



## Parent Handbook

Ready Set Grow  
Learning Academy LLC  
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*Where Education, Care and Play go hand in hand!*

*Play is the highest form of research –*

*Albert Einstein*

*Ready Set Grow Learning Academy LLC does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, marital status, ability, or venter status. We abide by the Non-discrimination Policy set in place by the State of Tennessee and the Federal Government.*



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## *Welcome!!!!*

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We take this opportunity to welcome you and your family to The Academy of Future Leaders, LLC. Our educational leadership team welcomes you with open arms as we become partners in your child's development.

The Academy of Future Leaders (FLA) parent handbook is used to outline the school's expectations, policies, and procedures that all families must understand and comply with. You have received this handbook as a partner in your child's development at The Academy of Future Leaders.

After reviewing this document, the consent form on the last page must be completed and handed back to the administration. This consent form states that you understand and adhere to all expectations, policies, and procedures of this learning environment. This handbook will be updated from time to time, and the most up-to-date copy will be made available to you. Thank you for being a part of The Academy of Future Leaders Family.

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## *WHO ARE WE?*

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### MISSION STATEMENT

At The Academy of Future Leaders, we believe each child has the potential to bring something unique and special into the world. By having a respectful and caring bond with both the student and the family, we can create a strong foundation for a wonderful early childhood experience for our students. Through active exploration of the world around them, play, interaction with others, memorable experiences, and hands-on learning activities, our student's development and growth occur every second of every day.

Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, exciting, and quality learning environment for all our students. Our love for children is why the school first opened and why we remain open to this day. Committed to the families we serve, we strive to give parents the feeling that their child is in the care of the most loving, knowledgeable, and thoughtful caregivers each day.

Children deserve to feel special, loved, adored, and cherished. They deserve to participate in experiences that will change their lives forever and The Academy of Future Leaders promises to provide the environment to make this come true!

### OUR VALUES

Our vision is to provide a community where all students feel respected, loved, and encouraged to become the best person they can be. Our vision is the backbone of our business, supporting children to develop into their fullest and greatest potential.

Our values consist of the following but are not limited to:

Quality – We believe every child deserves excellence in early learning programs and services to make a difference in their lives and our community.

Inclusion – All students are included in our learning environment. We welcome all with open arms and love in our hearts.

Respect – Respect is essential in building relationships with our students and families that last a lifetime. Respect is a key component of our work as it helps to optimize the talents and diversity we bring into the school as partners in the child’s growth and development.

Accountability – We pride ourselves on providing open communication with all our business partners. This allows us to be transparent, open, and honest with one another and, in turn, provides the best environment for our students at home and at school.

Teamwork – The combined action of the educators and the families working together provides an effective and efficient working relationship. By acting together as a team, we are working toward the best interests of our common cause, which is for our little ones!

## OUR GOALS

The Academy of Future Leaders goals provides us a path to our desired outcomes for our students. These goals provide direction and motivation for the quality of care and education we provide.

*To provide a wide variety of developmentally appropriate practices that children learn and develop from and enjoy.*

*To provide a flexible, calm, and nurturing environment where affection is given freely and from the heart.*

*Independence is encouraged, and expectations are clear for all students.*

*To meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of our students.*

*To provide an atmosphere of respect for self and one another.*

*To provide opportunities for cooperative play.*

*To create a happy, warm, and exciting environment that is inviting, comfortable, and manageable for the children.*

*To support a caring staff who show genuine respect, love, and encouragement for the children.*

*To offer children individual guidance based on careful observation of each child’s needs and keeping with parent/guardian direction.*

*To ensure the safety and welfare of all children.*

## What We Believe

The Academy of Future Leaders (FLA), we strongly believe in providing high quality care for young scholars through creative hands-on learning experiences, self-expression, developmentally appropriate activities, and a dedicated staff highly qualified to meet the needs of all children.

We provide a healthy, safe, loving, and simulating environment for scholars to grow, play, and explore. Here at FLA, scholars will be nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential. We will promote physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development daily because we believe that superb quality care produces superb, intelligent, and astounding scholars.

#### WHAT WE DO AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

At The Academy of Future Leaders, we believe each child has the potential to bring something unique and special into the world. By having a respectful and caring bond with both the student and the family, we can create a strong foundation for a wonderful early childhood experience for our students. Through active exploration of the world around them, play, interaction with others, memorable experiences, and hands-on learning activities, our student's development and growth occur every second of every day. We strive to have the utmost respect and love for all children who walk through our school's doors. We are a family!

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#### *Our Program*

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We accept children from six weeks to 12 years old. We are a full-service childcare center. Our hours of operation are from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. We encourage daily pick up around 5:30 PM. No later than 5:45 PM.

We provide Breakfast, Lunch and PM Snacks. We do require a completion of the Federal Food Program Application as part of our enrollment packet.

At The Academy of Future Leaders, we offer enrichment programs such a foreign language, sports, music and dance. These enrichment programs help our scholars explore new activities, develop new skills, and increase socialization. These extra program enhancements are included in tuition for each family.

