

# AristoCat Childrens Academy

## Parent Handbook



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# Welcome Parents

Dear Parents:

We look forward to an exciting and fun-filled time at AristoCat Children's Academy! The program has been designed to include a variety of activities and learning opportunities. By using Creative Curriculum and Opening the World of Learning we can offer many activities that will allow children to associate their learning with the real world. Please feel free to visit our academy, ask questions, share concerns, and accompany us on field trips anytime. Together we can make this a dynamic time for your child filled with excitement and adventure. Thank you for sharing your precious child with us.

Sincerely,

JaCie Butters, Owner/Director  
AristoCat Children's Academy

## **Purpose of Handbook**

Both home and school, have essential functions to serve in educating children, neither can work effectively without the understanding, support, and assistance of the other. Guiding the development of children is a cooperative endeavor. Therefore, there must be open communication between parents and teachers. To maintain an effective learning program, parents need to understand the program and the policies. The purpose of this handbook is to develop a better understanding of AristoCat Children's Academy.

## **Mission Statement**

AristoCat Children's Academy exists to provide an affordable, safe, developmentally appropriate gateway to a bright future. We are committed to strengthening the bridge between your work and family life by creating a special place that supports them both. Our focus is to provide a stimulating learning experience that promotes each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Our goal is to support children's desire to be lifelong learners.

## **Non-Discrimination:**

AristoCat Children's Academy is committed to providing an environment free of unlawful discrimination. We do not discriminate based on race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. Families requiring reasonable accommodation because of their religion or disability should direct that request to the Academy Director. Each request will be considered on an individual basis.

## **Purpose and Goals**

In our facility teachers are trained to care for and enhance the child's developmental progress. The Academy aims to fulfill such responsibility by way of the following goals and purposes:

1. To provide a supervised educational environment; this will meet the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of infants, toddlers, and preschool children as well as school-age children.
2. To provide a "model" childcare center where children can be served by the best and latest techniques in instructional methodologies.
3. To provide a developmental and intercultural learning experience for young children in a setting congenial to the spirit of harmony, generosity, and goodwill.

## **In Addition:**

1. We provide an environment of warmth and security.
2. We help children see themselves as worthy contributing participants by being responsive to their needs.
3. We foster within children a sense of responsibility for their actions and a respect for the rights of others.
4. We provide optimal physical development through activity and equipment, designed to foster motor development.
5. We provide guidance, equipment, and materials in an atmosphere that furnishes maximum cognitive stimulation.

## **Schedule of Operation**

Parents are requested to strictly observe the hours of operations so that children are properly always supervised.

### Hours and Holidays

The following holidays will be observed:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 17<sup>th</sup>)
- President's Day (February 21<sup>st</sup>)
- Memorial Day (The last Monday of May)
- Juneteenth Day (June 20<sup>th</sup>)
- Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Pioneer Day (Day of or the following Monday)
- Labor Day (The first Monday of September)
- Columbus Day (October 10<sup>th</sup>)
- Veterans Day (November 11<sup>th</sup>)
- Thanksgiving Holidays (Thanksgiving Thursday and the following Friday)
- Christmas Break (Christmas Eve, Day & any following days of that week)
- New Year's Day (year pending)

**In addition, the academy will be scheduled for four in-service days per year.** These days will be for teacher continued education and curriculum preparation. These dates will be given to you no less than one month in advance, as well as listed on our annual schedule, provided when enrolled. The academy reserves the right to close on any other day that is not listed above, and a written notice will be posted as soon as possible.

### Core Values

We value:

- **SAFETY**— We will ensure the well-being of children and staff by providing a physical and emotional haven.
- **COMMUNICATION**— We will respectfully and communicate expectations and needs while carefully listening to comments and concerns.
- **TRUST**— We will build a strong nurturing foundation by welcoming and respecting every family.
- **UNITY**— We will continue to strengthen the bond between the home, family, and work-life by working, teaching, and playing together.
- **PROMOTE LEARNING**— We will creatively encourage positive developmental growth in and out of the classroom.

### Staffing

All teachers and staff members are required to have the following training:

- Must have a high school diploma (or equivalent) and must be able to pass a thorough background screening.
- Obtain and maintain a current First Aid / CPR and Food Handlers certification
- Required to complete 20 hours of Early Childhood Education Training annually.

Many of our staff take additional training classes to work towards, obtain and maintain a Child Development Association Credential or other early education-related degrees.



