



Tiny Hands Academy

Parent Handbook

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State License #C04DU1433
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Welcome Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Tiny Hands We are so happy that you have chosen our academy and we would like to assure you that we are committed to assisting your child in reaching his or her goals with a smile. Our primary focus is to help prepare your child for school and life in a nurturing and loving environment. We pride ourselves in providing quality care in a safe environment. Our commitment is creating a community of learners that value each others opinions, differences, and creativity.

Creating a stimulating and exciting learning experience is our goal. This handbook was designed to provide parents with information explaining our policies and procedures. This handbook is designed to assist you in an easy transition and help you feel more confident in your family's adjustment into our program. Please keep this handbook for your reference throughout the school year. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to call or stop by.

We look forward to working with you and your child, to assist reaching your goals by preparing our Tiny Hands for a brighter future!

Thank you,

Shawntrell Houston RN, Owner

Philosophy

It is our belief at Tiny Hands Academy that every child can learn. Our goal is an ongoing commitment to helping each child succeed academically, socially, emotionally, and mentally in life. We believe that parents are our students first teachers; therefore we will strive to create a partnership and bond with the parents to assist our students in becoming model citizens.

Mission

At Tiny Hands Academy, our primary concern is to provide quality childcare services at an affordable price to families with young children. We are proud of the contribution that each member of our staff makes in providing a safe and happy environment where young children are able to grow in mind, body, and spirit.

Tiny Hands Academy offers the opportunity for each child to develop physically, socially, and cognitively according to their individual learning style. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge particular, distinct individual needs, interests and abilities. Activities and relationships occur in a healthy, positive and relaxed environment in which well-qualified staff provide personal attention, guidance and nurturing to each child.

The Academy will strive to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the program by conducting cooperative staff planning, training and a variety of joint activities involving the various groups of children. In this context, all caregivers at Tiny Hands Academy are encouraged to express their individual educational strengths as they work with children and in their cooperative efforts with other staff members.

When you come to "Tiny Hands Academy", your child will receive the best care the industry has to offer.

Open Door Policy

It is our policy at Tiny Hands Academy to maintain an open door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents will have immediate access without prior notice to the academy as long as their presence does not effect other children placed in our care. In situations where there is custody or domestic issues the following will apply:

- The academy must be provided with the most recent certified copy of court orders and any amendments to the order, i.e. custody order, restraining order, or a protection order from abuse.
- The academy will follow the orders of the court. Deviations from the court will only be made if there are written instructions with signatures).
- If there is not a copy of a court order or a copy has not been provided to the academy, then both parents will have equal access to their child. By law the academy may not deny access to the child by either parent without a court order.
- If there is a verbal or physical conflict at the center, we will contact the police.

Registration

The following fees are due upon enrollment: \$75 Registration fee and a \$40 annual Supply fee. These fees are non-refundable. I understand that if I disenroll and decide to re-enroll, that the above fees are used to hold my child(s) enrollment and are non-refundable if the child(ren) does not attend. These fees are due by the first Friday of the enrollment week.

Enrollment/Registration

For your child's safety and to comply with state regulations, all health forms and enrollment papers must be completed and on file at the Academy prior to your child's first day of attendance. The following items must be submitted at the time of enrollment.

- Form 3040 - physical examination
- Form 680 or 681 - immunization record
- Tiny Hands Academy Enrollment Form
- One time Registration Fee/Annual Supply Fee (non-refundable)
- School Readiness and/or VPK contracts
- DCF forms
- One Week's Full Tuition Payment (Non-Refundable)

Tiny Hands Academy does not discriminate in regard to religion, sex, national or ethnic origin in our admission policies.

Needed Items

(All Items must be labeled with first and last names)

- One Year Old: wipes, diapers, and change of clothing
- Two Year Old: Wipes, Diapers (Pull-Ups or Training Pants), and change of clothing
- Three and Four Year Old: change of clothing
 - Ensure that your child's first and last name is on all of their belongings.

Immunizations/Physical Requirements

Each child is required by the Department of Children and Families to have on file a Physical Examination (Form 3040 and Immunization Record (Form 680). **You have 30 days after enrollment to bring in these forms Per DCF requirements.** Any child who does not have the proper medical forms on file will not be allowed to attend until forms are on file and current.

If you schedule an appointment for immunizations or a physical, we must have an appointment card or letter from the physician to place in your child's file for the DCF inspector. DCF will fine the center \$25.00 each day the form has expired. Tiny Hands Academy reserves the right to impose these fees to the parent for non-compliance.

