



Parent Handbook 2024-2025

135 Executive Park Way Moncks Corner, SC 29461

Welcome

Welcome to Berkeley Kids Academy. This handbook has been created so that there are no misunderstandings, and so that everyone is aware of the requirements of our establishment, as well as the requirements of you, the parents/guardians. This handbook covers our childcare philosophies, business policies and expectations. Please read this handbook carefully, and feel free to discuss with a staff member any questions that you may have.

Philosophy

Our preschool and childcare Center is committed to creating a safe, warm, loving environment for children where they can learn and grow physically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually, and socially at their own pace. We want to help your child increase their confidence, and self esteem by treating them as unique individuals, and allowing them to express themselves in a variety of facets. We strive to make your child's time at daycare the best experience it can be for them as well as for you, the parents.

Each staff member undergoes a thorough background check, and we provisionally hire at our facility to ensure new staff members are a good fit. We are committed to supporting families by maintaining open communication and encourage parental involvement in our programming and care activities. Our objective is to care for your child the same way you would. We abide by an open-door policy that allows you access to your child at any time of the day unless a court order stipulates otherwise.

Our programming activities follows a play-based learning philosophy. We develop activities centered on stories, songs, math, fine and gross motor skills, circle time, science, music, theatre, and arts/crafts. We strive to prepare your children for their early school years by exposing them regularly to letters, numbers, colors, shapes, name recognition, and new vocabulary.

Thank you for choosing Berkeley Kids Academy, we look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Hours of Operation

6:00 AM to 6:00 PM – Monday through Friday

We close for holidays on January 15th, February 19th, March 29th, May 27th, June 19th, July 4th, September 4th, October 9th, November 10th, November 22nd - 24th, and December 25th - January 1st.

If extreme weather is to occur, we follow all [Berkeley County School District](#) closings such as full facility closures or early dismissal days when it is pertaining to dangerous weather and keeping our children, staff, and families safe.

Late pick-up policy: If you are late picking up (after 6:00 PM) your child you will be charged a late fee of \$15 per 15 min late, *or any part thereof*, except in emergency situations. This late fee will be added to your tuition on the next billing cycle.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Enrollment Requirements

Before your child can be officially enrolled in Berkeley Kids Academy you must complete and provide the following documents:

- Signed Parent Contract and Rate Agreement
- Completed Child Profile & copy of Immunization Record
- Signed Consent Forms (those that are applicable).
- Registration Fee of \$150 must be paid.
- All items required for your child success must be with them.

Spaces will not be held by verbal contract; the registration fee and first week's tuition must be paid for a spot to be held for you and your child.

We do require that the parent/guardian and their child(ren) visit our Center prior to enrollment. This process allows your child(ren) to become more familiar with our daycare and staff and for you as the parent/guardian to be more familiar and comfortable with your child's stay at our facility. Every item your child brings into the Center must be labeled with their name. Berkeley Kids Academy is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. Some of the items needed from home for a successful day at the Center are as follows:

Infants

- Premade labeled formula / milk bottles
- Diapers / wipes / diapering creams and ointments
- Two changes of clothes
- Playpen crib sheets
- Baby food and baby snacks (If applicable)

One Year Olds & Up

- Kinder Mat or desired sleep mat for nap time
- Blanket for nap and any other desired items such as stuffed animals, pacifiers, or pillows
- Diapers / wipes / diapering creams and ointments
- Two changes of clothing
- Sippy cup for access to water throughout the day

Payment Procedures

Forms of payment currently accepted are cash, check, and a virtual credit/debit card. If you choose to pay with a credit or debit card, you will be responsible for paying processing fees. All fees are due on Monday morning for the current week of childcare. If fees are not paid by pick up on Monday afternoon late charges will be added to your week of tuition at a rate of \$15 per day. To ensure accurate supplies to keep the daycare running, fees must be paid on time. After 5 days of late fees have been added to your account, your care will be suspended until fees are paid. After 3 late payments, fees may be required 2 weeks in advance, or service may be suspended. Each situation is dealt with on an individual basis.

Registration Fee

An annual registration fee of \$150/child is required upon enrollment. This registration fee goes towards supplies that we use to teach your child. This is a non-refundable fee.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Attendance Records Policy / Signing in and out

Children are signed in and out by staff members & parents upon their arrival and departure. We ask that all children are present by 9:00 AM everyday to ensure ratios. We ask that if your child is not going to attend care as per usual that you inform the Center ASAP. This will help us plan activities for the day. When your child does not attend daycare, you must call to let us know if the reason is an illness, as we are required to record this to attempt to prevent other cases breaking out. If no one answers the phone, please leave a brief message.

If someone else will be picking up your child, please let staff know upon arrival. Photo ID will be required by the person picking up your child. Please let any individuals other than parents who may pick up the children that they will be asked for picture ID to ensure the safety of all children.