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#### *Admissions*

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#### ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

To enroll your child at The Academy of Future Leaders your child must be between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years old

#### REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS

The following forms must be completed to reserve your child's spot at The Academy of Future Leaders:

- Completed Enrollment Application Packet
- Annual registration fee \$125.00 in cash non-refundable

- Bi-weekly tuition in cash or paid online via myprocare.com or on the parent app
- Child's Medical Information and Form
- Parent Contact Information Form
- Immunizations Record on Tennessee Form
- Childcare certificate if applicable

### SPECIAL DISCOUNTS

- UTHSC discount rate – (limited space is allotted in each room, based on availability)
- 10% off sibling discount
- 10% off military discount
- 10% off first responder discount
- 10% off if you pay one full year of tuition

*Discounts are not combinable. If you receive the UTHSC discount you are not eligible for another any other discount.*

### SIBLING ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

THE ACADEMY OF FUTURE LEADERS requires advance notice of three months for the placement of a sibling into our program. Siblings are given priority into the school but are not guaranteed a spot. Families receive a 10% discount on the lowest sibling's monthly tuition.

### WAITLIST INFORMATION

To join our waitlist, parents/guardians must complete a waitlist application. A non-refundable fee of \$50.00 waitlist fee is due at the time the application is submitted. Additional information on the waitlist process will be provided at the time of receipt of application.

### ANNUAL ENROLLMENT FEE

The Academy of Future Leaders requires a \$125 re-enrollment fee due on the first of July. This confirms your child's spot for the upcoming school year, which starts the first week of August. This is an annual non-refundable fee.

The annual enrollment fee covers the enrollment process as well as things like our Happy Nappies, and extra-curricular activities.

### ITEMS TO BRING ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Your child must have the following on their first day of school

- Closed-toed indoor shoes
- Extra set of clothes brought in a Ziplock bag
- Proper outdoor wear
- Wipes all ages
- Diapers/Pullups
- Pacifier if needed

## UPDATING FORMS FOR YOUR CHILD'S FILE

THE ACADEMY OF FUTURE LEADERS requires all parents/guardians of enrolled students to keep their child's forms up to date with their current medical and emergency forms. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure all school forms are current and updated. The administration has the right not to allow the student into the school if any forms are missing from their file after two notices from the administration.

## PAYMENT POLICIES

Tuition is payable either bi-weekly or monthly. Biweekly payments are due every other Friday by 9:00AM. Per the Bi-weekly tuition calendar.

Monthly tuition payments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. Auto-draft is required for monthly tuition. Monthly tuition is auto drafted on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.

## LATE PAYMENT FEE

Friday at 9:01 AM a late fee of \$40.00 is applied. Day 2 and beyond a late fee of \$5.00 per day is added. Tuition not paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> day results in suspension of childcare services until tuition plus late fees are paid.

## RETURNED PAYMENTS

\$45.00 fee for any payment returned. Late fee policies apply to returned payment fees that are not resolved the day the fee is applied.

## EVALUATION OF TUITION RATES

All families will be notified of any changes in tuition rates five months prior to when they become effective. By notifying our families well ahead of time, we help prepare them for the changes in pricing, and this allocated time to contact administration with any questions. The Academy of Future Leaders reserves the right to increase annually.

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### *Absence Policy*

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FLA does not offer tuition refunds or make-up days.

## VACATIONS

No tuition discount or waiver of fees applies to vacation time for the first two weeks.

Families who choose to remove their child from the school for more than three weeks must pay 60% of the child's tuition to reserve their current spot.

## LATE PICK-UP CHARGE

A \$25.00 for the first minute and \$1 for each additional minute late pick-up fee occurs every minute the family is late. Late pick-up fees are due on the day they occur. Payment is required when your child is picked up.

## HOLIDAYS

FLA is closed most Federal and some State Holidays. Tuition will not be prorated or discounted for dates the center is closed. Check our Holiday calendar for our close dates.

## WEATHER POLICY

The Academy of Future Leaders may close due to harsh weather conditions. No discounts are given. The owner/director of the school will monitor local news to address when the school must close early or cancel operations for that day. Parents will be notified through email, text message and message through our parent connection app.

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### *Inclement Weather & Emergency Closings*

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The Academy of Future Leaders will make every effort to remain open during inclement weather. Our goal is to make sound decisions based on the safety of families and staff, while still meeting the needs for childcare. The Academy of Future Leaders may close, delay opening, or close early at its discretion.

Please note that we may not always follow Federal Government or Shelby County Schools snow/weather closings. In the event that we need to close or delay opening, we will notify you by 5:30 a.m. in the following ways: Parent Procure App, email, posting on our website flamemphis.com our centers outgoing voicemail, text message, local news stations and/or by phone.

In the event that we need to close the center early we ask that you make arrangements to have your child picked up as soon as possible. We allow a 2-hour window after notification. Because we service the Medical District, we understand that those who work in the hospital settings, or who are clinical may not be able to leave work to accommodate closings. Please be aware that we will make every reasonable effort to only close the center if absolute necessary.

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### *WITHDRAWAL AND DISCHARGE POLICY*

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## WITHDRAWING FROM THE CENTER

If you wish to withdraw your child from The Academy of Future Leaders a 14-day written notice is required. If you fail to provide a 14-day notice your account will be charged for the full two-week tuition.



## DISCHARGE POLICY

The Academy of Future Leaders has the right to terminate a child's enrollment under specific circumstances. These circumstances include any child who, after many attempts, does not progress in their behavior and whose behavior affects the large group. This also includes any child whose needs cannot be met by the school's philosophies. Before termination, many attempts will be made to help the child thrive in our environment. These attempts include observation notes, therapy referrals, and tactics to be used at home and onsite at the school.

The following measures will occur prior to dismissal of a student from the school:

The teacher will document the student's behavior by providing detailed notes with dates and other insights into why the situation occurred and what happened.

