spectrum) whenever they are outside.
4. Provide sufficient areas of shelter and/or trees providing shade on the play yard.
5. Encourage children to seek and use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities.
6. Schedule excursions and all outdoor activities before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. (10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the winter months) whenever possible. The availability of shade will be considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities during these times.
7. Children will be hydrated and encouraged to drink water before and during prolonged physical outdoor activities in warm weather.
8. Staff and parents/guardians will model sun safety behaviors by (a) wearing appropriate hats and clothing when outdoors; (b) using broad spectrum SPF 15 or higher sunscreen for skin protection; and (c) seeking shade whenever possible.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Children's Academy of Oxford will notify parents ahead of time of any field trips and how they will be transported at the time of the field trip. TCA will not transport children daily, only in the case of emergencies. See page 13 for Evacuation Procedures.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

TCA's discipline policy is attached hereto as "Exhibit A" on Page 19

LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS

Lost items should be reported as soon as possible to the office. Please do not allow your child to bring anything to TCA that is valuable. TCA is not responsible for replacing lost or broken items.

VIDEOS

Videotapes will be shown periodically during extremely cold or hot weather or during rainy times. All videos must be approved through the office before viewing.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We will be happy to help your child celebrate his or her birthday. You may bring store-bought goodies; however, State guidelines prevent us from serving any homemade treats. We ask that you please not bring presents or balloons to TCA. A two-week written notification to your child's teacher is required, however, to prevent any duplication of celebrations.

CHILD ABUSE

Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. **Neglect** occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline, or when a child is abandoned. Mississippi law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the Department of Human Services. The toll-free hotline number is 1-800-222-8000. Caregivers are to report any suspected child abuse immediately to the director. We also have specific guidelines to deter any child abuse at TCA. They include the following:

- A. Avoid isolation of teachers and children.
- B. Teacher/child ratios maintained at all times.
- C. Children of widely different ages are not grouped together, without sufficient adult supervision.
- D. Daily visual checks are done to determine if there are any scratches, cuts, bruises, or other signs of abuse.
- E. Injuries occurring at TCA are written and reported to the parent and filed at TCA.
- F. No corporal punishment is allowed in the center or on the premises by staff or parents.

PRESCHOOL POTTY TRAINING READINESS

Toilet learning is a process. Successful bowel and bladder control is an important (and exciting) developmental milestone. It is important to be patient and follow the child's cues when supporting children in this process. Forcing a child or rushing a child into potty training can seriously impact a child's self-esteem, cause unnecessary power struggles and lead to undue stress on children and adults. When children begin to show signs of readiness, TCA staff will work with parents to help each child gain mastery over toileting functions. Readiness for toilet learning is determined when a child:

- stays dry for several hours;
- has regular bowel movements;
- asks to be changed when his/her diaper is wet or soiled;
- shows awareness of his/her bodily functions; and
- communicates what he/she is doing either before or after urinating or passing a bowel movement.

Toilet learning includes a child's willingness to initiate and ability to:

- tell an adult he/she has to go;
- undress to use the toilet; • sit on the toilet and go;
- wipe; dress;
- flush; and
- wash his/her hands.

When the above skills are not completed with minimal assistance from the teachers and within a three week period, a child's readiness may need to be re-evaluated.

A child in the toilet learning process should wear pull-up type disposable diapers and bring several extra, as well as a couple of changes of clothes. There is no "right age" to toilet train a child. Children begin to gain most of the skills they will need between the ages of 24 and 36 months, yet a child may not be ready to master toilet learning until the end of his/her third or even fourth year. The more ready a child is when he/she begins the process, the quicker it will go.

When a child shows readiness both at home and at TCA, parents and teachers are able to work together toward success for a child.

Exhibit A

Discipline Policy

The purpose of this discipline policy is to inform you the parent of appropriate discipline actions to be taken by the staff at The Children's Academy of Madison.

I. **Appropriate discipline techniques**

- A. Separate the child from the inappropriate behavior (age appropriate length of time)
- B. Redirect behavior
- C. Teach acceptable choices
- D. Use positive language
- E. Teachers will also look for deeper problems
- F. Lonely chair (age appropriate length of time)

II. **How we communicate with parents about children's behaviors**

We will consult with parents when all efforts have been exhausted concerning discipline. We will emphasize partnership between caregiver and parent in an attempt to defuse a tense situation involving a problem with the child's behavior.

III. **Punishment not allowed in the center**

- A. Corporal punishment or anything that causes physical pain
- B. Withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of food or love
- C. Abusive or profane language
- D. Humiliation
- E. Emotional abuse
- F. Using food or medication in any manner or for any purpose other than that for which it was intended
- G. Isolation
- H. Forcing children to sit at a table or in high chairs for long periods of time

IV. **Staff Training**

Staff will be required to attend periodic training on discipline issues. Workshops, staff meetings, and professional literature will be offered regularly to keep staff up to date on our discipline policy.

V. **Discipline vs. Punishment**

Discipline does not mean punishment. Discipline is teaching a child how to be safe, how to behave on his/her own and how to know the difference between right and wrong. Staff may not use punishment that is harsh, demeaning or abusive in the presence of children.

BITING POLICY

The purpose of this biting policy is to inform you the parent of the reasons children bite and actions we will take at TCA when biting occurs. It includes ways in which we will communicate with you about biting issues, ways to prevent biting, and actions staff members must refrain from using. Keep in

mind that biting is a normal age/stage development, but we will work diligently through this trying period.