### **Enrollment Procedures**

1. Current Immunization Records for each child
2. Child Admission Agreement & Health Assessment for each child
3. Student Schedule
4. Signed Parent Agreement
5. Signed Photographic Authorization form
6. Signed Field Trip Permission Form
7. Filled out and signed Tuition Express form (you can choose Credit Card or Checking) Credit cards incur an additional fee on every transaction.
8. \$50 Registration fee paid.
9. First-month tuition or State Subsidy paid for 1<sup>st</sup> month before the first day of attendance.
10. Potty training and/or behavior history provided to director/teacher.

**Completed paperwork must be received by the office, 48 hours (minimum) before a student can attend their first day.**

### **Registration Fee**

All families are required to pay an annual, non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 upon enrollment, and every year in August. The fee is due at the time of registration, as well as annually with August tuition.

### **Tuition**

Fees must be paid before services are rendered. Tuition is charged through Tuition Express on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month unless it falls on a weekend or holiday, then it will process on the following business day. All charges & payments can be viewed on our check-in computer each day, on [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com), or the app, using the email you provide at the time of registration.

Remote payments can be made on [tuitionexpress.com](http://tuitionexpress.com).

### **Payment**

Tuition Express gives you the option of paying with an electronic check, debit card, credit card, or EBT (State Assistance). All payments via Credit or Debit card will incur a 4% convenience fee on every transaction. We encourage the use of a checking or savings to account for tuition payment.

Invoices and Payments may be tracked online after registration via [www.tuitionexpress.com](http://www.tuitionexpress.com), [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com), and on the ProCare App. AristoCat Children's Academy does not accept cash or check. Teachers cannot accept fee payments in any way.

### **Past Due Accounts**

A parent whose account is delinquent will be denied access to the academy, and the child may not attend the center until the account is paid in full. A \$35.00 late fee will be applied every month the account is past due. Accounts that are past-due 30 days will be turned in to a collection agency of AristoCat Children's Academy's choice and all agency fees will be paid by the delinquent party.

### **Late Pick Up**

Parents are requested to strictly observe the hours of operations so that children are always properly supervised. If a late pick-up occurs there will be a charge of \$20.00 for every fifteen minutes, starting at 5:31 p.m.

### **Returned Checks and Delinquent Fees**

There will be a \$35.00 fee for all tuition transactions that are returned or declined for any reason.

### **Check-In/Out Policy**

For the safety of your child, we require you to sign your child in and out of the facility. If for any reason you are unable to check your child in or out, please see the director immediately. If a child is not checked in or out of our facility, there will be a \$20.00 check-in/out fee per occurrence.

### **Drop-in Policy**

To ensure proper ratios are always maintained, a 24-hour notice must be sent to our office via office email, [academy@ymail.com](mailto:academy@ymail.com). Any child dropped off who is not on the schedule and has not been arranged to be at the center will be charged a \$65.00 drop-in fee. If your child cannot be accommodated, we can and will refuse service.

### **Waiting List Policy**

To hold your spot on the waiting list, there will be a nonrefundable \$100 holding fee, per month, per child. Once there is an opening, you will be contacted with a date to start enrollment. If paying more than three months, 30% of the holding fees will be credited towards your first full month of tuition.

For any reason you wish to be taken off the waiting list, you must contact the office manager before the first of the month.

### **Absences and Vacations**

Regular attendance is encouraged. Any child who is absent from the center for a period lasting longer than two (2) consecutive weeks at any one time, without notifying the Academy Director, will automatically be removed from active enrollment, and will need to re-enroll before returning.

Absences of an entire week (M-F) will be adjusted to a \$100 holding fee, for the week absent, plus all tuition fees, if, notice is given to the office in written form before the absence.

Maximum of 4 weeks per fiscal year, per child.

### **Withdrawn / Termination**

Parents must notify the center director in writing via email two weeks before the withdrawal. All fees are due and payable during the final two weeks, regardless of termination cause.

AristoCat Children's Academy reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time with cause. Account balance must be paid within 30 days of dismissal; otherwise, the account will be referred to the company's collection agency, with fees or collection agency to be paid by the delinquent party. Refusal and non-payment of tuition are causes for immediate dismissal.

### **Sunscreen Policy**

For your child's safety and health, we apply sunscreen each time we go outside, and at two-hour intervals if outside time is prolonged, between the months of April and November. We provide sunscreen, if your child has an allergy to our sunscreen, you can provide an alternative sunscreen accompanied by a doctor's note.