Children will not be released to unauthorized individuals. If someone shows up to pick up your child and staff was not made aware of it, your child will not be released from the Center until a parent/guardian gives our facility permission to release the child into your care.

We may refuse to release children if we have reason to suspect that someone picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may, based on our judgement, endanger the child.

Berkeley Kids Academy requests that a copy of any court orders establishing custody be on file to prevent a non-custodial parent from having access to a child without the guardian's consent.

Absences / Exclusion from Daycare

If a child is too sick to attend daycare, please keep them home. There is no "sick room" at the daycare, and the best place for a child to be recuperating from an illness is at home. There are also many symptoms that a child may have that may prevent them from being able to partake in everyday activities. We strictly follow [SCDHEC](#) guidelines. If your child experiences any of the following please keep them home until they are gone, or are well enough to participate in normal everyday activities:

- Fever greater than or equal to 100.5°F
- Excessive drainage (clear or discolored) from the mouth, nose, eyes, or ears
- Red discoloration to the whites of the eye(s)
- Skin rashes as they are difficult to diagnose unless seen by a physician
- Severe abdominal pain, vomiting or diarrhea. Watery stool that includes diaper spillage or challenges caregivers to maintain sanitary techniques
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- Yellow discharge from the eyes
- An unusual yellow coloring of the skin or eyes
- Cuts or openings on the skin that are pus-filled or oozing
- Lice or nits

If your child(ren) is sent to daycare with any of the above listed symptoms or develop during the day, they will be sent home. Children should NEVER be medicated and then sent to daycare (i.e., given Tylenol to break fever). You should arrange for back-up care when your child is sick, and unfortunately there are no refunds or discounts for days that your child does not attend daycare. There are still costs associated with each childcare spot each day that unfortunately cannot be avoided if your child is not in attendance.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

If your child will not be attending daycare due to illness or any other reason, please let someone at the Center know as soon as possible, as well as the reason they will not be attending. This will prevent activities from being delayed.

This is the reference website for SCDHEC school and childcare exclusion list:
<https://scdhec.gov/health/child-teen-health/school-exclusion>

Child Abuse and Neglect

If there is any abuse or neglect suspected of any children in our care, we are required to report it. Also be aware also that children will NOT be released under any circumstances to impaired individuals. If we have reason to believe that any persons picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, an emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. The incident will also have to be reported to [DSS](#).

Clothing Code

Children should come dressed in comfortable, season appropriate clothing that can get dirty, since some activities we do daily are messy. A spare change of clothes is required for all children in case of soiling of clothes. Children under the age of 3, and those who are potty-training require at least two changes of clothing. We want to keep your children happy and comfortable.

Please ensure that you have proper outerwear provided for your child so that they are comfortable and do not miss out on outdoor play. If a child does not have proper outdoor apparel they will have to remain indoors with another teacher/classroom. Please leave an extra pair of these items such as jackets with us if you can or be sure to bring them everyday.

Potty Training Policies

We strive to support and continue your efforts of potty training at home here at daycare. However, there are some key signs to look for before we can help you train your child at the Center. The key signs of readiness for potty training include:

- The child can communicate to you when they need to go to the bathroom.
- The child's diaper is dry after nap times and for long periods during the day.
- The child can hold their bowels and bladder until they get to the potty once they realize that they need to go.
- The child can pull down and up their pants and underwear/pull-ups on their own with little or no assistance.

If these signs are not present, your child is not ready to potty train at daycare. We will always encourage children to use the potty regularly.

When your child does potty train, we ask that you provide extra clothing and remove soiled clothing daily. If we run out of clean clothes and underwear then you will have to be contacted during the day for you to provide them, as we do not have daycare "loaner" clothes or a washing machine and dryer on site.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Discipline Policy

Berkeley Kids Academy is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our Center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community. Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of others, property and to learn to understand results of their actions.

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness. Each student at Berkeley Kids Academy had a right to learn in a safe and friendly place, be treated with respect, and receive the help and support of caring adults.

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressively, we intervene immediately to protect the children. There is no physical punishment in our facility. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Center's Director.

