



## FAMILY HANDBOOK

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION Play Smart welcomes all families, regardless of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, ancestry, marital or parental status, and physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

ELIGIBILITY: In order to register for preschool, each child must meet the following criteria:

- Placement of class is determined by age on August 1st
- Proof of current required immunizations & physical form
- Complete all forms and pay registration fee

## **School Philosophy**

It is the philosophy of Play Smart that children are encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where all children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment. We believe that each child is a unique individual and that all children can learn. Our preschool programs provide inclusive settings that recognize children's varied abilities, interests, needs, and learning styles. We believe children learn best through meaningful play. Our play-based, child centered program reflects the integration of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self help and aesthetic areas for the total development of the child. Meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery and problem solving which allows individual growth and development of a positive self-image. We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their educational program. The primary bridge between home and school is the involvement of family and community.

- Curriculum: Play Smart embraces the developmental philosophy of learning, which respects each child as a unique individual, and supports the knowledge that young

children learn best through play and hands-on experiences. Through daily classroom activity we strive to maintain a BALANCE between: ·

- Child-directed and Teacher directed activity
- Structure and flexibility
- Group needs and individual needs
- Program goals and children's interests
- Security and risk-taking
- Familiarity and challenge

At Play Smart, our curriculum is... ·

- Developmental: Children's learning and skill acquisition is by nature, but develops at the child's own pace. Each child is respected and supported at each stage of development as they progress toward their own goals and potential.
- Play-based: Play is the child's natural process for learning and development. Within play's natural learning environment children develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.
- Child-directed: Children learn best when they have some control over their learning, when activities are meaningful and relevant, and when they make choices regarding what materials they use and how they will use them. These choices empower children to take control of their own learning and to become intrinsically motivated – the most effective and engaging way to learn.
- Teacher-supported: Rather than a dispenser of knowledge, the teacher is primarily a facilitator enabling the child to learn from his/her own experience. The teacher prepares a nurturing environment, a wide variety of material and activity, and ample opportunity to explore.
- Integrated: Curriculum includes all parts of the preschool day, including arrival, routines, care taking transitions, and departure as well as planned activities and spontaneous play. Learning occurs in all areas of the classroom and is not an isolated event, drill, or activity.
- Emergent: Curriculum is created daily as the children's interests and ideas are freely explored. When encouraged to make their own choices, explore their own ideas, and to follow their own interests, children are involved in the real process of discovering knowledge.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Enrollment Procedures:**

Play Smart accepts students from ages 3 years through 6 years. Applications and a yearly registration/supply fee per child shall be submitted prior to 1st . There will be a waiting list for any class with more applications than spaces. In compliance with licensing regulations, registration and emergency forms must be received prior to any child's admission to the classroom. All other health and immunization records shall be submitted at this time as well.

Children whose forms have not been received by the designated deadline may be excluded from the classroom until such forms have been received. The first 30 days of school is considered a probationary period. If it becomes evident during this period that the relationship between the school and the family is not mutually beneficial, the child may be dropped from enrollment. In the event a child is dropped from enrollment, tuition costs will be prorated and a refund will be given if applicable. If at any time, either the parent or the preschool feels that the relationship between school and family is not mutually beneficial, either party may call a special conference. Participants at the conference may include the parents involved, the teacher and the director. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to discontinue a child's enrollment at Play Smart. This decision will be based on the best interest for children and staff.

### **Admissions Process (effective September 1, 2023):**

1. Schedule a tour of the school.
2. Submit an application online with a \$50 fee.
3. Student observation/assessment will take place.
4. Notice of enrollment acceptance via email. An enrollment fee of \$150 will be required at this time as well.

### **Termination of enrollment may be a result of the following:**

Non-payment of tuition, abusive, destructive, and/or dangerous behavior to children, staff, or property by a child, parent, or family member, or failure to follow our Family Handbook policies and procedures.

