

## Sweetwater Kids Academy Parent Handbook

Welcome to Sweetwater Kids Academy! We know choosing an appropriate learning center is an extremely important decision for your family. We look forward to having you join our center.

### **Mission Statement:**

Since its founding, Sweetwater Kids Academy has provided a warm and creative environment which seeks to preserve and foster young children's imagination, curiosity and intellect. Our program strives to nurture the "whole child" in areas of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development and to instill a curiosity of learning. This is achieved by a developmentally appropriate emergent curriculum that integrates fine and gross motor skills, language development, literacy, problem solving skills, hands on science, and number sense. By recognizing individual needs, children will be encouraged to be independent thinkers and life-long learners.

### **Program Goals and Values:**

The program goals are based on the school's philosophy and the underlying respect for the individual child.

- Provide a facility that is safe and secure, where families are assured that their children will receive excellent care.
- To promote the development of cognitive and positive social skills through emergent curriculum and teacher interaction.
- Ensure children have a diverse learning environment.
- Foster creativity and self-expression through art, music and dramatic play.
- Stimulate and encourage curiosity and provide opportunities for problem solving.
- Build a strong sense of community between parents, teachers and children.

### **License and Accreditation:**

Sweetwater Kids Academy is licensed by and adheres to the regulations of the Florida Department of Children and Families. We are accredited through Green Apple and are a Gold Seal center.

### **General Information Policies:**

**Enrollment** – Sweetwater Kids Academy requires the following information:

- Enrollment form
- State of Florida health physical/ State of Florida certificate of immunization
- Transportation agreement
- Registration fee

### **Times of Operation:**

Operation hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

### **Parent Involvement:**

- Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's daily activities as long as it is not disruptive to the program
- All parents are welcome to join their children celebrate holiday festivities.

### **Holidays:**

New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday, Easter Friday, Christmas Day (these days are included in your weekly tuition; there are no credits for these days).

### **Vacation:**

After six months of continuous attendance, full time children are entitled to one week of vacation every six months. Please notify front desk one week prior to vacation. Full time school age children are entitled to one week of vacation during the Seminole County school year. Summer may be taken without penalty.

**Safe Arrival and Departure:**

- All parents will receive a code to enter the facility. Parents are asked not to share their codes with unauthorized users.
- All parents must sign children in upon arrival and out upon departure.
- Please check your child's folder for daily work or correspondence.
- Children must stay with parents when they are picked up; please do not allow children to roam the premise unattended.
- Children will only be released to authorized parents/guardians that are deemed fit to safely care for said child.

**Tuition:**

- Registration fee and first week's tuition are due upon enrollment.
- Each child's tuition is due in advance on a weekly basis; payable on Friday for the following week.
- Discounts: 10% off 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest child. (Not including camps)
- Late payment penalty of \$30.00 to all accounts not current by 1:00 p.m. Tuesday.
- The center may discontinue services if tuition is one week or more delinquent.
- Registration fee must be resubmitted when a child is dropped from the program by the parent or center and re-enrolled at any given time within the same year. New start date applies for vacation accruals.
- Late penalty fee = \$1.00 per minute will be charged for any child picked up after 6:15 p.m.
- NSF fee - \$30.00 will be charged on all returned checks.

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**Curriculum and Assessments:**

- Florida State Department of Education recommended Beyond Centers and Circle Time is the curriculum that we implement throughout the center.
- The age appropriate assessments we administer throughout the center include but are not limited to:
  - Ages and Stages
  - FDOE VPK Assessment
  - Teaching Strategies GOLD

**Withdrawal Policy:**

If a parent decides to withdraw from the program, a two week's written notice is required. If a parent fails to notify Sweetwater Kids Academy, they will be charged their normal tuition rate for two weeks.

**Inclement Weather/Emergency Situation:**

Sweetwater Kids Academy will close in accordance with Seminole County Public School system. Please contact the center for any additional information or changes to inclement weather instructions.

If an emergency develops that it is necessary for the center to close early, parents will be notified to make arrangements for early pick up of their child/children. If an emergency evacuation is required, children should be picked up from Sweetwater Park Pavilion, 201 E. Magnolia St. Oviedo, FL 32765.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:**

In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture Policy; Sweetwater Kids Academy is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, political party, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

**Discipline Policy:**

Discipline will be age appropriate and respectful, within appropriate developmental expectations. We believe in positive reinforcement and redirection. We will communicate with parents regarding any issues that we feel necessary and attempt to remedy the issue and/or assist with referral process. We reserve the right to dismiss a child whose behavior or circumstances are beyond the scope of our expertise.

**Expulsion Policy:**

On rare occasions, our academy may not meet the needs of an enrolled child. In such cases, and in the best interest of that child as well as the staff and other children enrolled, we may request that parents withdraw their child.

The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from our center:

- Failure for a child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children
- Excessive biting
- Failure to provide required forms including a child's health records
- Failure to pay or habitual lateness with tuition

**Illness:**

The well-being of your child is our main concern; with that in mind, the center is a place for well children only. If your child is ill or has shown any of the symptoms listed we request that you keep them at home. (There are no credits for sick/absent days)

- Temperature of 101 degrees or higher
- Severe cough
- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Head lice
- Any other signs of illness

Parents will be called to pick up a child that becomes sick at school. Children must stay home 24 hours or until they are symptom free.

We will only administer medication that has been prescribed by a physician. The medicine must be current, in original container, and a medicine request form must be completed.

**Nutrition Policy - Meals and Snacks:**

The center offers nourishments four times daily: breakfast, a.m. snack, lunch and p.m. snack, menus are posted weekly. Please notify the director if there is a medical condition that precludes your child from eating what is served. Together we can find an alternative to meet your child's needs.

Parents provide formula/breast milk and baby food for their infants. Formula and milk must be prepared and bottles must be labeled with child's first and last name.

**Reminders:**

- All children must have a complete change of clothes.
- Please leave all toys at home. They typically cause problems or can be lost or broken. We are not responsible for toys brought into the center.
- Please label all blankets, change of clothes, jackets, bottles, diaper bags, etc. This is the easiest way to keep personal belongings from being misplaced or misidentified by other parents or students.
- Children should be dressed in weather appropriate clothes for a day of indoor and outdoor activities. Tennis shoes or sneakers are recommended. Crocs and open back shoes tend to be unsafe on the playground. Sandals and flip-flops are prohibited.