Daily Routine

6:00 AM	Center Opens - Free Play (table toys, puzzles, coloring, etc.)
8:00 AM	Breakfast is served
9:00 AM	Circle Time/Other Educational Activity (our learning time)
10:00 AM	A nutritious snack is served
10:30 AM	Educational Activities and Programming - Art, science, weather charts and Story Time
11:30 AM	Lunch is served
12:00 PM	Naptime - Children remaining awake may read books, do puzzles, or other quiet activities while others sleep
2:00 PM	Quiet time is over for napping children
2:15 PM	A nutritious snack is served
2:30 PM	Outside Play (weather permitting) – Activities taking place at the Center's outdoor play area
4:00 PM	Educational Activities and Programming – Art, science, music, or literacy activities that relate to current theme/web
4:30 PM	Outside Play (weather permitting)
6:00 PM	Center Closes – Children must be picked up by 6:00 PM or late charges will apply. If you need to speak to staff about any concerns, you must come ahead of time to do so

This schedule is very flexible and is adjusted according to the children's needs and interests (i.e., If a child is engaged in art or another activity when snack is served, they may finish their activity and will then be served their snack. Or, if we are engaged during scheduled "learning/circle time" the learning/circle time will just be pushed back to a later time so that we may fully engage in the current activity unit it is completed. The number one goal is learning.

Due to the children switching rooms and going outdoors during the day, the designated care giver will always be "tracking" by keeping an attendance sheet on her and updating it after each transition.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Items Needed from Home

- Nap Bedding – Play pen crib sheets for children 12 months and under.
- For children ages one year or older, you are required to bring a floor mat for them to sleep on as well as a blanket for them to sleep with and any other items they may need to have a successful nap time such as stuffed animals.
- Diapers, rash ointment, baby wipes
- Pull-ups
- Labeled premade bottles for children 12 months and under.
- Spare Clothing – For children potty-training age and under, bring at least three (3) complete sets, including underwear and socks. For older children, only one set is required.
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- Weather appropriate clothing - jacket, splash, hats, mitts, etc. Lack of weather appropriate clothing will prevent your child from enjoying our outdoor play time. Please ensure you dress your child for outdoor play everyday.

Please ensure that children come dressed in “play” clothes. Although we are careful while doing art and playing outside; there are instances where clothes could become dirty and stained. We appreciate your understanding and so do the children. Extra supplies can be left at the daycare and replenished, when necessary, space permitting.

We request that you do not send or let your children bring any personal toys from home to school with them unless prompted by the teacher for events such as show and tell.

Snacks and Meals

All snacks and meals are provided by the Center and prepared at the Center. Throughout the day, water drinks are available for the children as needed. Juice or milk will be provided at meal and snack times. At all times during drinking and eating, children are required to be seated and not engaged in any play activity. This is to ensure safety (to avoid choking) and to promote healthy eating/drinking habits. Under no circumstances will young children be allowed to walk around or play with bottles in their mouths. Pacifiers are encouraged for use at nap time only and if your child requires a bottle at nap, it will be given to him or her before they get into bed. Under no circumstances will children be allowed to go to sleep with bottles in bed. This is also to ensure safety (prevent choking) and to prevent dental problems.

Medications

All medications are stored in a closet that is inaccessible to children. Children are not given any medication without the parents' written consent. Written consent may only be on a “Permission to Administer Medications” form and all medications must be in their original bottles with original labels. Staff must also indicate on the administering form the date, time and dosage of medicine given at each administration, and then initial this information.

For prescription medication, only the directions on the bottle will be accepted for administering the medication. And in all instances staff need to know when the child received his/her last dosage of the medication, to ensure medication is given at appropriate times consistently.

With any prescription antibiotics children may not return to care until they've had a full 24 hours of doses, ensuring they are well on the road to recovery, are no longer contagious, and are ready to participate in the full day's activities.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Allergies

All allergies (and dietary concerns) will be clearly posted in each room, on the refrigerator and written on the child's emergency info/consent cards. If you bring food to the facility for any special occasion and it does not have the appropriate symbols or ingredients list then they will not be served to anyone for safety reasons, and will have to be returned home, or discarded.

Developing Illness Policy

In the event a child becomes ill during the day, to the point where they are not capable of participating in regular activities, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and be required to come pick the child up. If the parents/guardians can't be reached the alternate emergency contact person will be called to come pick up the child. Allergy related and common cold symptoms as well as non-communicable diseases/illnesses do not require that the child be excluded from care.

Children may return to care when they are free of symptoms or are approved to return by the facility operator or in some extreme cases, by a medical doctor. If any of the following conditions are present, it is required that children be excluded from care:

- Pain - any unexplained or undiagnosed pain.
- Difficulty in breathing - wheezing or persistent cough.
- Fever (100.5°F / 38.3°C or higher) – Child must be free from fever (without being medicated) for 24 hours before returning to the Center.
- Sore Throat or trouble swallowing.
- Infected skin or eyes (mucus/pus draining) or an undiagnosed rash.
- Severe body or scalp itching.
- Children with a known or suspected communicable disease/illness.
- Vomiting - Two or more times in 24 hours - may return to care after 24 hours without vomiting.
- Diarrhea (as defined by an increase in frequency and loosening of stool) – Two or more times in 24 hours. May return to care after 24 hours without loose stool/diarrhea.
- Just not feeling good - a child must be well enough to participate in the entire day's activities to be at daycare.
- Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to the Center until they have been treated for lice and nits.