The director, parents/guardians, and teachers will meet to discuss any behavior concerns.

A Behavior Plan for the Individual is created and agreed upon by all parties, including staff, parents, and administration. Behavior therapists and consultants may be used to support the staff when working with the child.

Staff and parents/guardians will have frequent communication to evaluate the success of the behavior plan.

When the efforts to bring about change have been exhausted, parents/guardians and the director and owner will meet to determine the next course of action. The school and its staff reserve the right to determine any disputed factual matters regarding termination of enrollment.

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## *ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE*

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### ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

Upon arriving at the school, parents must pull up in the designated pick-up and drop-off spot in the front of the building. Parents must walk their child to the front door. As a State of Tennessee DHS requirement parents are required to sign the child in daily. You will be able to sign your child in on the parent connect app, when you are in close proximity to the center, or you may use the kiosk located at the center.

Drop-off time is between 6 and 9 a.m. Center cut-off time is 9:00 a.m. If your child will be late, please make sure to send a message to the center via the Parent Connection App.

### DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

The allocated pick-up time is from 4 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. daily. If you plan to pick up your child earlier, please notify the administration two hours prior through the Parent Connection app.

Upon picking up your child, you are responsible for grabbing their belongings. This includes nap time items, artwork, and other personal items.

## PICK UP AUTHORIZATION

For the child's safety, the only people authorized to pick up a child are those designated by the parent/guardian on the child's approved pick-up list. If a child is to be released to anyone other than the person(s) listed, a written note authorizing pick-up must be received prior to pick-up time.

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### *Authorized Persons/Emergency Contacts*

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Each parent must have on file a list of names and accurate phone numbers of emergency contacts. We ask that you provide us with a photocopy of your emergency contacts DL/ID to keep in your child's record. The Academy of Future Leaders staff will use that information for validation in the event your assigned person has to pick up your child. **PLEASE BE AWARE IT IS ILLEGAL FOR US TO RELEASE A CHILD TO ANYONE WHO IS UNDER THE AGE OF 18. EVEN IF IT IS A SIBLING**

**NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED WITHOUT PRESENTATION OF A LEGAL IDENTIFICATION. REGARDLESS IF OUR STAFF IS FAMILIAR WITH THE PERSON.**

The Academy of Future leaders will not deny a biological parent access to pick up or visit with their child. The rights of both the mother and father are respected. (Unless we have a COURT ORDER on file that prohibits the biological parent from contact, or there is a restraining order documented on file.) If we have documentation and it is on file, we will call the police in the event of an occurrence that violates court orders. *Our educational leadership staff will not attempt to physically stop a parent from leaving with a child, for the safety of the child and our staff.*

In the case of legal issues, the registering parent must indicate who has legal custody and who may pick up the child on the enrollment form. A court order must be provided in the event of such matter. We assume no liability if not properly advised and proper documentation is not provided. Whenever there are changes to be made, it is your responsibility to update the contact forms in your child's folder and classroom. All changes must be made by the enrolling parent or legal guardian and must be done in person.

If management or a staff member suspects that the person or persons picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the child will not be released. Another person authorized to pick up the child will be called. The safety and well-being of the children in our care are is our primary concern.

We ask that you inform our staff if you are unable to pick up your child as early as possible. Although, you have assigned authorized individuals that are allowed to pick up your child, it is important that our staff is able to prepare for the transition, and change to the routine.

### Water activities

During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervises all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

### Toys from home

Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home. We are not be responsible for lost or damaged personal items. Teachers may elect to schedule Show-n-Tell each week. Your child's toy must be labeled with their name and placed in their cubby until Show-n-Tell time.

### School Supplies

Please make sure to read and be aware of daily and weekly reports that give updates on your child's supplies.

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### *Infant Room Bottle Policy*

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All parents are required to send prepared bottles, "READY TO DRINK" to the center for their child (ren) each day. Bottles and tops must be labeled with the child's name. We advise that you send an extra bottle of milk and/or juice for your child, in addition to the amount that they normally have. If they typically drink 3 bottles of milk per day, send a 4<sup>th</sup> bottle just in case of an emergency. At 12 months of age, we will provide whole milk.

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### *Slander and Libel Policy*

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In the unfortunate event that you are not happy with our services and decided to leave our program, we ask that you refrain from making untrue statements. Untrue and unfair statements hurt the integrity of our program. If it is found that false accusations, or untruths are made either verbally or in writing they will be addressed in the court system. We make every effort to make sure that we follow state and federal guidelines as it relates to childcare services we provide.

We follow up all instances of any kind with paper documentation, record of incidents, record of phone calls made, verbal conversations, and with video of our classrooms. Those who violate this policy are subject to a \$2500.00 fee plus court and attorney fees if

anything stated is found untrue by the Department of Human Services, Department of Children Services or any governing agency. Statements made in reviews on social media remarks made to individuals and other parents adhere to this policy.

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### *School Property*

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Accidents happen, and they may make us sad. We understand that from time-to-time children may accidentally break items. However, if your child's behavior is deemed destructive and as a result equipment and toys are destroyed or damaged, it is the parent's responsibility and we hold you accountable for replacement fees of the items.

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### *GENERAL EMPLOYEE INFORMATION*

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#### STAFFING AT THE ACADEMY OF FUTURE LEADERS

The Academy of Future Leaders always provides enough staff for the capacity of each classroom. This means that student to teacher ratios is always followed. A detailed staffing plan is maintained and kept in the office.