Tuition Policy

Tuition fees are due and payable on Friday the week prior to ChildCare services via ProCare app. If payment is not made by Monday morning by 9am, a \$50.00 late fee will be added. Fees are based on reserved time (enrollment) and not on actual time that a child spends at the center.

Late Payment Policy

Weekly tuition is due every Friday. If you have an outstanding balance, we ask that this is paid prior to your child returning to the center. If for some reason you are unable to comply with this arrangement at anytime, you will need to speak directly to the director or owner. If fees continue to go unpaid before next tuition invoice is sent, your child will be placed on the do not accept list by Wednesday afternoon, until all payments have been made in full. Late Tuition Payment is \$50.00

All fees are assessed per the tuition rate chart. Your child's tuition rate is based on their age as of August 1. Tuition fees will not be reduced on your child's birthday. A price reduction will be given during the school year only if your child moves from one room (level) to another.

Tiny Hands Academy offers a discount of \$15.00 per family for families with more than one child enrolling full-time in our school.

All families will receive a statement of your account by January 31 for the previous year, as long as your account is paid in FULL per Tiny Hands Academy policy.

POTTY TRAINING

Tiny Hands Academy staff will assist with potty training at school but it is imperative that consistent training still occurs at home on a daily/nightly basis.

School Readiness/VPK

Parents who miss more than the allotted three (3) days a month, per the VPK contracts, will be held responsible for any days that are not reimbursed to Tiny Hands Academy. A doctor's note is required for return for absences over 3 days. VPK your child must arrive on time everyday which typically runs from 9-12 Monday-Friday (hours may vary depending on the school year).

Late Pick-Up Charge

Parents who pick-up their child after the regular closing time (6:00 p.m.) will be charged a late fee of \$25.00 per child. Late charges will be due the next day (there will be no exceptions). The parent will be asked to sign a late pick-up form acknowledging that the child was picked up late and that the late fee is due. If this becomes an ongoing problem, then you will be asked to find another center that can accommodate your needs.

Checks/Payments

Personal Checks will not be accepted. Invoices are sent via our procare app on a weekly recurring basis. Cash maybe accepted under extenuating circumstances, but payments through our procare app will always be our preferred method.

Soliciting

No soliciting will be allowed at Tiny Hands Academy, especially soliciting for other childcare options (example another childcare provider, babysitter, nanny, etc.) Tiny Hands Academy reserves the right to disenroll or not allow to reenroll if soliciting has happened in the academy.

Drop Off Policy

All children should arrive in their class prior to **9:00 a.m.** This will ensure that your child gets the best learning experience for their day and minimize interruptions to others .

VPK students will have to be dropped off just before 9:00am, which is the starting time for their class (review VPK Contract). NO child will be able to enter class once it has started per the VPK contract/state requirements. If your child has an appointment, a physicians note must accompany their return to school. Please give a courtesy call/or message via procare app to the academy to let us know.

Holidays

Tiny Hands Academy is closed for the following holidays; observed on the day of the holiday or the preceding Friday or following Monday, should the holiday fall on the weekend: New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday (observed), President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, 2 days for summer vacation typically in June dates will be announced at later time, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and Christmas Day and the day after. **No allowance/or discount for tuition will be made due to holiday closings.**

Vacation or Occasional Absences

No refunds shall be made for sick days or absences. Refund, credits or make-up days cannot be granted. If your child is sick for more than two days, please call the academy to let us know. It is helpful to the center and teachers to know if a child will be out more than two days. Any families in the School Readiness or ELC/Enrichment program must submit a physician's note after three (3) day's absence. School Readiness will not accept hand-written notices from parents for reimbursement purposes. A physician's note must be submitted for VPK and School Readiness parents.

Families in the full-time program are entitled to one-week vacation (five consecutive day, Monday-Friday). The one-week vacation can only be

used during one calendar year, January 1 through December 31. A minimum of twelve (12) consecutive months of enrollment must have occurred prior to using the vacation time. As a courtesy a two-week notice must be given prior to the vacation time, so you will not be charged.

DAILY SIGN-IN/OUT

A daily sign-in/out is located in the foyer via Procare app. Please make sure that you sign your child in and out on a daily basis. The time your child is dropped off and picked up, along with your signature, should be entered under your child's name. If a VPK (Enrichment) or School Readiness parent does not sign in or out per the requirements, then they will be held responsible for days to reimburse Tiny Hands Academy. VPK Only students will be charged per the non-instructional guideline in the VPK Only Contract.

