



## Arbor Learning Center Parent Handbook

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### Welcome

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Thank you for choosing Arbor Learning Center for your child's care and education. We are a profit, licensed child care facility. We welcome you and your child, and strongly believe that open communication between parents and our staff is essential to meet your child's needs.

It is our goal to create a partnership with our parents. Early experiences are vital to your child's growth and development. Early childhood experts agree that personality, identity, and language are largely formed by the time your child is six years old.

We are here to provide your child with a quality education in a safe, healthy, stimulating, and well-supervised environment. Our teachers are trained, experienced specialists that focus on the overall development of your child. Our eclectic curriculum combines the strongest elements of existing early childhood research, age appropriate activities. Our philosophy, values, and excellence reflect the expectations of the parents, communities, and schools we serve:

The purpose of this handbook is to share information and ideas with parents and guardians, to promote understanding of our programs, and foster a spirit of cooperation between parents and our staff. We are here to assist and support you as you raise your child.

Sincerely,

Milva Acosta  
director

Arbor Learning Center

## Arbor Learning Center

Arbor Learning Center serves children from 6 weeks of age through school age. Our hours of operation are 6:30 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. Arbor Learning Center is open year round.

### **Mission Statement:**

At Arbor Learning Center we believe children need the healthy development of emotional, spiritual, physical, and cognitive skills. Therefore, we provide a rich environment filled with opportunities to nurture confidence, curiosity, cooperation, and family values. We provide equipment and activities to give children freedom to strengthen and practice fine and gross muscle movements. We serve nutritious, well-balanced nutritious meals that give children the energy they need for each busy day. This is accomplished under the supervision of a warm, loving staff that upholds quality principles. Our mission at Arbor Learning Center is not only to serve children, but families, staff, and the community as well. We want to enable the exploration of a safe environment as we live in today's contemporary culture.

### **Holidays:**

Arbor Learning Center will be closed in observance of the following twelve (12) holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- Christmas Day and the day after

Should the holiday fall on a Saturday, we will close on Friday. Should the holiday occur on a Sunday, we will close on Monday.

### **Inclement Weather:**

If school is dismissed due to inclement weather, Arbor Learning Center will be open unless announced otherwise. Please listen to local radio and TV stations for school closings in Lake County.

### **Enrollment Procedures:**

1. Schedule a visit for you and your child.
2. Complete registration form.
3. Submit original immunization record and physical examination.
4. Read the Parent Handbook.
5. Fill out child profile.
6. Return all forms with a \$75 registration fee.

**Withdrawal from the Program:**

Parents or guardians must give at least two weeks written notice regarding the withdrawal of a child from the program by completing a withdrawal form. Otherwise, they will be responsible for paying tuition for two weeks after a child withdraws.

**Changing Days of Attendance:**

Parents must give two weeks written notice regarding the change of scheduled days of attendance. You may pick up a form at the office.

**Payment Schedule:**

Fees are on a per week basis and payable on Friday or Monday in advance of each week. A late fee of **\$20** will be assessed to your account each week if the payment is not paid by closing time (6:00 pm), each Monday.

If fees are not paid and become one week past due, the child will not be allowed to attend the program until payments are made current.

The person who signs the registration agreement is responsible for making sure all program payments are up to date.

Checks should be made to Arbor Learning Center.

**Overtime Charges:**

Overtime will be charged to accounts for attendance after or before your child's scheduled hours at the rate of \$5 per hour, prorated every fifteen minutes. Children picked up after closing hours will be charged at a rate of \$1 per minute for the first fifteen minutes and \$5 each additional fifteen minutes. This also includes children picked up after scheduled early holiday closings.

**Tuition:**

Our general policy is to review our fees annually. Some additional fees may be necessary from time to time to cover special events such as field trips. You may ask for a receipt for any payment.

**Multiple Child Discounts:**

When multiple children from the same family attend the Center, a discount from the usual tuition fee is typically granted once a second child begins attending. To take advantage of this discount, full tuition must be paid for the child with the highest tuition base. The discount is then applied to the other child enrolled from the same family. In most cases, the discount will apply to the tuition for the oldest child; you are only entitled to one form of discount and you cannot combine other discounts. State assistance is considered a discount.

**Vacation Credit Policy:**

Families who enroll with Arbor Learning Center for full or part-time programs are eligible for vacation tuition credits as follows:

Continuous enrollment is defined as no lapse in the contracted schedule of attendance, and no lapse in contracted fees. After one year of continuous enrollment, you may receive one full week of vacation at no charge. Your child must be absent from the Arbor Learning Center for a vacation credit to apply. Vacation credits must be used in full-week increments, but not necessarily Mon.-Fri. If a child is enrolled part-time, the vacation credit is the value of the weekly tuition. Vacation credits apply to tuition only and are excluded from all other fees. Your request for a vacation credit must be made at least two weeks in advance. Vacation forms are available in the office. Vacation credit must be used within one year of the time it is earned.