I. **Reasons children bite**

- A. Children bite mostly because they are very oral. They tend to put everything in their mouth.
- B. Biting is a basic response to undeveloped social skills in young children. They cannot express what they are feeling because their vocabulary is very limited.
- C. Young children may bite when other children get in their space or too close to them or their toys. Young children like their own space and feel threatened when other children get too close.
- D. Some children bite because they are teething.
- E. Biting is also a way for young children to get attention. Even if they receive negative attention, children will still bite in order to get some type of attention rather than no attention.

II. **Actions taken by the teacher when a child bites**

When a child is bitten, the teacher should first console the child and then clean the wound with soap and water, apply antiseptic ointment, and cover it with a bandage. Ice may also be applied to prevent bruising. The teacher should then turn her attention to the biter, and show him/her appropriate ways to touch and play with other children. Once both children are calm and playing, the teacher will fill out an accident report and make a copy for you the parent. If the bite breaks the skin or is in a very noticeable place, such as the face, the parent will be notified by a phone call.

III. **How we communicate with parents about biting issues**

First of all, you as parents need to understand that biting is an emotional issue for everyone involved. Your support through this trying period is very important. We as teachers will do our best to handle any biting issue that may arise.

Each time a child is bitten, we will fill out an accident report and have a copy for you to take home. We will call you if the skin is broken or if it is on the face. If the biting situation becomes constant, we will ask the parents of the biter to come in for a conference to discuss different ways to handle the problem.

We will never reveal who is doing the biting to any other parent. This is considered confidential information and under no circumstances will it be discussed with anyone other than the director.

We do ask that you as parents do not punish the child at home for biting accidents that occur at school. This punishment only confuses the child, because they do not remember biting earlier in the day.

IV. **Ways we will try to prevent biting**

There are many ways that we will try to prevent biting. This does not mean that biting will not happen because more than likely it will. We will keep low ratios in the classroom, in order to give each child their space and to allow the teacher to be able to closely watch the children. We will also help teach the children to use words instead of actions when they are upset or frustrated. Another way we may try to prevent biting is to attach a teether to the biter's clothing and teach him/her to bite it instead

of their friends. We will keep a record on the biter to help us figure out when and why the biting is occurring. Again, these records will not be revealed to you or anyone else for any reason. They are strictly to help prevent the biting from continuing.

If for some reason, all attempts have been made to prevent or stop the biting and nothing seems to help, we may require the temporary removal of your child. This step will only be used if we cannot manage it in any other way.

V. **Actions a teacher must NOT take when biting occurs**

When biting occurs a teacher must never do any of the following:

- A. physically punish the child
- B. bite the child back
- C. put anything into the child's mouth (i.e., hot sauce, soap, etc.)
- D. take away food or loving care
- E. keep the biter in isolation
- F. reveal who the biter is

As we have said, biting is very trying for the child, you the parent, and the teacher. Your support during this period is very important. We will work through this developmental stage to the best of our abilities.

Exhibit B

Curriculum

We are so excited to announce the new direction we are taking with our written and foundational curriculum for our Academy. It is important that we value our children's eagerness to learn and prepare them for school success through developmentally appropriate materials. Our teachers are excited to incorporate language/cognitive development, fine/gross motor, and sensory resources that foster each child's individual growth at their own developmental pace.

My First School Curriculum: One Year Old's (12-24 months)

My First School Curriculum incorporates play activities that are structured through teacher/student relationships. Furthermore, weekly assessments help modify instruction for the benefits of early learners' minds to create an overall learning foundation. Our lead Teachers will be dedicated to incorporating full sensory activities that nurture all their developmental domains.

Love Two Learn Curriculum: Two Year Old's (24-36 months)

Love Two Learn Curriculum allows children to explore their definitions of educational prosperity with guidance from their lead Teachers. Building and expanding from My First School Curriculum, children will develop on pre-existing knowledge to strengthen fine/gross motor, vocabulary, and letter recognition.

Preschool and Three's Core Curriculum and Foundational Learning Supplement

Handwriting Without Tears (Core Curriculum):

- A kinesthetic approach towards learning. Furthermore, having hands on activities and materials for the children to interact with creates a better learning experience through muscle memory.

Preschool Prep (Foundational Learning):

- An extra bonus for our young learners' minds. This foundational source will add to the much-needed core values for our students overall learning outcomes. It includes sight words, foundational math/writing concepts, and much more.

Weekly Lesson Plans Mandatory for all Lead Teachers in K-3 and K-4 Classrooms:

- Having teachers outline their weekly content not only prepares the teachers for more beneficial learning success but creates organizational routines and gives time for modifications. Learning here at TCA is extremely valued and by prioritizing the learning process Teachers will be able to deliver lessons more efficiently.

Pre-K and K-3 Readiness Calendars:

- Our Readiness Calendars will be available at the beginning of every month that show what and when our weekly themes, school activities, and holidays are. These will be sent home with each child in their designated folders and are a great way to stay connected with your child's learning routines.

Handwriting Without Tears: Three Year Old's (*My First School Book*)

Handwriting Without Tears (*My First School Book*) is a developmental curriculum that nurtures the children's unique and incessantly progressing skills. Teachers create an educational environment that prepares their students for Preschool success by structuring the learning atmosphere through high quality Teacher modeling.

Handwriting Without Tears: Four Year Old's (*Kick Start Kindergarten*)

Handwriting Without Tears (*Kick Start Kindergarten*) builds off the *My First School Book* in K-3 to create an easy educational transition into Preschool. Lead Teachers will prioritize the bridge between Pre-K and Kindergarten by flexible learning platforms. Expanding young minds through differentiated involvement and cross-curricular activities.