### **Referrals**

We know satisfied parents are our best form of advertising. We hope that you will share your satisfaction with friends, family, and co-workers. As a thank you for referring another family to our program, you will receive one week of the student's regular schedule of free tuition and your referral will receive FREE registration! The new family must have paid one full month's tuition before this credit will be issued. Please see the director for additional details. Be sure to have the referral mention your name on their enrollment paperwork.

### **Parent Conduct**

AristoCat Children's Academy requires the parents and others picking up or dropping off children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of AristoCat Children's Academy is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of AristoCat Children's Academy but, is the responsibility of every parent or adult who enters the Academy. All adults are required to behave in a



manner that fosters this ideal environment. This includes refraining from swearing, threatening, physical/verbal punishment of a child, smoking, and confrontational interactions.

### **Software Fee:**

AristoCat Children's Academy utilizes a software program, in the classroom and our summer camps to actively communicate with parents about daily happenings.

This is a mandatory program for all students that is \$7/month.

### **Features Include:**

- Receive pictures and beautiful daily reports via the app
- Download and share photos of your children!
- Record of assessments, activities, naps (and more!)
- Direct messaging program!

### **Arrival and Departure**

Classes begin promptly at 9:00 am. Please have your child here before the noted time to eliminate classroom disruption. Upon arrival, each child must be clean and fresh. Please bring your child with a clean face, clothes, and especially free of soiled diapers/underwear.

For the health of your child, all children and visitors must wash their hands following the posted handwashing procedures before entering any classroom.

Children will not be released to anyone not pre-authorized on the emergency list. When someone needs to be added to the authorized pick-up, we prefer that a parent/guardian does this in person with a staff member on duty. However, we will accept a call made from the parent/guardian to the academy's direct phone line, where they will be prompted for verification and the name of authorized pick-up personnel. Children must be left with a staff member upon arrival and parents must notify a staff member when a child is leaving. Do not let your child enter or leave the building unaccompanied.

We strongly request that parents NOT drop children off during rest times, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. (times vary depending on classroom) as it disrupts the rest of the class. If you wish to pick up or drop off your student(s) during this time, we ask that you inform us in advance either in person or on the app so that we can have them ready for your arrival.

While picking up or dropping off your child who is enrolled at the Academy; we urge you not to leave unattended children in your vehicle.

Parents agree to provide transportation to and from AristoCat Children's Academy. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on Academy premises.

\*Cell Phones: We ask all persons to please finish their cell phone conversation before entering the building. The children are excited to see you and need your full attention. Take a minute to enjoy greeting your child and listening to what they have learned that day.

### **Social Media Policy**

If for any reason it is seen that you or your family/friend has posted or replied on a Social Media Platform and has made any derogatory remarks about the Academy, its staff, and/or students, your child(ren) enrollment will immediately be terminated from the Academy. The two-week termination notice fee of 2-weeks tuition will also still apply.



### **Clothing**

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and allows for self-dressing. All items should be marked with the child's first and last name. We recommend that you provide a change of clothes in case of a spill or accident. Children need to wear sturdy closed-toe shoes as a matter of safety, particularly on the playground and field trips.

AristoCat Children's Academy will follow the ACA Clothing Policy. This includes the length of shorts, at least fingertip length, and NO tank tops (in which case, if one is worn an ACA t-shirt will be provided). Please bring your child inappropriate clothing for the day. We highly recommend the use of long or short sleeve sun-shirts in the summer for water play. If your child is wearing a bikini, an ACA t-shirt will be provided.

**ARISTOCRAT CHILDREN'S ACADEMY IS  
NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR DAMAGED ITEMS**

### **Cloth Diaper Policy**

We do accommodate parents who wish to use cloth diapers for their children. Parents who wish to use cloth diapers for their child must bring a HANDS-FREE Diaper Genie and provide the appropriate bag inserts for it. The purpose of this rule is to prevent the spread of disease-causing agents. Separate, plastic-lined waste containers are acceptable, if they do not require touching with contaminated hands, children cannot access them, and they enclose odors. Cloth diapers will be sent home at the end of each day.

### **Diapering Procedure (for non-potty-trained children)**

Parents of children in diapers are responsible for bringing sufficient diapers and wipes for each day. A fee of \$1.50 per diaper will be charged for diapers provided by the Academy.