### **Arrival, Departure, and Attendance:**

Children must be accompanied by the parent or another designated adult 18 years of age or older. It is your responsibility to escort your child into Arbor Learning Center and to sign your child in at the front desk. Please do not drop off your child in the parking lot.

Our responsibility begins when you place your child in the care of Arbor Learning Center staff member. At the beginning and end of each day attendance may be low. During these times children are gathered in designated rooms before they move on to their respective classrooms, or before their evening pick-up time. When arriving we encourage parents to spend a few minutes with their child in order to help him/her become involved with activities and to begin the day in a positive manner. When leaving your child, please remember to tell your child good-bye and that you will return later. Classroom staffs are willing to help with sadness or anxiety about separating. Such emotions are typical of many children.

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the Arbor Learning Center staff. If your child is ill, you should notify us as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious.

If your child is enrolled in our after-school program, please notify the Director of any changes in your child's schedule. We ask that you notify us at least two hours in advance of the scheduled pickup time if your child is not to be picked up at the public or private school on any given day. This will help prevent miscommunication regarding your child's transportation.

### **Sign-In/Out Procedures:**

Parents are required to sign their child in and out using the key pad located on the reception desk in the lobby entrance. If someone other than those on the child's authorized pick-up list will be picking up the child from the Center, prior authorization, in writing, must be given. The parent or guardian is the only person who can authorize the release of the child to another individual. The parent or guardian should provide the names of at least two other adults who have permission to pick up the child in case of an emergency. This authorization is given on the enrollment form and should be periodically updated in writing. Persons authorized to pick up children on a regular basis will be given their own code.

We ask for proper identification before releasing a child to someone other than his/her custodial parent or legal guardian. A photo ID is required.

If either parent wishes to place restrictions on the other parent's rights to pick up a child, Arbor Learning Center requires the enrolling parent to submit a copy of court orders or other legal documentation regarding child custody and/or visitation rights. This information will be kept in the child's file and we will abide by all legally authorized restrictions.

Under no circumstances will children be allowed to leave the Academy unsupervised for another location. We cannot release a child to walk to a bus stop or walk home.

### **Parents Always Welcome:**

We believe parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. We do everything possible to ensure the parents' involvement in our program.

Your input is important to us. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you may have with the Director at any time. Please consult with the Director or your child's teacher should any problems arise concerning your child, whether at home or at school. We seek your active involvement at Arbor Learning Center.

Parents are always welcome at Arbor Learning Center. We encourage you to visit, unannounced, at any time. Stop in, visit your child, and join us in our activities.

**Special Needs Children:**

If your child has any special needs, please notify the Director in advance. We will make all necessary arrangements to provide for a special needs child whenever possible. We ask that you bring a written statement from the child's physician that states the needs and the care instructions for the child.

**State Licensing Requirements:**

We believe that licensing and rigid enforcement of standards are in the best interest of all children. We comply with applicable licensing regulations and standards. These standards relate to our facility, staff, health and safety procedures, nutrition, teacher/child ratio, and record keeping. Arbor Learning Center is subject to inspection by state and city, health, fire, and licensing officials.

**Transportation:**

Arbor Learning Center will provide transportation to and from predetermined local elementary schools. A school transportation form must be signed at the time you enroll your child at the Center. We will not leave children at a drop-off site that does not have proper supervision. In such a situation, the children will be brought back to the Center. We will also provide transportation for planned classroom field trips. Parents must sign a separate permission slip for each field trip. Arbor Learning Center will provide transportation in the event of an emergency.

**Personal Belongings:**

Please provide a small blanket and cover for your child's use. It must be clearly labeled with your child's name. This should be taken home to launder each Friday. Your child may also bring a favorite soft toy for nap time. No pillows, please. Your child will be provided with many exciting activities, toys, and learning tools, so please do not allow them to bring personal items such as toys, money, or food from home unless your child has special dietary needs or is in the infant room.

**Clothing:**

Parents must maintain at least one complete change of clothing (including underwear, socks, pants, and shirt) in their cubby at all times. It is important for children to have a complete change of clothing in the event of an accident, whether toilet-related, food-related, or curriculum-related. If the change of clothing is used it should be replaced the following day. Children may be upset about soiled clothing and, in such a case; it is more soothing for children to change into their own clothing. Please be aware that you may be called to bring your child a change of clothing if one is not available in his/her cubby. All clothing must be marked with the child's name or initials in order to prevent the loss of items. Remember, that as children grow and weather changes, clothing should be exchanged!

During the course of each day, children will be involved in active exploration and play. Many kinds of materials and equipment will be available. Children should wear clothing that is appropriate for active play. Therefore, we will not guarantee the condition of children's clothing and accessories. The following guidelines should help you and your child choose suitable clothing: Choose clothing that is:

1. Permitted to get messy or dirty
2. Easy for the child to put on and take off, especially during potty training
3. Loose enough to allow free movement without being so loose that it hampers free movement, and
4. Suited to the weather, (outdoor time will be provided for all children, so please dress your child according to the weather).

