

AristoCat Childrens Academy

Parent Handbook



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Email: acacademy@ymail.com

Website: www.aristocatchildrensacademy.com

Welcome Parents

Dear Parents:

We are thrilled to welcome you and your child to AristoCat Children's Academy! Our program is carefully crafted to provide an exciting and enriching experience. With the utilization of Creative Curriculum and Opening the World of Learning, we offer a wide range of activities that connect learning to the real world. We encourage you to visit our academy, ask questions, express concerns, and join us on field trips. Together, we can create a dynamic and memorable journey for your child, filled with excitement, adventure, and plenty of learning opportunities. Thank you for entrusting us with your precious child.

Sincerely,

*JaCie Butters, Owner/Director
AristoCat Children's Academy*

Purpose of Handbook:

Both home and school have essential functions to serve in educating children; both can work effectively with the other's understanding, support, and assistance. Guiding the development of children is a cooperative endeavor. Therefore, there must be open communication between parents and teachers. Parents must understand the policies, program expectations, and requirements to maintain an effective learning environment. 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 to support them. We aim 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 submission 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 to meet the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of infants, toddlers, preschool, and school-age children.
2. To provide a "model" childcare center where the best and latest techniques in instructional methodologies can serve children.
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 respect for the rights of others.
4. We provide optimal physical development through activity and equipment that foster gross motor development.
5. We provide guidance, equipment, and materials in an atmosphere that furnishes maximum cognitive stimulation.

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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. Completed Tuition Express form (you can choose Credit Card or Checking). Credit cards incur an additional fee on every transaction.
8. Registration fees paid.

9. First-month tuition or State Subsidy received on the first day of attendance. (Fees must be paid upon enrollment; any fees covered by subsidy can be refunded once the subsidy is received.)
10. Potty training and behavior history provided to the director/teacher.

The office must receive completed paperwork at least 48 hours before a student can attend their first day, and the registration fee must be paid without declining.

Schedule of Operation:

Parents are requested to strictly observe the hours of operation so that children are appropriately supervised. We are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Except the dates listed below.

Holidays and Closed Dates:

The following holidays will be observed:

- New Year's Observance (January 1st)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 20th)
- President's Day (February 17th)
- Memorial Day (The last Monday of May)
- Juneteenth Day (June 19th)
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Pioneer Day (the Day of or the following Monday)
- Labor Day (The first Monday of September)
- Columbus Day (October 13th)
- Veterans Day (November 11th)
- Thanksgiving Holidays (Thanksgiving Thursday and the following Friday)
- Christmas Break (December 22nd through December 26th)
- 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 teachers' continued education, curriculum preparation, and deep cleaning. These dates will be given to you no less than one month in advance and listed on our annual schedule, provided when enrolled. The academy reserves the right to close on any other day not listed above, and a written notice will be posted as soon as possible.

Core Values:

- **SAFETY**— We will ensure the well-being of children and staff by providing a physical and emotional haven.
- **COMMUNICATION**— We will respectfully communicate expectations and needs while carefully listening to comments and concerns.
- **TRUST**— We will build a solid nurturing foundation by welcoming and respecting every family.
- **UNITY**—We will continue strengthening 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 obtaining and maintaining a Child Development Association Credential or other early education-related degrees.



Registration Fee:

All accounts are subject to registration fees. Registration fees consist of \$100 upon initial account creation plus \$50 for each additional child. An annual re-registration fee of \$50.00 per child will be charged annually in August. All registration fees are non-refundable.

Tuition:

Fees must be paid before services are rendered. Tuition is charged through Tuition Express on the 1st of every month unless it falls on a weekend or holiday; it will be processed on the following business day. All charges and payments can be viewed on our check-in computer each day, on www.myprocare.com, or the app, using the email you provide at the time of registration.

Remote payments can be made on tuitionexpress.com.

We do not accept mid-month billing changes.

Infant, Toddler, and Early PreSchool enrollment is FULL TIME ONLY (Monday - Friday).