**All children must wear a diaper, or underwear always and will be taken to the restroom every hour to be allowed to use the restroom.**

For those children who require diapering (including infants) the procedure is as follows:

**\*\*ONE HAND IS TO BE KEPT ON THE CHILD AT ALL TIMES\*\***

### **Diapering Procedures**

Gloves are to be worn 100% of the time during diaper changes due to the risk of exposure to CMV. For pregnant women, one of the two most common exposures to CMV is through contact with the urine and saliva of young children with CMV infection. The purpose of this rule is to prevent the spread of disease-causing agents. Separate, plastic-lined waste containers that do not require touching with contaminated hands and that the children cannot access, enclose odors, and prevents children from encountering bodily fluids. Maintaining sanitary conditions during toileting/diapering routines is necessary to minimize the spread of germs in the early childhood setting. So, it is important for every child and staff member that sanitary procedures be conducted consistently and correctly to protect the health of the staff, the children, their families, and the greater community.

1. Before beginning the diapering procedure, clean your hands by using proper hand hygiene (handwashing according to directions)
2. To minimize contamination, prepare for diapering by getting out all the supplies needed for the diaper change and placing them near, but not on, the diapering surface (ex: wipes, diaper, etc.).
3. Place the child on the diapering table, keeping soiled clothing away from you and any surface that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected. Remove all clothing to access diapers. If Soiled, Place clothes into a plastic bag. Always keep one hand on the child.
4. Unfasten the soiled diaper but leave it under the child. Lift the child's legs as needed and use wipes to clean the child's bottom from front to back (one wipe per swipe). Put the wipe in the soiled diaper.
5. Fold the soiled diaper inward, wrapping it up. Then by placing the diaper and wipes in your gloved hand, pull your gloves over the diaper so that it is completely covered.
6. Throw away the glove-wrapped diaper and wipes into a lined, covered, hands-free trash container.
7. Use a wipe to remove soil from your hands and throw it into a trash container.
8. Use another wipe to remove soil from the child's hands and throw it into a trash container.
9. Slide a clean diaper under the child and use the tissue or paper towel to apply any necessary diaper cream. Dispose of the tissue or paper towel in the designated container, then fasten the diaper.
10. Redress the child in either the clean clothes they were wearing or into new clean clothes.
11. Wash the child's hands following the proper handwashing procedure.
12. Return the child to the play area without touching any other surfaces.
13. Clean the diapering surface by spraying it with HB Quat and wait at least 30 seconds (as per HB Quat Instructions). Wipe with a paper towel.
14. Disinfect the diapering surface by spraying it with HB Quat and wait at least 2 minutes
15. Clean your hands by using proper hand hygiene.
16. Record on Daily Board and in Digital Daily Report for Families.

## Clothing and Toys

For younger children's (0-3yrs) comfort, we ask that you bring a complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, and outerwear) marked with the child's full name for identification. These will be kept in the center and used when necessary. The child's clothing should be comfortable and adequate for the weather. Outdoor play, when the weather permits, will be an important part of your child's day at the Academy. He/she will also engage in activities such as art, sand, and water play. You should consider these things when dressing your child for the Center. Please do not send designer clothing, expensive jewelry, chapstick, hats, or barrettes to school. We expect the children to play without worrying. Toys will be provided by the Center, and none should be brought from home.

### Things to Bring that will STAY at the Academy

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#### INFANTS: (0-18 months)

4 or more Bottles  
Diapers and Wipes  
Rash Ointment  
Pacifier  
Sleep Sack, or Swaddle Wrap, with Fasteners.  
(Velcro, zippers, or buttons)  
3 pairs of pants  
3 shirts  
3 pairs of socks  
(No Glass Bottles, Bottles and Sippy Cups and  
Pacifiers will not be used in the 2-year-old room)

#### PRE-SCHOOL

1 Extra outfit including, shirt, pair of socks, pants,  
and underpants.  
Pull-ups if potty training.

#### SEASONAL FOR ALL CHILDREN

##### WINTER:

Snowsuit OR Snow Pants and Coat  
Boots  
Gloves  
Hat

##### SUMMER:

3 pairs of pants  
3 shirts  
Swimsuit  
3 pairs of socks  
Swim Shirt  
Towel  
Water Shoes (closed-toe)

Drs Notes or Prescriptions

Medication releases for any medications.

All medications must be in their original container, labeled with students' full first and last name, and cannot be expired.

Any expired medication will be sent home or discarded.