### **Enrollment of Children with Special Needs:**

It is the policy of the school that children with special needs be included in enrollment when it is determined that the staff and /or facility can provide a beneficial classroom setting for this child. At the time of application to the school, parents shall be required to fully disclose any known special needs of his/her child. It is the prerogative of the school to request that the child be evaluated prior to admission to the school and that any medical, education or other pertinent records be offered to the school for consideration. If a child has a current IFSP or IEP, Play Smart staff will support the children's goals while at Play Smart.

### **Therapy services in conjunction with Simply Therapy (in house therapy clinic):**

We offer speech and occupational therapy through our private practice. Fees for therapy are not included in tuition and any claims are submitted to your insurance company. If a staff person believes your child may benefit from services, they will send home a referral form. It will be the parent/guardian(s) responsibility to follow through with contacting Simply Therapy if interested in services.

## **Withdrawal Procedures:**

Families must complete an Early Withdrawal Form (available from the Director) 30 days in advance of withdrawing a child prior to the end of the school year. \* A \$100.00 early withdrawal/administrative fee is due with the form to release you from your remaining monthly financial obligations.

## **Tuition and Fees / Class Schedules Registration / Supply**

### **Fee:**

Each academic year a supply fee is required: \$75 will be deducted on the first day of school, and \$75 will be deducted in January. The summer camp supply fee of \$100 is due June 1 with the first month's tuition. These fees are non-refundable.

- Monthly Tuition (tuition is due on the 1st of every month):
  - Summer camp: June 1, July 1
  - Academic Year: August 1st September 1st, October 1st, November 1st, December 1st, January 1st, February 1st, March 1st, April 1st, May 1st
  - Payments are set up and automatically deducted on the 1st. Play Smart is not liable if an ACH withdrawal results in an overdraft charge on your account.
  - Any changes made to ACH withdrawals must be put in writing and given or emailed to the director at least 15 days prior to the next withdrawal date.
  - If you would like to pay via cash or check or on a different payment schedule than monthly, you will need to submit that in writing to the Director. There may be additional administrative fees applied to your balance.
- Late Payment Fee: MONTHLY – If payment is not submitted by the 5th of each month a \$25 dollar late fee will be applied each week it is late. Returned ACH or returned check fee is \$35.00

Monthly Tuition Rates: ACH

2 days \$365.00 per month

3 days \$530.00 per month

5 days \$675.00 per month

- Early Room (7:15am-7:45am) \$2/day per child Late Pick Up is (4:30pm-5:00pm) \$2/day per child \$10 first minute after 5:00 pm, then \$2 per minute thereafter these fees are calculated each month and charged with next month's tuition. June early/late room charges will be charged July 1 and July early/late room charges will be charged July 30
- Tuition is not prorated during any month, regardless of holidays or other non-school days.
- Early Withdrawal fee: \$100
- Please consult with the director if you are unable to pay monthly payments.

## **Transitional kindergarten/Kindergarten**

Tuition is \$675.00 per month. Kindergarten hours are 8:00 am-3:00 pm. After school is available from 3:00-5:00 for an additional charge of \$25 per week. Early room from 7:15-7:45 am is \$2 per day.

## **Drop-off/Pick Up Policies & Procedures**

Our school is open from 8-4:30pm. We offer an early room from 7:15 am-7:45 am for an additional fee (\$2/day per child). We also offer a late room from 4:30 pm-5:00 pm for an additional fee of \$2/day per child. During the academic calendar year, our Kindergarten and 1st grade hours are 8:00-3:00 pm, with early room 7:15-7:45 am (\$2/day) and after school from 3-5 (\$25 per week). We ask that no children arrive later than 8:30 am unless you notify us in advance. Please respect these times so we can focus our attention on learning during our day. A late pick up fee of \$10.00 after the first minute late, then \$2.00 per minute thereafter will be applied after 5:00 pm. Payment will be deducted from your account on file on the 1st of the following month. If you are running late, please give us a quick call so we can inform your child and alleviate any concerns. Be assured that your child will not be left at the school until someone has arrived to pick them up. If there is no contact by the parents and the class is over, we will call the numbers on the emergency contact list until we have reached someone that has been authorized to be responsible for the child. In the event that no one can be reached and we have put forth sufficient effort, the local police department will be notified.