#### WHAT MAKES OUR STAFF SPECIAL?

Our staff can demonstrate the skill and competence necessary to contribute to each child's physical, intellectual, personal, emotional, and social development. Factors contributing to the attainment of this standard include:

- Emotional maturity when working with children
- Cooperation with the purposes and services of the program
- Respect for children and adults
- Flexibility, understanding, and patience
- Physical and mental health that do not interfere with childcare responsibilities
- Good personal hygiene
- Frequent interaction with children
- Listening skills, availability, and responsiveness to children
- Sensitivity to children's socioeconomic, cultural, ethnic, religious backgrounds, and individual needs and capabilities
- Use of positive discipline and guidance techniques; and
- The ability to provide an environment where children can feel comfortable, relaxed, happy, and are involved in play, recreation, and other activities.

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*YUMMY, IT IS TIME TO EAT!*

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### PREPARATION OF FOOD

Food Service is supervised by our Chef person holds a valid food-handler certificate as required by the state. FLA is part of the USDA Federal Food Program CACFP. We follow all guidelines on preparation

### MEALTIMES

Meals are served at 7:45 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 2:15 p.m.

Breakfast time ends at 8:30 a.m. Breakfast is not served after the scheduled end time.

### MENUS

All food menus are posted in the kitchen, walkway entry, classrooms, parent connection app and the office.

### WATER AND MEALTIME FLUIDS

Drinking water is always freely available to all children. The Academy of Future Leaders will provide milk to the students for breakfast and lunch. Water will be served with a snack.

### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL DIETS

If a student has an allergy or dietary restrictions, please inform the school immediately. Parents/guardians must notify the administration in writing, and this is kept in the child's file. This information is also posted in classroom for all to be aware of.

Depending on the method used in allergy emergency situations, parents may be asked to complete a Food Allergy Information form. A physician's statement may be required for an alternative to be served.

### FOOD FROM HOME

Outside food is not allowed into the center, unless it is due to a special dietary requirement and we have the required documentation on file.

If The Academy of Future Leaders cannot provide the food needed for a special diet, meals or portions may be provided by the parent. The parent and the administration must agree upon this. Perishable food will be refrigerated upon arrival. Special foods provided by parents must be clearly labeled with the child's name, date, and identity of the food and will not be shared with other children. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the student has food at the school every day.

### SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

At the Academy of Future Leaders we love to celebrate your little one during the school day! Parents/guardians must notify the administration or the classroom lead teacher one week prior to the celebration to discuss the classroom and school's food restrictions and policies for bringing in outside treats and snacks.

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## *GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES*

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### STATE REGULATIONS AND LICENSING

All employees must be knowledgeable in the state's childcare licensing rules and regulations. A copy of the state and local guidelines is always kept in the school, and each employee receives a copy upon hire.

### SMOKING POLICY

Marijuana, cigarettes, vape pens and other smokeless tobacco products are not allowed at The Academy of Future Leaders. Parents/guardians who smoke are strongly encouraged not to do so before picking up their child from school, as smoke stays on clothing and hair for some time. All parents and guardians must wash their hands after smoking before arriving at school.

### ALCOHOL POLICY

If at any time we feel that a parent, guardian, or anyone authorized to pick up or drop off the child is under the influence of alcohol and or any other toxic substance, the school may refuse the release of the child, and the school will contact another authorized person to come and collect the child, explaining the circumstances. In some cases, an incident of this nature could lead to a referral to our governing bodies and a call to social services.

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

The Academy of Future Leaders provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

*\* SHRM Better Workplace Better World*

### NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

At The Academy of Future Leaders, we value all employees and job candidates as unique individuals, and we welcome the variety of experiences they bring to our company. As such, we have a strict non-discrimination policy. We believe everyone should be treated equally regardless of race, sex, gender identification, sexual orientation, national origin, native language, religion, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, pregnancy, or other characteristics protected by law. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, please let the administration know immediately. Every complaint will be appropriately investigated.

*\* SHRM Better Workplace Better World*

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, "sexual harassment" is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling, or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

At FLA we encourage reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, any member of the personnel practices committee, human resources, or any ombudsman. See the complaint procedure described below.

*\* SHRM Better Workplace Better World*

## CHILD NEGLECT AND ABUSE

All FLA employees will be screened by the appropriate law enforcement agency using the state's background system. All employees will have successfully completed a background investigation by the State of Tennessee before working with children.

At the first reasonable cause to believe that child abuse exists, the reporting adult will immediately inform the director, who will determine the action to take. The reporting adult will make an immediate phone call to the local law enforcement agency. As a backup to the phone report, a written report will be completed and filed with the director or owner.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media includes online electronic tools to help students, parents, teachers, and staff communicate effectively. Specific examples of popular social media tools include Instagram, Facebook, and other communication apps.

Upon enrolling a child into the center, all parents and guardians must complete the social media consent form. This form is used as approval for allowing a parent's or guardian's child to be seen on our social media platforms.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Childcare programs maintain confidentiality on a "need to know" basis. This information is shared only when it is necessary. This is important, especially when there are specific health and safety concerns. State and Local Laws prohibit the sharing of information about children or employees without written approval from the parent, guardian, or individual.

## HAZARDOUS ITEMS

The Academy of Future Leaders has clear guidelines on identifying, using, and storing dangerous products, plants, and objects. This policy aims to protect the employee, children, families, and visitors from the risks associated with chemical products, medicines, other dangerous substances, and dangerous equipment used in the school's outdoor and indoor environments.