**\*\*If any choking hazards are brought from home into the academy they will be discarded immediately. This does include small hair accessories and jewelry.**

## Daily Routines

Each classroom teacher will have a daily schedule posted in his or her room. All classes start promptly at 9:00 A.M. Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in their child's daily activity. Please do not be late for class as it disrupts every child. The center will post notices of special events and activities. We also provide an opportunity for outdoor play every day. We use the Weather Watch Chart to determine the appropriate outdoor temperatures for children.

**Children under two years of age DO NOT watch TV, videos, or use computers.**

We believe that the use of TV, video, and/or computers are not considered absolutely necessary in preschool programs. The types of activities associated (with this equipment) often require passive rather than active involvement, sedentary behavior, limited learning opportunities, forced participation, and few opportunities to practice important social skills.

## Transitioning from Home to AristoCats:

**Use Pretend Play to explore the idea of preschool**

**Read Books About Preschool**

**Make a game out of practicing self-help skills**

**Visit the Academy**

### First Day:

**Plan to stay a little while.** Staying for 15-30 minutes on that first morning can help ease the transition. Together, the two of you can explore the classroom, meet some other children, play with a few toys. When you see that your child is comfortable, it is time to leave. If he is having a harder time getting engaged, you may want to ask your child's teacher to stay with your child as you say goodbye so that when you leave, he can turn to another caring adult for support.

**Keep your tone upbeat.** Children pick up on the reactions of the trusted adults in their lives. So, try not to look worried or sad, and don't linger too long. Say a quick, upbeat goodbye and reassure your child that all will be well.

**Think about creating a special good-bye routine.** For example, you can give your child a kiss on the palm to "hold" all day long. or, the two of you can sing a special song together before you leave. Good-bye routines are comforting to children and help them understand and prepare for what will happen next.

**Resist the Rescue.** Try not to run back in the classroom if you hear your child crying, as upsetting as this can be. This is a big change, and your child may, quite understandably, feel sad and a little scared. But if you run back in, it sends the message that they are only okay if you are there, and it is likely to prolong your child's distress and make it harder for them to adapt. Rest assured; teachers have many years of experience with helping families make the shift to preschool. Instead, you can

wait outside the classroom for a few minutes to ensure that all is well, or call the school later in the morning to check-in.

### **Transitioning through Activities**

An egg timer, (or alarm on your watch) – Teachers will show their students that they are setting the timer and let them know that when it goes off it will be time to switch activities. Having a “ping” announces it is time to move on takes the pressure off teachers, and when used consistently helps students transition between activities without frustration.

Verbal cues are an absolute necessity when encouraging your child to transition from one activity to the next.

Cueing will take place before, during, and after the transition. For example:

**Before:** After this tower, we'll put the blocks away so we can have lunch.

**During:** Time to put the blocks away so we can have lunch.

**After:** Nice job putting the blocks away! Now it is time for lunch.

Of course, real-life does not usually happen this smoothly, and that is okay. Kids are not always going to like the fact that they have to stop something that they're enjoying. Here are some steps we use to move towards smoother transitions:

- **We ALWAYS use verbal cues** before, during, and after a transition.
- **We use verbal cues that your student can understand.** Young children don't understand abstract time frames like 5 or 10 minutes. We use concrete references like Three more times down the slide. Then, we help your child count, reminding them how many times are left after each turn. Then remind your child several more times before it is time to transition.
- **We use picture schedules and cards that can be helpful** for children who have a hard time following verbal directions. We point to the picture of the next activity or hand your child the picture and let them carry it to the next activity. This can help the transition. Sometimes students simply don't understand or can't process the verbal direction alone. This technique can be particularly helpful.
- **We establish and maintain regular schedules and routines** in our classrooms. When students know what to expect and can anticipate upcoming transitions, they can maintain a sense of organization and order leading to smoother transitions.
- **We allow for adequate time** for children to engage in their preferred activities without interruption.

Transitions will always be difficult for your young child. Developmentally, they're simply not well-equipped to leave an activity they're enjoying and move to a potentially less desirable one. Keep in mind that this, like any other step in your day, will be exacerbated by lack of sleep, hunger, or illness.

### **Transitioning into a different Classroom**

At AristoCat Children’s Academy, we understand how important it is for a child to be eased into a new environment. For them to be comfortable before they start in a new classroom AristoCat Children’s Academy does the following:

- 3 months before the transition, the student will meet their new teacher and tour the new classroom to see what is there.
- A few months before the transition, AristoCat Children’s Academy will let the student spend a morning or afternoon in the class that they will be transitioning into.
- A month before the transition, AristoCat Children’s Academy will let that student spend a whole day in the classroom to get used to the new environment.
- A week before the transition, AristoCat Children’s Academy will let that student spend a few days that week in the classroom to get used to the new environment.