RELEASE OF CHILD

Children will be released only to those persons whose names are listed on the child's enrollment form/or procare app. Each authorized persons will have their own individual 4-digit code. Parents must give notice to the Director/or owner if someone else will be picking up your child. Any such persons picking up any child will have to show their picture ID to staff on duty. This is for your child's safety. You must be 18 years of age or older, in order for Tiny Hands Academy to release the child.

If a parent or authorized adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the staff will attempt to contact the other parent or authorized adult on the pick-up list. Tiny Hands Academy does not have the right to deny the parent access to their child, but the staff will contact the police immediately if the academy is not able to contact another parent or authorized adult to pick-up the child.

VPK ONLY + VPK Enrichment

All children who wish to enroll in our VPK program will be required by the state to register with the Early Learning Coalition. You will have to obtain a certificate of eligibility to enroll in the VPK program. Families will also be required to sign a VPK contract to ensure that guidelines and policies are followed in the VPK program. Please remember the State, ELC will only allow one (1) transfer per school year. ELC requires a pretest and posttest for each student.

Curriculum

We know the first five years of childhood are the most important in a child's development and learning. We use age appropriate curriculum in our toddler through our four year old classrooms approved by the Early Learning Coalition.

Our teaching method is through learning centers. Preschoolers will choose from art, blocks, home living, puzzles and manipulatives where activities have been planned to help teach the children.

Weather and Emergency Closure

Please note we have the right to closure for weather days for safety of staff, families and children. This applies during hurricane season. Closure of center will be permitted when Duval County School District closure for weather preparedness. Once a storm passes and is out of the area, we will assess the center for any damage and re-open as soon as possible. The center must have power and any physical damage must be repaired. In addition, staff must be available to provide appropriate child-staff ratio, per DCF requirements. Parents are still responsible for child care tuition even during school closures related to natural disasters.

ILLNESS POLICY

Please keep your child home if he or she displays any of the following symptoms/or will be asked to immediately pick up your child.

1. A fever of 100.4 degrees or more, or has had a fever in the past 24 hour period.
2. Severe cough ex. Child gets red or blue in the face or to make a high-pitched whooping sounds after coughing, wheezing, discolored nasal discharge, sneezing.
(Case by case basis at the discretion of director/owner).
3. A communicable disease. A communicable disease will have some or all of the following symptoms: sniffles, reddened eyes with a discharge, sore throat, headache and abdominal pain, accompanied by a fever. Please notify the Director immediately if your child does have a communicable disease. Your child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours (or had 3 dosages) before coming back to the academy and presents with no fever, along with a doctors note.
4. Redness of the eyes accompanied by a discharge (pink eye).
5. Severe itching of body or scalp (lice). There must be no sign of nits for your child to return to school and proof of treatment.
6. Sore throat.
7. Ear discharge
8. Diarrhea-runny, watery or bloody stools. Student must stay home for 24hrs, and have solid stool before returning.
9. Vomiting- two or more times, vomiting that contains blood, or followed by severe cramping. Student must stay home for 24hrs, and has not vomited in the last 24 hrs.
10. Unusual spots or rashes.

11. Mouth sores with drooling.
12. Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention that staff can provide without jeopardizing the health and safety of other children.
13. Conditions that usually require parameters from a physician detailing when the child may return include, but not limited to, chickenpox, strep throat, scabies, impetigo, meningitis, and Hepatitis A.

A phone call to let us know why your child is absent would be appreciated. Children with a fever cannot return to our academy until 24 hours after the fever is less than 99 degrees. Children with diarrhea cannot return to our academy until they have had a normal bowel movement. If your child has one diarrhea bowel movement during the day, we will make a courtesy call to let you know. After the second diarrhea bowel movement, you will be asked to pick up your child.

Children with a serious illness will not be allowed to enter the academy without a physician's approval (must be in writing). Tiny Hands Academy reserves the right to override a physician's note if your child still exhibits some of the above symptoms; the parent will be called to come and pick up their child.

Should your child become ill during the day, you will be notified as soon as possible. Parents are required to promptly (30 minutes) pick-up their child from the center. Parents that are unable to pick-up their child in a timely manner, will need to have an authorized person on your child's enrollment form come pick-up your child. It is your responsibility as a parent to update your enrollment form if needed. In the event of a serious illness or injury and we are unable to contact you or any person listed on your enrollment form, at the discretion of the Director/Owner, the paramedics will be called and your child will be transported to the nearest emergency facility.