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## *BITING*

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Biting is a behavior that is often unexpected and can harm and frighten others. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. Most times, it is a temporary behavior and one that is seen between the ages of 11 and 24 months. Toddlers bite others for many different reasons. A child might be teething, feel tired, angry, frustrated, or even bite when they are overly happy and excited. Biting may also be a way for a child to get attention from other adults or friends. Toddlers do not have strong verbal skills, are impulsive, and lack strong self-control, and it is important to remember that they are developing these abilities at their own pace. Biting can also occur for no apparent reason, happen quickly, and be shocking to observe. Our primary concern at The Academy of Future Leaders, LLC is the safety and health of the children and our staff. We take all biting situations seriously and use our knowledge as educators to handle these tough situations in positive, constructive, and meaningful ways to stop them from occurring.

When it comes to a biting incident, our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve it immediately. The school will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will always maintain close and constant supervision of the children.

If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent. For every biting incident, two actions will occur

Parents will be contacted with a phone call.

An accident report will be completed and signed by the parent/guardian at pick up for the child who bit and the child who was bitten.

If the biting becomes excessive and the school's techniques have been exhausted, The Academy of Future Leaders, LLC has the right to discharge the student. Please note, many



measures will be taken prior to help the student prior to it getting to this point. These measures are outlined as follows:

Procedure Employees will follow if Biting Occurs:

We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior.

For the child that was bitten:

First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.

Parents are notified with a phone call. If a parent cannot be reached, an email will be sent, and an additional phone call will occur until the parents are reached directly.

An accident report form is filled out documenting the incident for both children involved.

Parents/guardians will sign the form at pick-up

This form is stored in the child's file. Parents/Guardians can receive a copy of the form if asked.

For the child that bit:

The teacher will firmly tell the child, "DO NOT BITE! WE DO NOT BITE OUR FRIENDS"

The child will be brought to an area of the classroom where they can talk with the teacher.

Parents are notified with a phone call. If a parent cannot be reached, an email will be sent, and an additional phone call will occur until the parents are reached directly.

An accident report form is filled out documenting the incident for both children involved.

Parents/guardians will sign the form at pick-up

This form is stored in the child's file. Parents/Guardians can receive a copy of the form if asked.

Procedure if Biting Continues:

The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents. This includes the teacher remaining close to the child and holding the child's hand in moments where there is free play, outside time, high energy activities, or times where the child has bitten in the past.

The classroom staff will observe the child to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.)

The director and administrative staff will also observe the child if the classroom staff cannot determine the cause.

The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.

The teachers will also support the learning of appropriate behaviors with books, short acceptable educational video clips, puppet shows, and modeling interactive games and activities.

Procedure if biting becomes excessive:

If a child inflicts three bites in one week, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.

The administration, teachers, and parents will create an action plan, which will be followed immediately in the classroom. This action plan can consist of shadowing and mirror techniques, half-day exposure to school, or an agreed-upon disciplinary approach.

At the end of the one-week action plan, if the child has two incidents of biting, suspension or discharge from the program will be decided by the administrator if they feel the behavior is disrupting the classroom, cannot be controlled, and harming others.

Recommendations for therapy, alternative schooling, and other ideas will be provided to the parents.

Please note, The Academy of Future Leaders will do its best to integrate and teach appropriate behavior choices for children who bite or harm others, but in some situations, the environment may not be the best for this child, and the teachers may have exhausted all resources.

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## *POTTY TRAINING*

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### Stages of Potty Training

The Academy of Future Leaders believes there are three steps to potty training or toilet learning. These stages are:

#### First Stage: Interested in the Potty!

This stage occurs when the child communicates that they have gone potty in their diaper. They show interest in the potty by pointing, saying potty words, and being uncomfortable in their diaper. This is a great phase to start reading books about going potty and watching videos!

#### Second Stage: Toilet Trained with Adult Support

This occurs when the child can use the toilet, but it is the adult who gets the child to the bathroom on a set schedule. In summary, the adult initiates the use of the toilet by the child. During this stage, the child is fully assisted by the adult. The adult walks the child to the toilet, sits them down, pulls up and down their pants, and helps with wiping. Accidents do frequently occur in this stage. This stage focuses on getting the child used to going to the bathroom, being aware of this new and exciting adventure, and assisting them to do it correctly!

#### Third Stage: Potty Training

The student can use the toilet, mostly independently, and express the need to go potty on the toilet. They are communicating interest and acting. The child shows signs of readiness and feels independent to use the potty. Accidents occur very infrequently in this stage! They still may occur, so do not get discouraged.

#### Signs of Readiness

##### Verbal Signs:

- The child can speak in three-to-four-word sentences.
- The child can speak when their diaper is wet.
- The child can say they need to go potty or is wetting their diaper.
- The child tells you that they need to go to the bathroom.

#### Physical/Psychological Signs:

- The child stays dry for longer periods
- The child can hold urine or bowel movements.
- The child has a somewhat consistent bowel movement schedule. This means their bowel movements are at somewhat regular times.
- The child can pull down and pull up pants and underwear.
- The child asks and wants to wear underwear.
- The child initiates using the toilet by walking to it.
- The child can learn and initiate the following actions of going to the bathroom, pee, wipe, flush, and wash hands.

#### General Notes on Potty Training

The following notes are important to remember while potty training your child:

Make potty training a POSITIVE EXPERIENCE for everyone!

Never make the child feel bad for having an accident. Remember, it is a process!

Positive reinforcements are beyond helpful in training.