### **Transitioning into Your First Year of School**

It is an amazing time for your student to start Kindergarten at public schools. At AristoCat Children’s Academy, we strive to make this transition an easy and happy time for you and your student. Here are some strategies that are used at AristoCat Children’s Academy each year:

- We will take your students on “bus runs” to show them where they will be picked up and dropped off.
- We will work with your student in our classrooms to get them ready for kindergarten by working on preschool and kindergarten curriculums.
- We will transition your student with the older group of students the summer before to get so that they can get used to being with older students.
- We will create situations where your student can listen to instructions and follow them, help in the classroom as a class helper, and practice transitions from activity to activity.

Here are some strategies you can use at home before the school year:

- Take a tour with your student at the elementary school.
- Meet your student’s new teacher with them.
- Play at the park at the elementary school.

### **Language Support:**

We will support families of English learners by the following:

- Using basic words and phrases in the student’s home language.
- Incorporating the home language, with labels, books, and other classroom materials.
- Using interpreters when needed.



### **Transportation**

Safety is our primary concern when transporting children. Our buses have scheduled maintenance and inspections. All children must wear a seat belt and remain orderly when riding in our buses.

If for any reason your child will not be riding from their school, it is imperative that you notify the Academy 30 minutes before pick-up time.

**A \$15.00 fee will be charged each day** when the Academy is not notified to take the child's name off the pick-up schedule. The bus driver will wait five minutes at the assigned bus stop. If a child does not report to the bus in that time the driver will notify the Academy, and the school, then proceed to the next assigned pick-up location. The Academy director will call the parents for further instructions.

Our buses will not transport children during any weather conditions considered hazardous.

### **Field Trips**

Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips. Children are expected to follow all safety rules on field trips. Failure to abide by rules will be cause for the exclusion of a child from field trips. Younger children may go on walks through the neighborhood. All children are required to wear closed-toe shoes on field trips. If a class field trip is scheduled, and you wish for your child not to participate, you may be asked to make other care arrangements for your child for that day. When on field trips, we follow the same teacher/student ratio as in class.

### **Progress Observations**

Individual assessments of skills are completed three times each year for every child. Assessments include social, emotional, cognitive, language, gross and fine motor coordination, and self-help skills. These help us know how to best guide each child's learning. We will review these observations at Parent-Teacher Conferences. All parents are encouraged to attend conferences and be involved in their child's academic growth. We will hold parent-teacher conferences twice per year.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. We invite parents to join their child on an "AristoCat Trial Day" before enrollment. Once enrolled, parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classroom, share family or cultural traditions- foods- music- games, and/or assist teachers. Parents not interested in volunteering directly in the classroom may donate items, do maintenance work, or assist in program preparation. Parents are encouraged to attend Parent-Teacher Conferences which are held twice a year.



## Meal Information

AristoCat Children's Academy requires that parents provide all meals and drinks for students daily, while in attendance.

**Our scheduled mealtimes are as follows:**

### BREAKFAST

8:00 am - 9:00 AM,

### LUNCH

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM for downstairs classes

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM for upstairs classes,

### AFTERNOON SNACK

3:00 PM -3:15 PM.

**Meal requirements are as follows:**

- All students must have a packed lunch box/bag, labeled with the student's first and last name on the exterior.
- Breakfast, lunch, and snack items, including drinks (if desired), other than water.
- Any hot items, in thermoses, must be labeled with students' first and last names as well as the date provided. We ask that parents place correctly labeled items in their students' classrooms.
- Infants will need to provide formula and purees' if not eating solid meals.
- Food must be bite-size, per licensing requirements, all food must be cut up into bite-size pieces, for infants (under 24 months) this is ¼" pieces. For toddlers (under 3 years old) this is ½" pieces.

As our teachers are in classrooms and unable to step away, we are not able to heat/reheat meals, hot items will need to be sent hot and in a thermos-type container.

Students will only be allowed to eat what is sent in their box, we will not permit sharing or trading meal items.

If a parent wants their student to eat specific items at specific times, they need to be labeled with "B (breakfast), L "lunch" or S (snack)"

Breastfeeding infants is an encouraged practice at AristoCat Children's Academy. **ACA will provide a cozy private area for nursing mothers.** When breast milk is the primary choice of food for an infant it will be thawed by sitting in a bowl of warm water (never in a microwave). To warm bottles that are already thawed or formula, the academy will use a bottle warmer, and the temperature will be tested before serving. Breast milk will be stored in a labeled container either in the refrigerator or the freezer.