Parents are requested to notify the Academy Director if their child has a communicable disease so that parents of children in the classroom/academy may be notified. Only information about the

communicable disease will be shared. The academy will follow the Confidentiality Policy and Procedures.

Daily Health Checks are made on each child upon their arrival. If a child shows visible signs of being ill, at anytime during the day, the parents will be called to pick-up their child. There is no tuition break due to illnesses. We will notify you of any outbreaks in the classrooms verbally/or procare app.

Lice

A child identified as having head lice shall not be permitted to return until the following day (24 hours) and only provided that treatment has occurred and has been verified. Verification of treatment may include a product box, box top, or empty bottle.

Medication

Only emergency medication will be given. Parents are strongly encouraged to give all medications at home. A physician must prescribe all medication given to a child at the academy. Parents are required to fill out a medication release authorization form. All medication must be in the original container, indicating the child's name, type and date of prescribed medication, amount and time of dosage and the length of time medication is to be distributed. These forms must be updated weekly.

All medication will be kept in the main office. No over-the-counter medication will be given, unless a written physician's prescription is presented with the medication. Again, the correct dosage and time of medication must be on the physician's prescription. It is the responsibility of the parent to pick-up the medication from the front office. Any expired medication that is not picked up by the expiration date will be discarded. If any medication is kept at the center on an as needed basis, such as nebulizers, the form is valid for only six (6) months and a new form must be filled out when expired.

Any child that has severe allergies must have an epi-pen and/or Benadryl on site. Medical release forms must be on site with the epi-pen and Benadryl with a physician's note.

Special Requests

Parents must follow the policy for administering medication if the child is to receive medication during the day. This should be taken care of during arrival time.

Parents are requested to notify the teacher or Director if there are any special needs or instructions for the child's day. Special requests must be submitted in writing and may include, but are not limited to health issues, family situations, alternative pick up person, early pick up time, or any other issues the center should be aware of to best meet the early pick up time, or any other issues the academy should be aware of to best meet the individual needs of the child. Discretion by Director may be used based on the circumstance.

Biting Policy

In order to provide the best possible care for all the children here at our academy, we have implemented a Biting Policy. The parents will be notified when their child has bitten another child. One teacher will shadow the child trying to avoid another biting incident from happening. If the child bites again during the same day, we will contact the parent to come and pick-up the child from the academy. After the child has bitten three times or it becomes an ongoing problem, our academy reserves the right to withdraw your child at any time without notice.

Potty Training

This is a task when teachers and parents need to work together as partners. When you believe that your child is ready to begin potty training, we recommend that you bring in at least three (3) extra sets of clothing each day. Each child is a unique individual and has their own pace when it comes to potty training. We all need to have patience and encouragement for your child. By working together as partners, we will see success in time. If your child turns three and is not potty trained, they will be required to pay the two year old rate until they are fully potty trained.

Clothing/Dress Code

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothing (uniform). Students are required to be in uniform everyday, unless notified from director/owner. Your child will participate in a variety of different activities throughout their day. Clothing should be durable and washable. Straps or complicated buttons, slippers and belts that cause frustration must be avoided. No one piece clothing will be permitted on days uniforms are not required. Comfortable shoes that provide protection should be worn; closed toe shoes with rubber soles that are securely tied or fastened (tennis shoes, sneakers). Please no dress shoes, open toe, or "flip-flops". Dress your child in season appropriate clothing. All jackets, sweaters, and coats should be labeled with your child's first and last name in permanent marker. We will not be responsible for unmarked clothes. You will be asked to supply a complete set of extra clothing (shorts or pants, shirt, socks, underwear, and shoes). We suggest that the clothing be placed in a clear Ziploc bag with your child's first and last name on the bag. No hair beads are allowed to be worn in the center, which is for the safety of all children, and most importantly a choking hazard.

Nap and Rest Time

After lunch, a nap/rest time will be required for all preschool children for up to 2hrs. Individual blankets are provided by the center. Blankets will be washed and sanitized on a weekly basis.

Birthday Parties

Birthday celebrations are welcomed! The cupcakes or birthday cake must be store bought. Utensils associated with the party must be provided by the parent. Please check with the teacher or director for the number of students in your child class.

Staff

Every effort is made to hire the most qualified people to help your child reach their full potential. References/background checks are made on every employee; all state standards are met and exceeded. At any time, there is a concern about the staff please feel free to speak with the director/owner about any concerns. In addition, all staff are cpr/first aid trained.