Make sure to pay attention to the child's signs of readiness and be ready yourself!

Remember that all children potty train at their own speed.

#### The Potty-Training Process at Home and School

The Academy of Future Leaders requires the potty-training process to begin at home. The process should begin when the parents and child can be dedicated, and there are not many changes in the child's life.

##### The Process at Home:

Notify the teacher of a scheduled weekend you plan to start the process. Ensure that the teacher is aware and can start working with your child at school around the same time.

We recommend your child stay in underwear for two to three consecutive days. This is because underwear feels different than a diaper on a child. They start to realize that the underwear cannot hold their urine/poo, and they feel uncomfortable. Underwear helps produce the sensory signs of going to the bathroom on the toilet to maintain dry and clean underwear!

It is important that parents stay close to home and keep the child close to the bathroom while playing or participating in activities to ensure ease of use.

We recommend your child wear comfortable, easy-to-remove clothing during this process.

Take your child to the bathroom every two hours, and reward them with cheering or other positive reinforcement techniques even if they are just sitting on the toilet.

Read books throughout the process and watch clips to support this new and exciting milestone.

Staying consistent with the procedure at home is the most important step in this process.

The Process at School:

A successful weekend at home is defined by the child having three or fewer accidents and remaining excited about the process. If your child goes more times during the weekend on the toilet than in their underwear, this is a sign of success!

Notify the teacher that it was a successful weekend through a note in the app or face-to-face conversation.

Bring extra clothes and underwear in case of accidents.

Walk the child to the bathroom and show them how it looks, just like the one at school. Stay a minute at the school to have the child sit down and become comfortable with a toilet outside their home.

Talk with the child about how excited you are for them to use the potty at school.

The teachers will bring the student to the bathroom every 1.5 to two hours.

Notes on the potty-training process at school will be provided to the parent.

The following Guidelines must be followed when children are potty training at school/wearing underwear:

No Overalls, pants with a belt, pants that snap. or any clothing that is hard to get out of quickly.

If possible, bring an extra pair of shoes as they can get wet too.

ALWAYS have extra clothes and underwear onsite at the school.

Inform the teacher if your child prefers to sit or stand when using the toilet.

Keep a small supply of pull-ups for nap time at the school.

Your responsibility is to take home any soiled clothes to be cleaned and sanitized.

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### *TRANSITIONING A STUDENT TO THE NEXT AGE GROUP*

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Students will transition to the next age group when they are age-appropriate, there is space available, and all parties, including parents, teachers, and administration agree it is the right time for the child. We transition our students to the next age group in chronological age to make it fair for everyone.

Most transitions occur at the start of the new school year, which is in August, but some may occur during the school year if a space becomes open.

The Academy of Future Leaders transitioning schedule is based on how the students react to the new environment. On the first day, one of the student's current teachers will walk the student over to explore their new classroom, see their new friends, and meet their new teachers. On the second day, the student will be walked to the next classroom by the same teacher but will have more time to explore independently. If the child does well, the teacher will observe and allow more time in their new classroom. If we see the child is having a hard time, they will be taken back to their current classroom and discuss how exciting it was in their new classroom. The next day, the teacher will walk the student over again to see any progress. This will continue until the child is in a place where their current teacher is no longer needed by their side in their new classroom, and they feel comfortable and positive!

Parents will be notified with detailed messages through the school's app on the students' progress. We believe that slow and steady wins this race, and positive energy by both the new and the old teacher will help the student feel comfortable and confident in this exciting new adventure!

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### *SCREENS AND MEDIA*

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The use of visual media, such as television, films, and videotapes, shall be limited to developmentally appropriate programming. Media may be used as a special event or to achieve a specific goal but not as a regular daily routine. TV, video, internet, or DVD viewing shall not be allowed during meal or snack time. The Academy of Future Leaders follows state policy on the allowed amount of time of screen time.

The director must approve all videos, and all screen time must be related to educational programming developed by the center.

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### *ATTIRE FOR CHILDREN*

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Your child must wear clothing that is easy to manage and safe for the activities they will be participating in while at school. Dressing your child in simple, comfortable clothing that is washable. Please remember in choosing their clothing that children paint, glue, and participate in large movements daily. Children must also be dressed appropriately for the weather. Children must wear comfortable, closed-toed shoes. **No flip-flops or open-toe shoes** are allowed for safety reasons.

Don't forget to include a change of clothing to be left in your child's backpack in case of emergency. All clothing items must be labeled with the child's name. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged clothing items.

Please do not bring children in clothing that is special, expensive or holds value to your family. Children learn through play; they will get messy. FLA is not responsible for any clothing that is damaged as a result of learning or playing. This includes shoes, send children in play shoes.

**Hair Beads are prohibited**, they are a choking hazard and are not allowed. Please be mindful of hair accessories and how they may become loose or lost.

### Clothing & Personal Belongings

Our days are filled with fun and exciting activities and many times these activities can become messy. Although children have access to smocks and are asked to wear them for messy activities, there may be mishaps. We do not want to ruin anything that is special to you or your child. We ask that you provide at least one complete outfit (including socks) to remain at the center. Because children grow so fast it is important to check the outfit quarterly to ensure that it is size and weather appropriate. Always label everything with your child's name. Please make sure that your child's clothes are child appropriate.

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### *SPECIAL EVENTS*

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The Academy of Future Leaders hosts special events throughout the school year as an opportunity for our families to get together with our staff and have a wonderful time. You will be notified by email three weeks before the event. Please note alcohol and smoking are prohibited.