\*All bottles and food that have been served to an infant must be discarded after two hours after feeding (Utah State Licensing rule).

**\*\*If a student does not come prepared with meals, an emergency meal will be provided at a daily cost of \$12. \*\*\***

## Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a very special day, and we love to help celebrate. You are welcome to bring a special snack for your child's class if you choose. Health Department regulations require all food brought in the building to be commercially prepared or pre-packaged. Please discuss your plans with the director before the day.



## Health

Parents are required to provide the Academy with a record of the child's immunizations before the child can attend. Please submit an updated form to the office when the child turns 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, 5 years, and 7 years old. Parents also must sign an agreement giving the Academy permission to call a doctor in case of an emergency.

If your child has a personal, medical, or religious exemption from immunizations, an Exemption Form from the County Health Department **MUST** be submitted annually instead of a record of immunizations. In the case of an outbreak, we will ask that your child not attend until the outbreak has cleared.

If your child becomes ill at the Academy, they will be isolated, and you will be notified at once to take the child home. Facilities are not available at the Academy for sick children. If the Academy calls a parent or guardian when their child becomes ill, parents are expected to pick up the child promptly. **Children need to be picked up within 30 minutes.** We require parents to come expeditiously without hesitation. If a parent does not come or refuses to pick up their child, they will be unenrolled from our program.

A child with an elevated temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, or known illness will not be admitted to the Academy. If your child has a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea the night before, you are required to keep him/her home to limit exposure to infections in the Academy. If your child is between 6 weeks and 5 years old, we do not allow your child to attend the Academy with a fever above 101.0 degrees.



If your child has three episodes of vomiting or diarrhea, you will be called to pick up your child.

If your child has a temperature of 101 and holding, and/or any signs or symptoms that are outlined in the Utah General Health Guidelines, we will call for you to pick up your child.

If a child is sent home from public school, AristoCat Children's Academy will follow district policy and the child will not be allowed at ACA.

The child must be FREE of any fever, vomiting, or diarrhea AT LEAST 24 hours before returning to AristoCat Children's Academy.

**\*\*AristoCat Children's Academy has the right to change update these policies at any time for the safety and health of our students. This includes any outbreaks or epidemics that the local health department has declared. \*\*\***

### Allergies

Please inform AristoCat Children's Academy, as well as provide a Drs Note, of any allergies your child may have and their reaction to any allergens. We will make a copy for your child's classroom.

### Medication

By state law, AristoCat Children's Academy will not dispense any medication to any child without advance written consent from the parent or guardian. Parents must complete a "Medication Authorization" form, either in writing or on the app. Prescription medication may be given only to the child for whom it is prescribed. Over-the-counter medication must have the child's full name printed on the container. All medication must be in its original container and unexpired. ACA will follow ALL manufacture guidelines when administering medications.

**Medications will only be administered to students under the age of 24 months IF a Drs. Note or prescription label is provided.**



### Rest Time

All children at the Academy will rest after lunch. To protect your child's health, we provide a freshly sanitized cot, as well as a blanket and sheet. **Please do not send any sleep materials, as they will be provided.** Although children will not be forced to go to sleep during the nap period, nor criticized for not going to

sleep, they will be required to rest quietly or do a quiet activity that is provided so that children who want to sleep may do so. Children can get off their mats/cots after 30 minutes if they can remain undistruptive to other students. Children only stay on their cots/mats longer than 30 minutes if they choose to do so. TV and videos are not used during nap time.

### **Incident /Accident Reports**

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the day, a staff member will complete a Digital Incident/Accident Report on the app. The report will be discussed at the time of pick up and signed by the parent or person picking up. Should a person other than the parent pick up the child on the day of the incident, it is then the responsibility of that person to sign the incident report. By signing the incident report, you are ONLY acknowledging that you were informed about the incident.

### **Biting/Hitting Policy**

Outlined below is our policy for children who bite or cause physical injury to other children or teachers. We work consistently with the children on appropriate and expected behavior. Biting or hitting is especially tough because there is a victim. It is our goal that everyone should have a good, injury-free day. Most victims are very disturbed about being bitten or hurt.