Payment:

Tuition Express allows you to pay 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 using a checking or savings account for tuition payments.

Invoices and Payments may be tracked online after registration via www.tuitionexpress.com, www.myprocare.com, and on the ProCare App.

AristoCat Children’s Academy does not accept cash or checks.

Teachers cannot accept payments in any way.

Past Due Accounts:

Any student with a past-due account 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 delinquent by 30 days will be turned in to a collection agency of AristoCat Children’s Academy’s choice. If any balance is not paid as agreed, the undersigned agrees to pay a collection fee as well as all collection costs. In the event of a lawsuit to collect the unpaid balance, the undersigned further agrees to pay court costs and reasonable attorney fees.

After Hours Pick-up Fee:

Parents are requested to strictly observe the hours of operation to ensure that children are adequately supervised. If a late pick-up occurs, there will be a charge of \$30.00 for every fifteen minutes per child, starting at 5:31 p.m. This is monitored directly with the time you sign students out at the check-in station.

Authorized and Emergency Pick-Up Persons:

In the event that a parent/guardian is unable to pick up their child, they may send an alternate pick-up person. Any person listed on the student’s enrollment paperwork be authorized to drop-off and pick up the child, using their personal access codes. Additional persons may be added by emailing their full name and phone number to the office, or coming in and adding them to the paperwork in person. Emergency pick- pick up persons must be communicated in advance by written message with the parent app or email to acacademy@ymail.com. This person will need to bring a Photo ID for a student to be released to them.

Children will not be released to anyone not pre-authorized on the emergency list. 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. 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.

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 your child's safety, 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, acacademy@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 \$75.00 drop-in fee. If your child cannot be accommodated, we can and will refuse service.

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Waitlist Policy

A non-refundable holding fee of \$150 per month is required to secure a spot on the waiting list. This fee becomes due once we can provide an official attendance start date for your student.

Holding Fee:

The holding fee guarantees that your student's enrollment space is explicitly reserved. As such, the holding fee becomes applicable when you accept the opening and will continue until the official attendance start date specified by the administration.

If your student will not be able to attend immediately on the official attendance start date specified by the administration, 50% of the total monthly tuition will be required to secure the space for one month. Full tuition will be due after the initial month, regardless of attendance.

If a space becomes available mid-month, the holding fee will be applicable upon availability, and prorated tuition will be charged from the start date until the end of the month.

If you decide to be removed from the waiting list, kindly contact the office manager before the first day of the month. All holding and waitlist fee's are non- refundable.

Vacation Holding Fee:

In the event that a student is on vacation, according to the Vacation Policy, a Vacation Holding Fee of \$100 per week per child will be applied in place of regular tuition for the time of the absence.

Absences:

Regular attendance is encouraged. Any absence lasting longer than two (2) consecutive weeks at any time without notifying the Academy Director, will be dismissed from enrollment and need to re-enroll, including paying the registration fees to attend.

Extended Absence:

An extended absence is when your student(s) will be absent for longer than two consecutive weeks.

The tuition for an extended absence will be reduced to a monthly charge of 50% of each child's regular tuition.

All other fees are still applicable.

Extended absences are exempt from all tuition discounts.

The schedule must be communicated in writing, and the billing adjustment must be requested in advance in order to receive the adjustment. (otherwise, full tuition is due)

Vacations: (Maximum of 4 weeks per fiscal year, per child.)

If your student is absent for an entire week (Monday to Friday), the billing will be adjusted to a holding fee instead of charging the full tuition for the missing week. However, this adjustment can only be made if written notice is provided to the office before the absence, and the request for adjustment is made accordingly.

Please note that billing will not be adjusted for any dates when the academy is scheduled to be closed according to the annual schedule.

Summer Adjustments:

As AristoCat Children's Academy operates year-round, several students attend full-day during the summer but before and after school during the school season. School-age students who participate full-time during the summer will be subject to a total tuition cost based on their attendance schedule.

