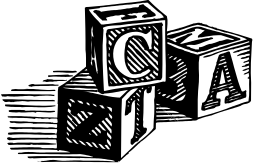


Parent Handbook

Your Guide For Center Policies and Information
2022



Genesis Church
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Gulf Shores, Alabama 36542
gkacademyoffice@gmail.com
251-948-0782 office
Director: Kathy Thrift
251-550-8055



Parent and Guardian Letter

First and foremost, we are very excited that you have chosen Genesis Kids Academy to be a vital role in your child's early years of exploration and development. Every child that enters our doors automatically becomes a part of our center's family, and we feel privileged to call you one of our parents.

We believe strongly in the importance of creating an atmosphere to aide in the cognitive, language, physical, and creative skills that young children are developing each day. Our commitment to you and your child is to provide a safe, loving, and nurturing environment that you feel comfortable leaving your child in. All children are unique and require individual emotional and physical needs that we promise to meet. Our desire is to not only be your child's "home away from home," but also to be a positive experience they will remember for a lifetime.

This booklet you have received provides you with essential information about our policies and day-to-day operations. If you have additional questions or concerns please contact our director. We will do all that we can to answer your questions about your child's progress and provide you with additional information. We have highly educated staff members that are capable of assisting your child in all ways possible.

At our center we believe the first years of a child's life are meant to be gratifying and filled with feelings of accomplishment. The director and staff thank you for allowing us to be a part of your family, and also welcome you into the family of our own. We look forward to many years of working together to create a very special person: your child

Sincerely,
Kathy Thrift
Director at GKA

MISSION STATEMENT:

Genesis Kids Academy is a preschool ministry of Genesis Church.

Our mission is to:

- * Teach children about God and His love for them.
- * Help each child develop academically, spiritually, socially, physically, and emotionally.
- * Develop each child's self esteem in a safe, nurturing, and creative environment.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Genesis Kids Academy has established policies and procedures that are in place to assist the preschool in making good decisions that optimize the goals set out in our mission. GKA reserves the right to make exceptions to, or to change policies as deemed necessary, by the Director. Parents will be notified in writing with any significant changes made during the school session.

Hours and Days of Operation

Core Enrollment: M-F 7am-4pm

Afternoon Care: M-F 4pm-5:30pm

Academic Year runs Mid August - Mid May

Optional Summer Program typically runs for 8 weeks during June and July.

See Annual GKA Calendar for Holidays and Scheduled Closings.

Please note: situations out of our control may disrupt service from time to time. Tuition will not be adjusted or discounted for any closure, scheduled or unscheduled.

Please Note:



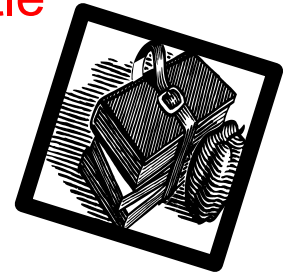
To avoid interruption of our daily schedule, all children must be checked in **no later than 8:30am**.

Late pick-up fee begins at 5 minutes past schedule pick up time.

Fee starts at \$15 and increases by \$1 per minute after 10 minutes late. Parents will be automatically be billed for late pick up fees.

What does my child need for preschool?

- **2-3 complete changes of clothes (labeled)**
(including underwear, shirts, pants, shoes, and socks)
- **Fall/Winter/Spring: Jacket (Labeled)**
These are very important to children's protection.
- **Diapers (labeled) send a whole package or box**
- **Preferred brand of diaper ointment**
- **Nap mat and nylon tote (labeled)**
(parents/guardians are responsible for taking mats home to launder at the end of each week.)
- **A full size backpack**
- **Lunch box with spill-proof cup or sports bottle**



Please label everything you bring.
Check out www.inchbug.com for great washable labels
and orbit bands for cups/bottles!

The center is **not responsible** for any lost or broken items.

What NOT to bring to Preschool...

- * **Toys of any kind...we have plenty here!**
- * **A small soft lovey for nap time is appropriate and should be left inside the backpack except for nap time.**



Adult / Child Ratios

**Children are placed in classes based on their age on September 1st of the current year.
Children in the PreK 3 class must be completely potty trained.