At drop off (until 8:15 am), pull through the pick up line, a staff member will be waiting at the back door. Staff will escort your child to their classroom. Please use the Procure app to sign your child in for the day.

At pick up, please pull into a parking spot near the ramp. Call the facility and a staff member will gather your child and belongings, and bring them to your vehicle. Please use the Procure app to sign your child out.

## **Records Request**

Please allow 48 business hours for any request of student files or payment records.

## **School Closings**

Play Smart follows Owensboro Public Schools calendar including most professional development days. Generally, Play Smart will close when OPS closes due to unsafe road conditions regarding weather. In the event that school needs to be canceled for any reason, we will post on social media and our family app for communication. We will not be pre-scheduling

make-up days. If we are closed for an excessive amount of days, we will communicate any make up days that will be offered.

Extended Leave: Play Smart's expenses do not change when individual students take an extended leave of absence from the classroom. Therefore, tuition payments must be made in full during extended leaves. Or, a child may voluntarily withdraw pursuant to the terms of withdrawal procedures. If space is available, the child may re-enroll and a new registration, equipment and retainer fee would not be required. The school offers no guarantee that openings in the classroom will not be filled during the time a student has voluntarily withdrawn.

## **School Communication**

Director: Amy Morris Email: amy.playsmartky@gmail.com

Phone: 270-240-3310 (school phone). If a child will be absent, please notify his/her teacher by calling the school phone, emailing the director, or posting in the app. A Newsletter is distributed on or around the first of each month via email; this publication provides important information regarding classroom activities, important dates, snack menu, and other general information. Please take a few minutes each month to read our newsletter – our most important vehicle for communicating school activity.

## **Parent Communication:**

Each student will be provided a folder on the first day of school. This folder will contain activities completed by your child as well as pertinent information. Please check this daily and make sure the child returns it on the next school day. We will communicate during the day with parents using the Procure app. Please do not use social media to communicate with the staff or Director/Owners. All parent communication should be through the Procure app, or email if a personal matter. There is a parent bulletin board and calendar located in the gym. Here you will find information including what we are learning, state information, our newsletter, and more! Parent Meetings/Conferences: Please schedule a conference time with your child's teacher or the director if you have questions or concerns you'd like to discuss. Meetings can be requested at any time. At these meetings we will discuss your child's development and progress in the classroom with their teacher. We will schedule parent/teacher conferences twice per academic calendar year.

## **Health and Safety Guidelines**

In an effort to create a healthy and safe environment, all families must abide by the following rules. Any family failing to meet any of these Health guidelines may be dismissed from Play Smart. Complete registration, emergency forms, health and medical records and turn in to the Director before the first day of school.

Ensure your child's immunizations are current.

- IF CHILD IS FULLY IMMUNIZED- Complete Certificate of Immunization form and turn in to office.
- IF CHILD IS NOT FULLY IMMUNIZED – If you have chosen not to immunize your child, your responsibilities are listed below.
  - Statement of Exemption to Immunization Law printed on the reverse of the Certificate of Immunization form must be filled out and given to the Director. Please be sure to list any immunizations your child has had on the front of the form.
  - You must be completely knowledgeable on the symptoms of any diseases your child has not been vaccinated for. If your child exhibits any of the symptoms of these diseases, you must notify the Director immediately.
  - Be prepared to keep your child out of school until the Doctor determines it is safe for your child to return. Understand in advance that this time period may be as long as 2 months, depending on the circumstances.

## **Illness**

Keep your child out of school if they exhibit any of the symptoms of contagious illnesses listed below (please notify staff of your child's absence).