Children have been injured when wearing sandals, jellies, or flip flops on the playground equipment. We recommend that parents keep their child's safety in mind when putting on their shoes each morning.

At school, aprons or paint shirts are provided for painting, water play, and similar activities; however, these do not always prevent accidental stains on clothing.

Outdoor time will be provided for all children, so please dress your child according to the weather.

### **Nutrition:**

Nutritious meals are provided throughout the day at Arbor Learning Center. We serve breakfast, lunch, and snacks. These meals and snacks are closely monitored by the Child Nutrition Program guidelines. Unless your child has special dietary needs or is in the infant room, we ask that parents do not send food to school with their child.

Weekly menus will be available for all parents and will be posted on classroom parent boards and in the front lobby.

### **Allergies/Special Diets:**

Parents should provide specific information concerning allergies and/or special diets. If a special diet is needed a doctor's note with the recommended diet will be requested. Administration, kitchen staff, and parents will discuss dietary needs and implement a plan.

### **Birthdays:**

Your child's birthday is a special day! Parents who wish to celebrate their child's birthday at school are welcome to provide a special snack for the children in their child's classroom. Parents should notify the teacher in charge at least one week in advance if they are providing a special treat. To ensure the safety of all children, we ask that you honor our "no latex balloon" policy. All treats must be bakery or store purchased and packaged. Treats also need to be age appropriate. Party invitations may not be distributed at school unless all children in your child's classroom are invited. Selective invitations should be delivered outside school hours.

### **Discipline Policy:**

It is the policy of Arbor Learning Center to use a positive means of managing children's behavior. We recognize that as a child care provider, we share with the parent the responsibility for the development of self-discipline and self-control in the child. Specific behavior techniques which will be utilized are reinforcement of good behavior, modeling good behavior, redirection of activities, removal from environment, talking through the problem to aid the child in identifying and expressing their feelings and frustrations appropriately, and, as a last resort, the use of thinking time.

Our program has been structured to encourage acceptable behavior. Discipline will be consistent and individualized for each child, as well as appropriate to the child's level of understanding. The method of discipline will not be humiliating, frightening or physically harmful to any child. It will not be associated with food, rest, toilet training or isolation. A child will not be labeled as "bad" or "naughty."

Parents will be notified of any problematic behavior exhibited by their child who has not responded to positive behavior techniques. Their assistance will be requested in establishing an appropriate behavior modification program. However, should efforts be unsuccessful and the child's behavior is of such a severe nature as to represent a threat to the safety of others and/or a substantial disruption to the program, the child may be removed from the program.

Physical punishment is not allowed on the premises, by staff or others.

**Child Maltreatment Reporting:**

All persons working in a child care facility are required by law to report any suspected maltreatments of a child. All reports are kept confidential. Children may be interviewed by Child Care Licensing, Special Investigations, and law enforcement personnel in the event that any maltreatment is suspected. This would be done with discretion and with the child's best interest in mind.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:**

It is the policy of Arbor Learning Center to provide an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination of any type, including discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

**Field Trips:**

We enjoy giving children the opportunity to learn about the community by providing exciting recreational and educational field trips. Field trips are only for children four years of age and older. You will be notified in advance of all scheduled trips. Responsible adult supervision is provided for these excursions. Your permission for your child to participate is part of your Enrollment Record, but you must authorize each trip in order to have your child participate. There may be occasions when an additional fee or lunch from home is required. Tennis shoes are recommended for all field trips.

**Extracurricular Activities:**

Our enrichment programs can add even more to your child's overall development. These may include movement, music, and art lessons. Other services may include speech, hearing, and vision screening. Please contact your Director if you are interested in any of these activities. Additional fees may be required.

**Lost and Found:**

If your child is missing anything, please inquire at the school as soon as possible. It is much easier to return a lost item if it is labeled with the owner's name. Remember to label everything. Unclaimed items are given to charity after a reasonable amount of time.

**Emergency Contact:**

Please provide Arbor Learning Center with at least two other persons who are authorized to give Arbor Learning Center guidance in the case of a medical emergency if the child's parents are unavailable. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the Director of any changes in address, telephone numbers, emergency contacts, persons allowed to pick up your child, and any changes of transportation needs. You will also be required to provide a secret password to keep on file in case someone else must pick up your child.

## **Arbor Learning Center**

### **Parental Agreement of Parent Handbook and Enrollment Policies**

I have received a copy and agree to abide by the Arbor Learning Center Procedures and Handbook Policies.

I have read and understand Arbor Learning Center Financial Enrollment Agreement.

Section 65C-22.006(2), F.A.C., requires a current physical examination (Form 3040) and immunization record (Form 680 or 681) within 30 days of enrollment.

Section 402.3125(5), F.S., requires that parents receive a copy of the Child Care Facility Brochure, "KNOW YOUR CHILD CARE CENTER".

Section 65C-22.006(4)(c) 2, F.A.C., requires that parents are notified in writing of the disciplinary practices used by the child care facility.

By signing below, you verify that you have received the above items and that all information on your enrollment form is complete and accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date