Room	Maximum # of Children	Minimum Adult/Child Ratio
BABY NURSERY	8 children	1 adult / 4 children
Toddler 1 Class	6 children	1 adult / 6 children
Toddler 2 Class	6 children	1 adult / 6 children
2's Class	8 children	1 adult / 8 children
2 1/2 Class	10 children	1 adult / 10 children
3 – 4 years	20 children	1 adult / 10 children

Tuition and Fees:

Annual Registration Fee/Academic Year:	\$150
Supply Fee for Academic Year:	\$ 85
Summer Program Enrollment Fee:	\$100



***** All fees and payments are non-refundable.**

Monthly Tuition Payments:

CORE DAY 7AM-4PM

Nursery	\$600/month
Toddler/Preschool	\$575/month (not potty trained)
Toddler/Preschool	\$525/month (potty trained)

Afternoon Care 4pm-5:30pm

All ages	\$100/month
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**Limited afternoon care spots will be available in each age group.*

**Sibling discounts do not apply to afternoon care.*

Late Payment Fees:

Tuition is due on the first of each month. A late fee of \$25/child will be added at 3pm on the 10th of each month.

Past Due Balances:

Your child may not be permitted to attend if the payment is not received by the 15th of the month. If you fail to pay your child's tuition in full by the end of the month, your child's enrollment may be terminated.

*****Tuition payment is the same every month regardless of absences, school holidays, or unexpected school closures. No allowances, credits, refunds, or make-up days shall be made for absences.**

Discounts and Special Priority

Multiple Child Discount:

A 10% discount is given to additional siblings. Full price tuition will be paid for the sibling with the highest tuition rate. This applies to Core tuition only.

Genesis Active and Serving Members:

A 10% discount will be given to children of actively members at Genesis Church while they are consistently serving on one of our key serve team.

Priority Enrollment:

Priority enrollment will be offered to Genesis Church actively serving members as well as currently and previously enrolled families.

Teacher Qualifications and Background Checks

- ♥ All staff members have a background check which includes fingerprinting at the time of hire. Persons with convictions of crimes against persons, felony drug convictions, certain juvenile adjudications, and DCF validations of child abuse or neglect are prohibited from living working or volunteering in child care facilities and homes.
- ♥ All staff members are required to have current C.P.R. & First Aid Training.
- ♥ All staff members are to have in-service hours pertaining to early childhood development each year.
- ♥ The center is an equal opportunity employer and provider. Applications for employment and enrollment are considered without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, or other basis prohibited by law.

Center Enrollment Information

- ☑ The center accepts children 8 weeks to 4 years of age.
- ☑ Prior to start date, children must submit a medical record with a complete physical, a current immunization, and any state requirements that apply.
- ☑ We do not discriminate against race, color, national origin, or sex.
- ☑ All registration materials must be completed before any child is able to start attendance at the center. This includes a complete physical; no child will be accepted without one.

Waiting List

- ☑ The center maintains a waiting list with a security deposit of **\$25.00**, which is non-refundable if parent withdraws from the list.
- ☑ If space is not available for a reserved date the **\$25.00** will be refunded to the parents due to the unavailability of the slot. Date of application, the child's age, and the children currently enrolled are taken into consideration for enrollment and those waiting to advance to the next age group. We **will not** reserve a space on the list without the required security deposit.

Parent & Child Confidentiality

All information pertaining to a child and their family is kept confidential at all times. Children's files are kept in the director's office to be monitored and accessed by administrative staff only.

Clothing

Each child needs **2 sets of extra clothing to be stored at the center** labeled with permanent marker. Also, make sure to bring socks and underwear. We are not responsible for lost items; however we will do our best to find them.

Please dress your children **comfortably** with casual clothing. Our craft projects and activities are some times messy and occasionally stain clothes. It is recommended for children to wear closed shoes with socks and refrain from wearing shoes that either slip off easily or are unsafe for them to walk in. Also, please choose clothing that makes it easy for diaper changes as well as potty time. Long flow dresses are adorable but sometimes fall into the potty! Skinny jeans are cute but are hard to pull up and down at potty time!

Meeting With Teachers And Communication Development

The staff at the center is strongly committed to being in partnership with you, to achieve the best educational program for your child's development. We believe in teamwork and communication, within the center, and with you. We encourage your involvement and communication with your child's teacher. GKA uses Brightwheel, a fabulous app to help us keep the line of communication open between teachers, parents, and administration. Be sure to turn your notifications on for Brightwheel! You don't want to miss something important! If you at any time have any questions you are able to stop by the center and speak with either the director or set up an appointment to meet with your child's teacher.

Birthdays

- ♥ GKA loves to celebrate birthdays Please make arrangements for the celebration by notifying your child's teacher and the director. They will give you guidelines for bringing in special treats!
- ♥ Birthday parties are the talk of the class! If you would like to send invitations for you child's party, please be sure to send enough for the whole class. GKA will not send home invitations unless the whole class receives one.