#### **Our policy on biting/injuring is as follows:**

1. We will encourage you and your child to discuss what we do bite (food, apples, crackers) or injure other students, as well as what is acceptable to bite, (children, paper, toys, etc.).
2. We can also suggest you make available to your child a teething ring or sterile frozen washcloth for biting. These can be used at school as well.
3. If there is a continuing biting/hitting incident (2 or more episodes) or an incident that draws blood or an injury to a teacher, you will receive a call requesting that your child be removed from care for the remainder of the day. This will allow you to Re-emphasize what is acceptable and what is not.
4. If biting/hitting continues after all the measures above have been exhausted, we will ask you to make other care arrangements for your child.

We must make this policy clear for the safety and wellbeing of all the children in our care. Everyone has the right to have a good, safe day. We must maintain that standard by stating what is acceptable and what cannot be tolerated.

### **Abuse and Neglect**

As early care and education professionals, we are mandated by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. We will not hesitate to seek help for any child. The Academy is required to contact the Department of Children Services for refusal to pick up a child at any time.

### **Guidance**

Children must learn to see themselves as worthy, contributing participants, with a sense of responsibility for their actions, and respect for the rights of others. We believe in a positive approach to discipline with logical consequences for inappropriate behavior. When redirecting or guiding the child, consideration is given to

both age and level of development for setting limits and schedules. Parents will be notified if there is a consistent behavior problem. Children learn and live by positive words and actions as a method of developing confident interpersonal skills.

### **Corporal Punishment is prohibited by Parents and Staff**

Corporal punishment is prohibited at the academy (This includes the parking lot)! Verbal abuse, threats, cruel and unusual punishments will not be tolerated! Children will not be deprived of basic needs for any reason. When a child's behavior interferes with the teacher and children to the point of repeated disruptive behavior, parents will be required to have a conference with the teacher to develop a plan of action to stop the behavior. Conferences may be held at any time. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers regularly. The director will conduct all conferences. The Director maintains an open-door policy. However, please make every effort to communicate with the teachers.

### **Emergency Care**

Accidents are inevitable wherever large numbers of children gather. We strive to prevent mishaps through safety instructions, elimination of dangerous equipment, alert supervision, and other safety procedures. However, despite precautions, we cannot completely avoid injuries; therefore, certain policies have been established to ensure immediate and adequate care when such occasions arise. At the time of registration, parents must sign an agreement giving the Academy permission for emergency medical care and list the name and address of a doctor to call in case of emergency. If parents cannot be contacted immediately, the Academy will then notify other persons designated by the parent to call in case of an emergency. Please keep emergency contact information current. If an attempt is made to contact emergency numbers that are no longer working your child will be denied access until working numbers are provided. An emergency is any time a child needs medical attention beyond basic first aid.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Our staff is trained in emergency response. This includes skinned knees to medical emergencies. Fire drills are held monthly and mock disaster drills semi-annually. Should the building have to be evacuated parents will be notified and the staff will remain with the children until they are picked up. If a child has a life-threatening emergency, the staff will call 911 and notify the parents immediately. We will have drills for all the following emergencies:

- CO2
- Fire
- Flood
- Tornado
- Hurricane
- Hazardous Material  
Accident
- Bomb Threats
- Gas Leak
- Power Failure
- Loss of Water
- Plumbing Problems

### **Security**

It is recommended that you lock your car whenever you leave it unattended in front of the Academy. The front door is locked each day at 5:30 p.m. We will not release a child to an unauthorized person. Anyone other than a parent picking up his or her child will have to show identification, with a biometric code or be on the authorized pick-up list with photo identification. When someone needs to be added to the authorized

pick-up, we prefer that a parent/guardian does this in person with a staff member on duty. However, we will accept a call made from the parent/guardian to the academy's direct phone line, where they will be prompted for verification and the name of authorized pick-up personnel.

A security camera system is always used inside the building. Video and Audio Recordings are only available for management review unless requested with a subpoena.

### **Conflict of Interest**

AristoCat Children's Academy does not allow staff to care for enrolled /previously enrolled (past 36 months) children outside of the academy during academy business hours. Failure to comply with this policy can result in termination of enrollment for the child and termination for the employee. This matter is not taken lightly. Do not ask for staff personal information.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Should you or your child have questions or concerns about any part of our program we ask you to speak directly with the center director or the center owner. We are committed to providing the best possible care for your children and understand there might be occasional misses in communication. Please talk to us so we can resolve any issues and/or concerns. If you have any further questions regarding the state regulations, please feel free to visit <http://health.utah.gov/licensing>.