Digital Communication Consent

Tiny Hands Academy publishes a variety of information about our center via the web and other digital communication platforms. From time to time we may wish to include your child's work and/or photo on our web site, bulletin boards, newsletter, fliers, or in our graduation video or other forms of communication. No names will be used and photos will only be used generically. No identifying marks or physical marks or physical characteristics, clothing or articles bearing a student's name or any other means by which a student can be identified will be photographed. No other personal information about the student will be published on the web site, bulletin boards, newsletters fliers, or other forms of communication. We may also videotape and will occasionally use portions of the video for educational purposes.

If do we offer TV time during the day, it's for educational purposes and occasional movie day. Computers and tablets are only used for learning.

Divorce and Custodial Rights

Tiny Hands Academy understands that some families have shared parental responsibilities. If there are any circumstances that are pertinent to one or the other parent, a court order **MUST** be on file. Tiny Hands Academy will comply with any court order for a family in our care.

Emergency Closing Policy

In the event that an emergency arises which makes it necessary to close the center, parents will be notified as quickly as possible. We will always do our best not to close on unplanned days, but nature has a way of changing our schedule sometimes! No allowance for tuition will be made for such an occurrence. We ask you to call our voice mail for updated information.

Withdrawal

A two-week notice is required when withdrawing your child from our center. If a request is received on Monday or Tuesday, this will count as the first week of your notice. Verbal or written communication will be used for the two-week notice and must be with Director/Owner.

Parent Involvement/Volunteering

Tiny Hands Academy has an open-door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parent involvement is highly encouraged. This may include fund raising or volunteering in the classroom throughout the year. All visitors will be required to sign in before entering the classrooms where students are enrolled. Activities and homework are highly encouraged to be returned when applicable.

Covid-19

Tiny Hands Academy is always conscious of the safety and well-being of children. We have changed some policies and procedures due to the Covid-19 virus. If you or your child has been in contact with a covid positive person, please notify us immediately and the child may not return to school. Child will not be permitted to the center if he/she is sick, has a temperature of 100.4, has a runny nose, and/or is coughing. We will be socially distancing as much as possible and handwashing throughout the day.

Toys from Home

To prevent special toys from being lost or broken, we ask that toys not be sent to school with children. Unless this is authorized by the child's teacher for special occasions ex. Show-N-Tell.

Behavior Management

At Tiny Hands Academy all newly enrolled students have a two-week behavior trial period without any penalization of two-week notification withdrawal policy. This is to encourage positive behaviors for all new students, to find whether your child is the right fit for our center and most importantly if we are the right fit for your family. Behavior issues will always be communicated with parents to promote effective and healthy behavior.

Meals

Parents will provide lunch for their child Monday-Thursday. Pizza or an alternative meal is served every Friday. The center will continue to provide breakfast and snack items daily. Breakfast is served from 730a-830a. Please give your child at least 15min to eat, so please arrive on time. All lunches must be brought in a prospective lunch box that will kept in child's cubby until lunch is served at perspective classroom times.

Tiny Hands Academy

Behavior Management and Discipline Policy

The forms of discipline used at our facility are:

1. Positive redirection
2. Positive reinforcement
3. Time-out away from the group
4. Parent conference to ask for help with child's behavior
5. Suspension for 1 to 2 days
6. Termination from facility

We praise good behavior and encourage the child to make acceptable choices at all times. We use time-out or time-away from the group to help a child to calm down. If your child cannot/will not calm down, we will call you immediately to come to remove your child from the facility. **We will not allow constant disruptions or outbursts.** It is not fair to the other children to have a classmate who constantly disrupts the class by yelling, fighting, destroying class materials or being overly aggressive toward others. If your child's behavior is beyond his/her control we will suggest appropriate agencies for your child's behavioral management.

The forms of discipline used for the toddlers (under two) are positive redirection and positive reinforcement. Redirecting a toddler to another activity or another toy will usually solve the conflict.

School-aged children are expected to follow and obey the rules of our center. We do not allow inappropriate touching, fighting, destruction of property, stealing, throwing food or toys.

Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited.

I have read the electronic copy of Parent Handbook available on TinyHandsAcademy.net with the latest updated version.

Parents will sign that they have read in its entirety, understand and had any questions answered in enrollment package.

I agree to abide by all policies and procedures of Tiny Hands Academy.