Your participation in these events brings a feeling of connectedness and collaboration to our school!

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### *DISCIPLINARY POLICY*

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The Academy of Future Leaders uses praise and positive reinforcement as effective behavior management methods. When children receive positive feedback, they develop problem-solving abilities, self-discipline strategies, and a stronger sense of self-love. Based on this belief, the school uses a positive approach to discipline.

#### WHAT WE DO!

Communicate to children using positive statements

Communicate with children on their level

Talk with children in a calm, quiet manner

Explain unacceptable behavior to children. Give attention to children for positive behavior

Praise and encourage the children. Reason with and set limits for the children

Apply rules consistently

Model appropriate behavior

Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems

Provide alternatives and redirect children to an acceptable activity  
Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems  
Help children talk out problems and think of solutions  
Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires, and feelings  
Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts  
Use storybooks and discussions to work through common conflicts.

#### WHAT WE DO NOT DO!

Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child, which includes any physical force to the body  
Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child  
Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child  
Use food as a form of reward or punishment  
Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment  
Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs  
Embarrass any child in front of others  
Compare children  
Place children in a locked and or dark room  
Leave any child alone, unattended, or without supervision  
Allow discipline of a child by other children  
Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

#### WHAT WE DO WHEN PROBLEMS OCCUR

When a more serious or consistent disciplinary policy occurs, a conference will be scheduled with the teachers of the classroom and the students' parents. Observations, accident reports, and other important documentation relating to the events will be presented and used as evidence.

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### *ASSESSMENTS, OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS*

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The Academy of Future Leaders reserves the right to conduct developmental assessments of children's growth and progress to determine appropriate placements and programming. Behavioral specialist students from UTHSC will be onsite throughout the year to perform clinical assessments of our students. Parental consent is required.

We may ask parents to share professional evaluations when necessary to determine how best to meet their child's needs. This information helps us provide the best care possible for your child's unique growth and development.

Parent-Teacher conferences occur multiple times throughout the year. These meetings provide parents with insight into their child's growth and development while enrolled at the school and what parents can do at home to support what is occurring at school. Parent-Teacher conferences also allow the teacher and the parents to form a more personal relationship to ensure the school is meeting the family's standards and so that the teacher can understand the family setting the child has outside of the school's doors.

Parents will be aware of their scheduled Parent-Teacher Conference time one month before the scheduled meeting.

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### *EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS*

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#### **EMERGENCY CONSENT FORMS**

Emergency consent forms are completed by the parents or guardians upon enrolling their child(ren) at the center. A copy of these forms is in every classroom and always available on the school app.

#### **EMERGENCY HANDBOOK ONSITE**

The Academy of Future Leaders has an emergency procedure handbook to define policies and protocols in emergencies. This handbook is reviewed often, and all staff upon hire will be trained.

#### **IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION**

Should a child or a staff member receive an injury while at school, an accident report is completed. The report includes information regarding the time and date of the injury, what happened, how it was treated, and the signature of the witnessing teacher. This report is provided to parents before the child leaves the center and recorded in the center's medical logbook.

#### **FIRE**

Fire drills will be practiced at random times of the day. The drills will occur at least once a month. Evacuations maps are posted throughout the school and are easy to access and always visible. All employees and students will be prepared for the drills and review what happens during a drill often so that all are prepared! All must remain calm and keep their heads during any emergency drill!

The director or owner will inform the staff in advance that a drill will occur later in the week.

The staff will talk to their students about the alarm, rules, and procedures while evacuating the building.



The director or owner will sound the alarm, and the school will act and do the evacuation procedure.

Children will proceed immediately to their designated outside school meeting spot.

If possible, one staff member should try to grab the attendance sheets emergency contact list and have cell phones with them.

The staff will take the students' attendance and check off their attendance sheets or communication app.

If safe, the director or owner will quickly check hiding spaces in the school for any lost children. They will also check for any sources of smoke or fire during an actual fire emergency.

The director or owner will then meet the rest of the students and employees at the designated area.

The director or owner will review attendance by checking the sign-in and out sheets or other student attendance documentation (the school's communication app).

The director or owner will time the drill to see how long it took to evacuate the building.

The director or owner will confirm when it is safe to return to the building with local law officials.

The director or owner will complete the first drill log with the following information: date and time of the drill, number of students, number of teachers, and the length of time it took for the students and teachers to evacuate the building.

Parents will be notified a fire drill occurred on this day.

## TORNADO

Tornado drills will occur twice a year, at most times during the spring and summer as tornados occur during the warmer months. Evacuations maps are posted throughout the school and are easy to access and always see. All THE ACADEMY OF FUTURE LEADERS employees and students will be prepared for the drills and review what happens during a drill often so that all are prepared! It is important that all remain calm and keep their heads during any emergency drill!

The director or owner will inform the staff in advance that a drill will occur later in the week.

The staff will talk to their students about the alarm, rules, and procedures during a shelter in place. The director or owner will sound the alarm, and the school will act and do the shelter in place/lockdown procedure. Children will proceed immediately to the designated lockdown site/shelter in place designated spot. If possible, one staff member should try to grab the attendance sheets emergency contact list and have cell phones with them.

Students will take the safety position by kneeling on their knees and elbows with their foreheads on the floor and covering their heads with their hands.

The staff will take attendance of the students and check off their attendance sheets or communication app while also comforting students to take the proper safety position.

If safe, the director or owner will quickly check hiding spaces in the school for any lost children.