- Fever of 100 degrees F (axillary)/or 101 degrees F (orally) or higher within 24 hours.
  - Discharge from eye(s), nose, or ear(s).
  - Loose, watery stools within 24 hours
  - Vomiting within the last 24 hours.
  - Within 24 hours of starting any antibiotics
  - Cough lasting more than 1 week without a doctor's note.
  - Excessive crying, with the inability to participate in regular activity
  - Any evidence of lice
  - Any unusual rashes, not associated with diapering, heat or allergies
- If your child displays any of these symptoms while in our care, we will call you and your child will need to be picked up within 30 minutes. Your child will need to be symptom free for one full school day before returning to school. This includes all of the above symptoms.
    - If at any time Play Smart has reason to believe that your child has a communicable disease, we can request that he/she be seen by a doctor and that a note be provided from the doctor stating that your child is not contagious and is able to attend, and participate in a group care facility. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, you need to notify the Director so we can notify other families.

## Injury

In case of a minor injury, we will administer basic first aid. All injuries require immediate parental notification and will be documented in the form of an Accident Report and notified via app, email, or phone call. In case of a minor injury in which an ambulance is not needed but immediate medical attention is required, the Director or Owner(s) will contact the parents. If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be notified. Play Smart Preschool staff cannot transport students to a hospital or doctor's office. Injured students shall be transported for medical attention by parents or by calling 911 for an ambulance.

## Hygiene

Be overly cautious in regard to hand washing both adults and children at school. Hands should be washed at the following times: Upon arrival at school, prior to handling or eating food, after using the toilet, before and after playing with sensory materials such as play doh or shaving cream, after blowing nose, after coming inside from the playground.

## Medication Procedures and Storage

As a general rule, medications are not administered at Play Smart. In an event that your child needs medication while at school, it must be stored in the designated medicine box located in the office out of the reach of any children. The box will be locked; a teacher will know where the key is located. **Medicine must be in the original container with the child's name. Parents will need to sign an authorization and give the medication directly to a staff member to be placed in the designated medicine box.**

## Toilet Training

At Play Smart, we do not require that your child is toilet trained to attend our preschool. It is preferable that they are able to use the restroom and wash their hands alone, but together we can take extra measures to make them comfortable at school and guide them to be self-sufficient. If this is a concern, please discuss it with the teachers or director so we can develop a plan of action together. We take the children to the restroom at designated times: before morning snack, after morning gym/outside time, before lunch, after lunch/before nap, after nap/before afternoon snack, and before going home. We will accompany a "potty trained" child to the bathroom at other times, if necessary. We consider a child to be potty trained when the following criteria are met:

1. Be able to TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go. They must be able to say the words "I have to go potty" BEFORE they have to go (special circumstances allow a child to use sign language or another sign). A potty trained child is able to perceive events that are going to happen before they happen. They MUST learn they have to tell us so we can accompany them to the bathroom and supervise them. We cannot allow free access to the bathroom.



2. Be able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance (we request you send them in pants/shorts that are easy to pull up and down).
3. Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet.
4. Be able to get off the potty by themselves.
5. Be able to wash and dry their hands.
6. Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are outside and away from the bathroom.
7. We do not put kids on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour. This could cause your child to not develop bladder muscles needed to hold urine.
8. We don't limit food or drinks to only be given at certain times. We maintain the same food and snack schedule during training.
9. We don't clean out poopy underwear. We will bag pee soaked underwear and return it to the parent at the end of the day but we will not do this with soiled underwear. We must dispose of that immediately into the garbage. We don't do laundry of any soaked or soiled clothes. They are bagged and returned to the parents at the end of the day.

If your child is not considered "potty trained" according to these criteria, we require that they come to school in a diaper or pull up. If you have had great success at home, we can accommodate that by putting a pull up over their underwear while training. If the child has regular accidents in the underwear we will switch them back to regular diapers and try again at another time.

## **Safety Guidelines**

The following procedures are required by the State health and human services guidelines.