If a student is absent for the entire summer season, a summer holding fee will be applied. This fee is \$250 per month per child.

Summer Camp:

AristoCat Children's Academy has an annual summer camp program. To participate, students must be both fully potty trained and meet the age requirement for the chosen camp. Please note that camp fees are separate from the regular monthly tuition. All camp participants are required to adhere to the camp code of conduct. It's important to note that all camp fees are non-refundable and non-negotiable.

Withdrawal:

Parents must email the office a minimum of two weeks before the withdrawal.

All fees are due and payable during the final two weeks, regardless of termination cause.

Termination and Dismissal:

AristoCat Children's Academy reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time with cause. Any 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.

Any credit that is left on a student account at the end of their enrollment will be refunded 30 days after their final date of attendance.

If a student is dismissed from enrollment for any reason besides giving a two-week withdrawal notice, any and all paid tuition is non-refundable.

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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.

There is a feature for you to upload documents; however, it does not notify us if you have done so. Documents will still need to be emailed to acacademy@gmail.com

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!

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 March and November. We provide sunscreen; if your child has an allergy to our sunscreen, you can provide an alternative sunscreen accompanied by our sunscreen waiver.

Referrals:

Satisfied families are our best form of advertising. We hope 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 a credit equivalent to one week of the student’s regular tuition, and your referral will receive FREE registration! The new family must have paid one entire 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 prioritizes creating a nurturing environment for children to learn and grow. We kindly request all adults to uphold decency, courtesy, and respect by refraining from swearing, threatening, physical/verbal punishment of a child, smoking, and confrontational interactions. Let's work together to foster an ideal environment for our children's development.

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Arrival and Departure

Classes begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. 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 clean-faced 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.

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.

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. Please take a minute to enjoy greeting your child and listening to what they have learned that day.

Social Media Policy

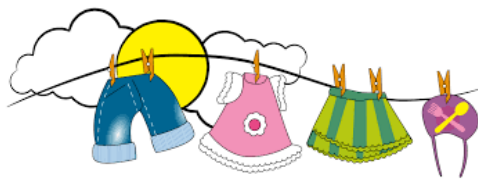
To ensure a positive relationship between AristoCat Children's Academy and our community, we kindly request that any concerns or issues be addressed directly with the Academy. In the event that derogatory remarks about the Academy, its staff, and/or students are posted on social media, we may need to review the situation. Depending on the circumstances, appropriate actions, up to and/or including enrollment termination, will be taken in the best interest of all parties involved. Please remember that open communication is vital to maintaining a harmonious learning environment.

Dress Code:

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-sleeved sun-shirts in the summer for water play. If your child is wearing a bikini, an ACA t-shirt will be provided.

ARISTOCAT 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 want 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.

ALL CHILDREN MUST WEAR A DIAPER, PULL-UP, OR UNDERWEAR AT ALL TIMES AND WILL BE TAKEN TO THE RESTROOM HOURLY.

Diapering Policy: (for non-potty-trained children)

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

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 prevent 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 essential 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 (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 while leaving 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 in 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. When the weather permits, outdoor play is an important part of your child's day at the Academy. They will also engage in activities such as art, sand, and water play. It would be best if you considered 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. The Center will provide toys, and none should be brought from home.

Things that will stay at the Academy:
No Glass Bottles, Sippy Cups or containers.

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

Pacifiers will not be used outside of the AristoCub and MeerCat programs.

PRE-SCHOOL:

- 1 Extra outfit including a 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 Prescription labels.

Medication releases for all medications.

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

Any expired medication will be sent home or discarded.

****Any choking hazards that are brought from home into the academy will be discarded immediately. This includes small hair accessories and jewelry.**

Daily Routines:

Each classroom teacher will have a daily schedule posted in their room. All classes start promptly at 9:00 A.M. Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in their child's daily activities. 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 is not 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.

Transition Information:

Transitioning from Home to AristoCats:

Here are some tips:

- Use pretend play to explore the idea of school
- Read books about preschool.
- Make a game out of practicing self-help.
- Visit the academy with your student.