Center Closings:

The center will be occasionally closed for severe weather to ensure the safety of all the children enrolled. The safety of our children is our foremost concern, and although a closed center is inconvenient to the families we feel it is in their best interest to stay with their families. If area schools make a decision to close, GKA will follow suit. Occasionally, GKA makes the decision to close independently of the school systems. Please watch Brightwheel for closure announcements. Once you receive such announcement, please be sure to respond so that the GKA team will know that you got the message!

Withdrawal and Termination

Withdrawing Your Child

If you decide to withdraw your child from our program, **you are required to give us a thirty (30) day written notice.** You will still be responsible for all tuition and fees for the remaining thirty days, whether or not your child is in attendance. After you have withdrawn your child, he or she will only be eligible for readmission based upon space, availability, and if all other enrollment criteria have been met. If an outstanding balance existed when your child was withdrawn, you must bring your account current before we can consider you for re-enrollment. If your child is eligible to re-enroll, you must pay a new non-refundable registration fee at the current rate.

Termination of care is at the director's discretion. A child's enrollment might be terminated as a result of one of the following:

- *Abuse of other children, staff, or property by child or parent/guardian
- *Continued violations of policies by child or parent/guardian.
- *Disruptive or dangerous behavior by child or parent/guardian.
- *GKA's inability to meet the child's needs or the parent/guardian's expectations.
- ***GKA reserves the right to end enrollment of a child at any time and for any reason as deemed appropriate. Whenever possible, prior notice will be provided to the parent. Decisions of the Director are final.

Please No Smoking On The Grounds Or In The Parking Lot

The center holds to a "no smoking" policy. Staff members are not allowed to smoke in the buildings, and we ask that responsible adults do not smoke in the building or in the parking lot when picking up their child.

Please no dumping of ashtrays in the parking lot or in any of the facilities trashcans.

Health, Illness, and Medication Distribution Procedure

The center's directors administer medications to your child if the medicine is in the **original container** with the pharmacy label affixed indicating the following:

- ♥ child's name,
- ♥ doctor's name,
- ♥ medication name,
- ♥ dosage,
- ♥ expiration date,
- ♥ and directions for administering

Important Note: Medication forms are located in the office and must be completed and signed before a center director can administer them. All medications are stored and locked for safety.

No medications will be administered that are:

- ♥ Not properly labeled,
- ♥ Without the medication form,
- ♥ Without specific written instructions from the parent or child's doctor.

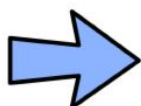


Detecting Illness In The Classroom:

- ♥ The staff of our center is highly trained for signs and symptoms of illness. All teachers are instructed to observe the children both developmentally and physically.
- ♥ Children that develop symptoms of illness during the day are evaluated and separated from other children to prevent further spreading of the illness. Parents will be notified if their child needs to be removed from the center due to an illness.

The Following Are Reasons Your Child Would Be Sent Home:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ♥ Fever of 100°F or greater | ♥ Scabies, head lice, and other parasites |
| ♥ Coughing Spells | ♥ Chicken pox |
| ♥ Difficulty breathing or wheezing | ♥ Untreated Mouth Sores |
| ♥ Vomiting | ♥ Yellow skin or eyes |
| ♥ Diarrhea | ♥ Pink irritated eyes with discharge |
| ♥ Undiagnosed rash | |



A Child will not be permitted to attend the center for 48 hours after being sent home.

Please do not bring your child to our center if they have the following symptoms.

If any of these symptoms are observed at preschool, you will be called to pick up your child from the center as soon as possible.

- ♥ If your child **currently has a fever** when arriving at the center or **has had one in the last forty-eight hours**. Fever breaking medication will not be given at the center and we ask that you **not give your child fever breaking medication and send them to the center**.
- ♥ A temperature of **100° F** or higher
- ♥ Symptoms or signs of sever illness (such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, persistent congestion and runny nose, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or any other unusual signs).
- ♥ Diarrhea.
- ♥ Vomiting illness (vomiting in the previous forty-eight hours).
- ♥ Symptoms of communicable disease such as heavy nasal discharge that is not clear, sore throat, reddened eyes, pink eyes with discharge, rash, complaints of a headache, complaints of abdominal pain, yellow skin or eyes, fever, and/or behavior change. Also if you child is not feeling well enough to participate in center activities.
- ♥ If your child **has not been** on an antibiotic treatment for more than twenty-four hours.
- ♥ **Untreated** scabies, head lice, or other infestations such as parasites.
- ♥ Mouth sores with drooling unless doctor determines the condition is non-infectious.
- ♥ Communicable diseases such as chicken pox need to be reported to the center as soon as possible so we can take the necessary precautions for the other students enrolled.