The director or owner will meet at the shelter in place designated spot to review attendance by checking the sign-in and out sheets or other documentation for student's attendance (the school's communication app).

The director or owner will time the drill to see how long it took for the students to take shelter.

The director or owner will confirm when it is safe to leave the shelter in place designated spot. The director or owner will assist with children who need support to enter back into the program main area.

The director or owner will complete the first drill log with the following information: date and time of the drill, number of students, number of teachers, and the length of time it took for the students and teachers to evacuate the building.

Parents will be notified a drill occurred on this day.

### MISSING CHILD

If a child is not accounted for at any time, the staff member responsible for the child should:

Search the premises for the missing child. Each area that a child could potentially hide should be searched and the outdoor areas of the facility. The staff member should also double-check to confirm the child's location by checking the sign-in and sign-out log.

If the child is not located after all potential hiding spots and immediate outdoor areas have been searched, the facility director should be notified that the child is missing.

Begin Lock Down procedure. Employees must monitor all exits, letting no one in or out of the facility.

The staff member responsible for the child will call 911 since they will have the best knowledge of what the child was wearing that day, along with other distinctive features.

The facility director will notify the child's guardians that the child is missing from the facility.

While the police are in route to the facility, the staff will continue to search the facility for the missing child. The staff should look in every cabinet, closet, cubby, and every other location where a child may hide.

The facility director will always stay on the facility premises to be the contact person for the police department, as well as the missing child's guardians.

The police should be asked to activate Amber Alert by the facility director.

### POISON PROCEDURE

The Poison Control Center phone number will be posted on the list of emergency numbers by telephone.

Poison emergencies or requests for poison information will be made by contacting the Poison Control Center Hotline at 1-800-252-2022 first—unless the person who has been poisoned is unconscious, not breathing, having trouble breathing, or is having convulsions. If any of these conditions are present, we will call 9-1-1 first.

Chemicals, medications, pesticides, paints, cleaning agents, and other potentially harmful substances will be stored in locked areas inaccessible to children.

Toxic substances will be stored away from food and food preparation areas.

All chemical products and medications shall be stored in their original containers with original labels intact.

Poisonous plants are not permitted in the center

Staff must identify plants and determine "safe" prior to bringing them to the facility. If the plant is not on the poisonous plant list, please contact the poison control center (1-800-252-2022 or 1-800-942-5969) for guidance.

Food-handling staff will be trained in and follow Integrated Pest Management practices for the prevention of pests. Only a licensed exterminator will apply pesticides if additional pest control is necessary. Pesticides must be EPA-approved with natural pesticides that are non-toxic to humans. Pesticides and other potentially toxic chemicals will not be applied while children are present. The application shall be in a manner that prevents skin contact and other exposure and minimizes odors. A staff member will observe the application of the chemicals and verify that they are applied according to instructions on the label.

The Program Director will notify parents and staff before using pesticides.

Following the use of pesticides or other potentially toxic chemicals, the treated area shall be ventilated for the period recommended on the product label or by a nationally certified poison control center before being reoccupied.

All staff purses and personal belongings will be securely stored to prevent access by children. Purses and other personal belongings may contain items unsafe for children, including medications, lighters, pocketknives, etc.

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### *ILLNESS POLICIES*

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The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- a fever of 100 degrees or more
- inflammation of the eyes (excessive redness, glassy or discharge)
- vomiting
- more than three incidences of diarrhea or loose stool that is not contained within the clothing
- communicable disease as defined by the Department of Health Services/Center for Disease Control
- unknown rash
- excessive nasal discharge
- pain

- if the teacher determines that the child is not able to participate in activities, seems lethargic or uninterested in events regardless of if symptoms are present

If your child is sent home due to illness, he cannot return to the childcare center until he has been free from symptoms for 24 hours without using a fever reducer. This allows your child time to recover and stop the spread of illness to the other children and staff.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining if your child is ready to return to school.

- Mood, appetite, behavior, and activity are again normal
- No fever for 24 hours without a fever reducer
- Antibiotics (have been used for a full 24 hours)
- Vomiting cleared for 24 hours
- Diarrhea cleared for 24 hours
- Frequent coughing excessive nasal discharge resolved
- Pain resolved

It is your responsibility to notify the school if your child has a communicable disease or infestation such as measles, mumps, hand foot mouth, chickenpox, or head lice. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a physician only if the child has been absent for a period equal to the longest incubation period of the disease as specified by the Department of Health and Human Services. The local Health Department will immediately be notified of all infectious diseases, and a note will be posted in the parent information center when there has been exposure to a communicable illness in the center.

Children returned to the center with signs of illness, or communicable disease will be refused entry into the childcare center.

Please consult with your director if you need additional information.

#### MEDICATION POLICIES

We do not administer medicine at the center. If your child requires medication, please give the child their dose of medicine before arriving to the center. Parents are allowed to come to the center throughout the day to administer any medication. Please inform the teacher if your child is currently on medication include: the name, the amount they were giving and how often you administer the medication. If you plan to come to the center administer the medication, please inform the teacher of the time you will arrive.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

Today's Date:

We \_\_\_\_\_ the parents of \_\_\_\_\_ have received a copy of THE ACADEMY OF FUTURE LEADERS Parent Handbook.

I agree and understand the policies and procedures listed in this handbook and comply with the school's rules and regulations.

I understand that the policies and procedures listed in this handbook are subject to change to reflect the program's needs.

I understand I will be made aware of these changes in a timely fashion, and I will always adhere to the most up to handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature    Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature    Date