On the 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, and 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 goodbye 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 into 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 in 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, well, put the blocks away so we can have lunch.

During: It's 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 toward 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 area. This can help the transition. Sometimes students don't understand or can't process the verbal direction alone. This technique can be beneficial.
- **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 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 students 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 a fantastic 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 students. 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 students 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 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 teachers with them.
- Play at the park at the elementary school.

Language Support:

- We will support families of English learners by the following:
- Using essential 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 seat belts and remain orderly when riding on our buses.

If, for any reason, your child will not be riding from their school, you must notify the Academy prior to 2:00 PM to prevent an additional fee.

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 following 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 cause 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.

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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 guide each child’s learning best. 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- and 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.

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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 the student’s first and last name as well as the date provided. We ask that parents place correctly labeled things in their students’ classrooms.
- Infants will need to provide formula and purees if they are 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 three years old), this is ½” pieces.
- Students must come with eating utensils, as we do not provide them.

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 for “breakfast,” L for “lunch,” or S for “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 melted 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 into the building to be commercially prepared or pre-packaged. Please discuss your plans with the director before the day for quantity and possible allergies.

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Health:

Parents are required to provide the Academy with a record of the child’s immunizations before the child can attend, as well as provide updated records when immunizations are given. 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 your student at 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.

****AristoCat Children's Academy has the right to change or 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. ****

- **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 is holding, we will call you to pick up your child.**
- **If your child has any 2 (or more) combined symptoms, we will call 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 ALL symptoms for AT LEAST 24 hours (unless otherwise stated by the administration) before returning to AristoCat Children's Academy.**
- **Illness symptoms include but are not limited to fever, diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy, and changes in behavior.**

In the event of multiple students or teachers with the same illness, we will post a communicable disease notice and follow the outlined information regarding exclusion from the program.

To view the communicable diseases guidebook, visit [child-care-illness-exclusions.pdf \(utah.edu\)](#)

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 in writing. 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 manufacturing guidelines when administering medications, including age requirements.

MEDICATIONS WILL ONLY BE ADMINISTERED TO STUDENTS WHO ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 24 MONTHS IF A DOCTOR'S 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 and Injury 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.

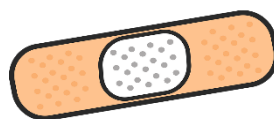
Biting and Hitting Policy:

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.

Biting and Hitting procedures

1. We will encourage you and your child to discuss what is acceptable to bite (food, apples, crackers) and alternatives to negative behaviors. (hitting, kicking, biting, wrestling, 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 ANY 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 well-being 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.



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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:

Corporal punishment is prohibited at the academy (This includes the parking lot)! Verbal abuse, threats, and 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.

Security:

You should 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 a child will have 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.

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 wholly avoid injuries; therefore, specific 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 people 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.

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Emergency Preparedness:

Our staff is trained in emergency response. This includes skinned knees and medical emergencies. Fire drills are held monthly, and disaster drills quarterly. 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
- Intruder
- Gas Leak
- Power Failure
- Loss of Water
- Plumbing Problems

Conflict of Interest:

To prioritize the safety and professionalism of our staff, AristoCat Children's Academy strictly prohibits staff from providing care for enrolled or previously enrolled children (for 36 months) during academy business hours. This policy helps maintain a clear boundary between personal and professional relationships. Non-compliance with this policy may lead to the termination of enrollment for the child and the employee. We kindly request that the personal information of our staff not be solicited.

Grievance Procedure:

At AristoCat Children's Academy, we value open communication and strive to address any questions or concerns you or your child may have. Our dedicated staff, including the center director and owner, are here to listen to and resolve any issues that may arise. We are committed to providing the best possible care for your children, and we understand that occasional miscommunications can occur. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us so that we can work together to resolve any concerns or address any questions you may have. For information about state regulations, please visit <http://health.utah.gov/licensing>.