Parents are required to inform staff of any serious illness or communicable/contagious disease (with their child or within their family) within 24 hours to allow other families at the Center to be alerted.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Full-Time Weekly Fees

Full-time is defined as having access to our services on all days that we are open, Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Child's Age	Weekly Rate
0-24 Months	\$215 / week
2-3 years old	\$200 / week
3 years old & above	\$175 / week

Fees are due on the first day of care of each week. Any fees received later than the first day of the service week are subject to the \$15 a day late charge. If fee payment is more than 3 days late, all service will be suspended until fees are paid in full. Full fees are due regardless of a child's illness, statutory holidays, or holiday days off. A receipt for fees paid throughout the year will be provided at the end of each year for tax purposes – monthly receipts are available upon request. Fees are subject to increase with a minimum of two weeks notice.

Our attendance and tuition policy on COVID follows our normal sickness policy

Parents/guardians that use government subsidy to help pay for fees are responsible for renewing their authorization before it expires. If parents/guardians do not renew their subsidy claim before their previous claim expires the parents/guardians will be responsible for full fees until we receive authorization to bill the government and have received payment.

Vacation

We do not provide free vacation days, your child's tuition based on a weekly rate with or without attendance for any reasons.

Telephone Communication

If you need to contact the daycare for any reason, please call our phone on location at (843) 899-0093. If you get our voice mail, please leave a message, as often we are out or busy with the children and unable to get to the phone at that moment. We do check messages regularly and return phone calls as soon as we get the chance. We do not mind calls to see how your children are doing during the day.

If you call outside of daycare hours, please leave a detailed message. Someone will return your call soon at our earliest availability.

Parent's Grievances and Suggestions

At Berkeley Kids Academy, we are committed to being incredibly open and honest. If any parent should have any grievances, or any suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Confidentiality

All children's records will be kept in a locked file cabinet on the premises and will be kept confidential. By law, [SCDSS](#) will have access to all documentation provided on your child.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Parent Involvement

Our doors are always open to parents who would like to be involved in their child's care and education. We welcome any comments or suggestions from parents about programming or the care of their children. If any parents wish to volunteer at the Center, or on outings please contact any staff member so we can make necessary arrangements.

Photographs / Video Cameras

Our facility has a Facebook page that is updated frequently with pictures. Images of you child at play at the facility may be shared on this page. If this is something you are not comfortable with, please make us aware. These images/videos will not be shared with any third parties except for [SCDSS](#) or [OHAN](#) investigators if a complaint arises.

To help ensure everyone's safety, we do have a video monitoring system in place at the daycare.

Television

Our facility is television free although we do have smartboards located inside our facility that are used for Curriculum instruction, engaging learning activities and free time which may include school friendly videos and movies.

Transportation

At the time we are not providing any transportation of any sort, we also will not be planning off premises field trips currently. If this changed all parents/guardians will be notified.

Withdrawal of Services Policy

A minimum **TWO-WEEK WRITTEN NOTICE** is required for termination of childcare services. Even if your child does not attend during that two-week period, payment is still required. Any fees not paid on time with regards to termination of childcare services will also be subject to daily late fees, until full payment is received. If fees are not paid, the unpaid bill will be placed into collections.

In the event of any concerns (raised by staff, parents/guardians or even children) a meeting can be scheduled to address the issues. The meeting will involve the owner/operator, the Director and involved staff member, and the parents/guardians involved. The concerns will be clearly stated (late payment, failure to adhere to Center policies, behavioral problems etc.) and discussed. Meeting minutes will be taken, and solutions will be sought in a non-judgmental manner. A plan will be designed to resolve the issue. A second meeting will be scheduled to review the situation within a reasonable time frame. In the event the issue cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, a two-week written notice of termination will be given.

Parent Initials: _____

Director Initials: _____

Parent/Family Handbook and Fee Agreement

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Type of Care: **Full-Time Care**

Weekly/Daily Childcare Fees: _____

I/We (the undersigned) have read the parent handbook for Berkeley Kids Academy and understand all the information, policies and procedures outlined in the handbook. We (the undersigned) have also received a copy of these policies and procedures for our own records and reference.

By signing this agreement we consent to all the handbook policies and procedures and agree to them, including payment policies and late fee procedures. By signing this agreement, we acknowledge that the information supplied in the registration form regarding our child(ren) and the information supplied below is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge.

By signing this agreement, we also consent to pictures being taken of our child(ren) and shared on the Facebook page. We also consent to our children being recorded by the video monitoring system and understand that the footage will not be shared with any third parties with the exception of [SCDSS](#) if a complaint arises concerning any of this information.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Director Signature

Date