**Emergency Procedures:** Tornado drills shall be performed quarterly. If a tornado warning is issued, parents are advised not to pick up their children until the warning is over. Children will remain in a place of safety at the school until the warning is lifted. Fire drills shall be performed once per month, for each class. Evacuation plans are posted and fire alarm equipment shall be utilized during drills. In the event of a fire or emergency other than a tornado, children will be evacuated to a safe area and parents shall be promptly notified. Staff will remain with the children until the emergency has passed and class has resumed, or until parents have picked up their children. Intruder drills will be done once per quarter. We will communicate via Procure when an intruder drill will take place. They will also be notified when it is completed. **Head Count of Children:** The staff at the preschool is responsible and required to take a headcount of the children in the class in accordance with the enrollment record at the beginning of the class. It is suggested that each teacher identifies where every child is every 15 minutes in addition to every time there is a change in play—Outside to Inside, Snack to Book Time, etc. Lockdown drills are performed quarterly to ensure staff and children know the procedure to maintain safety if an intruder should enter the building.

**Sign In and Sign Out** All students must be signed in and out by an adult every day they attend. We encourage you to do this from your procure app. \*Students will only be released to their parents and authorized adults on their emergency consent form. Please let the teachers know

ahead of time if we should expect an unfamiliar face picking up your child. Identification will be required for us to release your child.

Drop off procedures are as follows: a staff person will be located by the entrance to the school from 7:15-8:15 am. You will pull next to the cones and get your child out of the vehicle. The staff person will walk your child inside. You are permitted to drop off your child inside on the first day of school only. All students need to be in school by 8:30 am, with the exception of doctor appointments, etc. It can be disruptive to other students when children arrive late to school.

Pick up procedures: Pull into a spot in the parking lot and dial our phone number. A staff person will bring your child out to you.

**Dress and Extra Clothing** We request that students wear play clothes that are practical, comfortable, and washable. Please dress children for active play. We will go outside for large motor activities whenever the weather allows us. Be sure your child is adequately dressed so he/she can enjoy the outdoor activities. We ask that you provide your child an extra set of clothing, appropriate for the season, that can be kept at school (socks too). Be sure to put your child's name on ALL clothing that is removable.

## Food Allergy or Special Diet

If your child has a known food allergy or special diet, please provide us with a doctor's note or plan. We have students enrolled who have a severe life threatening allergy to some foods and any food processed with these items. Please be aware of any foods sent in lunches even processed in plants with these foods.

Snack Time: Please inform the classroom teacher of any allergies or food restrictions. Play Smart will provide two nutritious snacks for your child daily. Please bring your child with two cups (one with water and one with milk- preferably in insulated cups) daily. The aseptic milk containers are also allowed. See below for cow's milk restrictions.

Children love to cook and are capable of helping in many ways. On certain days the children will prepare their own snacks with the help of the teacher / teacher assistant. You can bring your child a snack from home, but please keep it simple and nutritious. For special occasions (Birthdays) parents / guardians are allowed to bring a commercially made treat for the entire class. First please check with the teachers on any allergies.

## **Lunch Requirements:**

- Please be sure to include an ice pack in your child's lunch box.
- While we will assist the children in opening their packages, we do ask that the lunches are pre-portioned and in child-friendly packages. This year we are

requesting all lunches be packed in a Bento box. Due to state regulations, we cannot have plastic bags out on the tables.

- All lunches must contain the following per state guidelines: · Bread, Milk(unflavored), 2 different vegetables OR a fruit and a vegetable, AND meat or meat alternative. We prefer that you do not pack any candy or sweets. All lunch boxes and cups brought to school should be labeled with the child's name.
- Lunches cannot be warmed in the microwave. You may bring a thermos to keep your child's lunch warm.
- If your child has an allergy to cow's milk, we will need a note from your doctor stating your child cannot have cow's milk and that they can have an alternative of water. If you prefer your child have milk, you may provide a milk alternative such as almond or oat milk.
- Every child must bring a separate leak proof water cup to school each day.
- Be sure to label all lunch boxes, ice packs, and water cups.

## **Guidelines for Discipline in the Classroom**

Treat all children with dignity and respect, taking into consideration each child's special needs.