Parents and Guardians are required to check their child in upon arrival using the Ipad located near the office.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

- ♥ Enter your child's code at the iPad and complete check-in or check-out process.
- ♥ Please escort your child to their classroom and inform the teacher that they are present.
- ♥ Never leave a child outside of the building to walk in or clock-in alone.
- ♥ Parents must use the Time Terminal Pad daily for the clock-in and clock-out process.
- ♥ Permission slips for medication can be signed in the mornings. Please see the director or your child's teacher.
- ♥ Please encourage your child to "WALK" in the building. Our teachers work on that all week long so help us reinforce this good behavior!

Pick-Up Authorization

To ensure the children's safety, the center keeps a file of names of those authorized to pick up each child. Children will be released only to the parent or authorized guardian. Any parent/guardian unable to pick up their child must inform us before the other party arrives that day to pick up the child. This person's ID will be checked before they are allowed to take the child from the center.

In the case of divorced parents, we ask you to indicate on the enrollment form that has legal custody of the child. In the case of sole custody, we require a copy of the divorce decree.

These documents are in your child's file and kept confidential.

Please notify office, in writing, of any changes to your child's file. Children will not be released without proper authorization. When you pick-up your child please clock your child out and make sure the teacher knows your child is leaving.

Training and Mandatory Reporting

The staff has been trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse. Neglect and abuse can occur in all walks of life and can be either physical or emotional. We understand that both parents and children are the victims and need our understanding and help. The law requires us to report suspected abuse and neglect to the Child Protective Agency.



Steps Used If Abuse Or Neglect Is Suspected

- ♥ Staff member will confidentially discuss the suspected case with the director.
- ♥ The director will observe and speak with the child in question. To gather information to help determine if abuse and neglect has possibly happened.
- ♥ The director may or may not discuss with child's parents and concerns of the suspected situation.
- ♥ Staff members and directors will determine if there is a need to notify the Child Protective Agency.
- ♥ Staff members are entitled to make an individual report concerning the possibility of abuse or neglect.



Biting Policy for infants, toddlers, and preschool children

Children sometimes bite other children. Although not all toddlers bite, biting is considered a normal stage in a child's development. Children may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent to hurt another child. Karen Miller, author of Things To Do With Toddlers And Twos, suggests toddlers may bite for any of the following reasons:

Teething: Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the itch and stops the pain momentarily.

- ♥ **Sensory Exploration:** Toddlers are very good at using all of their sense to learn about the world. The "oral mode," is important style of learning for infants, and continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just their playmates.
- ♥ **Cause and Effect:** Toddlers are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often, the response is dramatic: they see that there is a lot of noise and attention from adults when they bite.
- ♥ **Self-Assertion:** This is probably the most common reason toddlers bite. It is a way to express frustration when they do not yet have the language skills to do so.

Genesis Kids Academy's staff takes action to reduce the number of biting incidents, including providing access to teething toys, providing numerous sensory exploration activities, providing opportunity to explore cause and effect, and offering toddlers options and alternatives to reduce frustrations.

When a child is bitten, that child is immediately comforted and the bite is washed with antibacterial soap and a Band-Aid is applied if skin is broken. The biter is told very firmly and in a loud voice that "It is not okay to bite. Biting hurts!" If possible the teacher will try to encourage the child who was bitten to express his/her feelings. "It hurts" or "Don't bite me" are sentences teachers will model for the child to repeat. The biter is then redirected to another area of the classroom and no positive or negative attention is given for approximately 5 minutes.

Consistent with GKA's policies, parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents of the biter are informed and work together with the teachers in hopes of preventing further incidents of biting. We recognize how upset parents may be when they learn their child has been bitten; however, we also recognize that biting is a normal component of child development. Despite our many concerted efforts to prevent biting incidents, they are bound to occur. Please feel free to ask the staff any questions about toddlers and biting. Parents should understand and take comfort in knowing that biting is a normal stage in the course of a child's development and, like all stages, he/she will quickly grow out of it.



Center's Discipline Policy

Undesired behavior is easily avoided by having highly trained and observant staff, capable of redirecting the negative behavior, to positive behavior.

Discipline is carried out on the belief that children are individuals with unique backgrounds and needs that require support, compassion, and firmness.

Children have great days and they also have not-so-great days. Our staff is trained to detect whether or not the behavior problem results from being tired

or bored or something more complex. The center cherishes every child, and understands that growing up can be difficult when you're small and the world is still new. Reinforcing positive behavior by complimenting or bringing attention to him/her encourages the child to continue with their good behavior.