- Corporal or harsh punishment of any kind is not permitted at Play Smart.
- We are committed to providing a safe environment for learning. We will use strategies to help support all students' social emotional development by teaching expected behaviors and teaching various social skills all year long. We try our best to provide a consistent, challenging learning environment with activities that will prevent boredom and promote good behavior. If a behavior arises, teachers may use a pre-correction, verbal redirection, state the expected behavior, give behavior choices, provide visual support, and/or go to the safe spot. The safe place is a quiet, cozy place in the classroom a child can go when they are feeling upset, sad, or just want to be alone. The safe place also has a Calm Down Kit. It is a bucket with items and visual supports to help a child calm down. We use Green and Red Choices to teach students appropriate "green behaviors". It is our goal for students to be happy, confident learners who can problem solve and work collaboratively with others. Being able to make good (aka green) choices when they are alone and interacting with others is a big part of that. If a student makes an inappropriate, dangerous, or destructive choice, an Incident Report will be used to document the behavior and given to parents at pick up.
- Our discipline procedures will consist of the following strategies: 1. Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child. Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes. 2. Redirecting behavior when this seems potentially effective. 3. Separating a child from the group (Time-Out) to Calm Down area – One Minute away for each year of age. 4. Counseling children individually about their behaviors. 5. Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns via an Incident Report and/or phone call and/or conference.

## **Aggressive and Disruptive Behavior Policy and Procedure**

Policy: At Play Smart our philosophy is providing developmentally appropriate experiences where ALL children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment. Disruptive behavior distracts from the full benefit of our program and will result in consequences.

- There will be no refunds or prorated tuition in the case your child has been sent home for disruptive behaviors, or not allowed to return.
- We consider the following to be aggressive or disruptive behaviors:
  - Screaming
  - using foul language or cursing
  - Spitting
  - threatening peers
  - Pushing
  - Scratching
  - Hitting
  - Kicking
  - Punching
  - throwing toys or furniture
  
- We have found that behavior concerns usually indicate that a child needs more time, support, and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social and emotional health. If further guidance is required, actions taken will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's level of understanding.

Procedure:

- 1st offense - A verbal warning is given, along with redirection.
- 2nd offense- The offending child will be guided to a quiet place in the room like the calm down corner or other similar area where the child can take time to settle down.
  - If the offending child is unable to use the calming techniques and continues to be disruptive, the teacher will then notify the office and the director will be called in to help the child.
  - Both sets of parents will be told of the incident.
- 3rd offense – The child's parents will be asked to pick the child up immediately for the day and focus on helping the child understand that aggressive behavior is unacceptable.
- 4th offense – The Administration will meet to determine whether the next step will be further time at home, or removal from the program for the remainder of the school year. Factors such as home environment, whether outside resources were utilized, and family history will be taken into consideration.
  - If the child displays recurring aggressive behaviors (sent home twice in one week), the administration will meet to determine whether the next step will be further time at home, or removal from the program for the remainder of the school year.

- At ALL times Play Smart will take into consideration the safety of all students. A record of all incidents will be kept. This is especially useful in determining any patterns of behavior and preventing them. Play Smart staff and teachers will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been involved in an aggressive behavior incident.

## **Reporting Child Abuse**

Child abuse is generally defined as non-accidental, physical, or mental injury caused by the acts or omissions of the child's parents or caretakers, including physical abuse, neglect, emotional maltreatment and sexual abuse. As required by law, any staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse, must immediately report such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency at the following address: Kentucky Cabinet For Health and Family Services 3649 Wathens Crossing Owensboro, KY 42301 (270) 687-7491 1-877-597-2331

Thank you for choosing Play Smart Preschool for your child. Please let us know if you have any questions or need assistance with anything.

Owners: Trina Pryor & Jill Payne

Staff Members:

Amy Morris, Director

Teachers:

Amanda Burke

Morgan Day

Heather Ipock

Ashlee O'Bryan

Kimberly Montgomery

Emily Moore

Jennifer Stauffer

Updated July 21, 2023

## **Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Page**

I verify that I have read and understand the Parent Handbook and agree to follow Play Smart Rules and Procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date