



"Where children have a unique fingerprint as a catalyst for change"

2026–2027

PARENT HANDBOOK

SERVING THE TREASURE COAST WITH JOY

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Welcome to Kids in the City Academy

Welcome to **Kids In The City Academy (KITCA)**, where learning is fun! Our goal is to provide the most nurturing, loving Christian preschool education program to the children and their families in the Fort Pierce community. We strive to help your child learn how to think creatively for him or herself, to facilitate intellectual exploration, and to promote physical, social and emotional development. We are proud of our engaging curriculum, learning tools, and teaching aids that will enhance your child's experience at Kids In The City Academy. Please feel free to ask for clarification on any aspect of your child's educational experience. We are happy to talk with you at your convenience.

Kids In the City Academy enrolls children from 6 weeks through 5 years of age. All administrators and teachers have been carefully selected for their experience and expertise in caring for, working with, and teaching young children. Staff members undergo a rigorous background screening and have participated in their required training. Many staff members hold their associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood education, and /or hold the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) or the Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) Certificate. Our curriculum is carefully designed and implemented to be certain that all activities are age appropriate and help each child reach their developmental milestones. Our staff is dedicated to nurturing the physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social emotional development of each child. We have gathered the very best research, highly trained teachers, and combined a Christ-centered approach with the trends in education that are proven to be successful in Early Childhood Development.

Handbook Disclaimer & Reservation of Rights

This Family Handbook is not intended to provide general information regarding school policies, procedures, expectations and operations. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of rules, regulations, or operational guidelines of KITCA. Kids in the City Academy reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to interpret, modify, amend, suspend or discontinue any policy, procedure, tuition rate, schedule, program, curriculum operational practice, or regulation described in this handbook at any time, with or without prior notice, as deemed necessary for operational, educational, safety, legal, licensing, accreditation, or regulatory compliance purposes. KITCA further reserves the right to establish additional policies or procedures not specifically outlined in this handbook as circumstances may require.

Nothing in this handbook shall be construed as creating a contractual obligation between KITCA and any parent, guardian, or student, nor does it limit the authority of KITCA to making decisions in the best interest of the school community. Continued enrollment at Kids in the City Academy constitutes acknowledgement and acceptance of all current and future policies and revisions.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

Kids In The City Academy does not discriminate against anyone, adult or child, staff or parent/guardian, based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, or veteran status. Kids In The City Academy is committed to its non-discrimination practices in the acceptance and treatment of students, as well as the participants of its students in educational and social programs and services provided to parents/guardians. Accommodations are made for children with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Diversity Policy:

At Kids In The City Academy we believe each child is unique and we strive to nurture children and support them in all that we do. We recognize that our students come from a variety of homes with different cultures, religions, family structures and lifestyles. Our goal is to provide structure and routine for our students, while recognizing that home plays an important role in our students' emotional well-being and development.

Smoke and E-Cigarette Free Environment

KITCA maintains a smoke-free and e-cigarette free environment in compliance with local, state, and federal laws. We ask that you do not smoke or use e-cigarettes in the center or on KITCA property.

Student Confidentiality

Information pertaining to a child and his/her family is kept confidential. Occasionally records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies for information that may be pertinent to a child's wellbeing or requested by legal subpoena. Student files are otherwise confidential and monitored only by administrative staff. If your child is involved in an incident involving another child, KITCA will not reveal the other child's identity without prior written consent from the other child's parent/guardian except when prohibited or required by law. Federal law prohibits KITCA from testing children involved in biting incidents for bloodborne pathogens.

Technology-Free Environment

To promote a safe, focused and engaging learning environment, children are not permitted to bring personal electronic devices to school. If a teacher finds a student with a cell phone, it will be confiscated, and the parent must pick it up from the office. Electronic devices, including cell phones, tablets, apple watches, ear buds, etc. are not permitted on the school campus. KITCA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices that are brought to school in violation of this policy.

Children with Special Needs

KITCA welcomes children with special needs and will make reasonable accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. When appropriate, KITCA staff will collaborate with the child's physician, therapist, and other qualified professionals to support the child, or make referrals to community resources or a more appropriate therapeutic setting. Parents and guardians are encouraged to provide complete and accurate information regarding their child's medical, developmental, behavioral and educational needs at the time of enrollment and to promptly notify KITCA of any changes. This will better equip staff to be able to develop appropriate supports and partner with families to promote each child's success.

Table of Contents

Our Mission	7
Our Philosophy	7
Our Spiritual Philosophy	7
Our Statement of Faith	8
Our Program	8
VPK Scholars	8
Three-Year-Olds: Adventurers	8
Two-Year-Olds: Explorers	9
Toddlers: Little Lambs	9
Infant Program: Little Angels	9
Enrollment & Immunization	9
Registration and Enrollment	9
Tuition, Fees, and Payment Policies	10
<i>Registration Fee</i>	10
<i>Tuition</i>	10
<i>Tuition Billing and Due Dates</i>	10
<i>Payment Methods</i>	10
<i>Returned Checks</i>	11
<i>Late Pick-Up Fee</i>	11
<i>Diapers & Wipes</i>	11
<i>VPK Optional Fees</i>	11
<i>Agency Reimbursement</i>	11
<i>Withdrawal Policy</i>	11
<i>School Closures</i>	12
Additional Items for Registration	12
Health Procedures	13
Illnesses	13
Medications	14
Changes to Contact Information	14
Communication	14-15
Hours of Operation	15
Holidays and Celebrations	15
Holiday Closings	16
Discipline Policy	16
Expulsion, Suspension, Dismissal Policy	17
Biting Policy	18
Incidents/Accidents	18

Open Door Policy	19
Child Abuse	19
Attendance Policy	19
Attendance for VPK	20-21
Arrivals	21
Departures	21
Sign In/ Sign Out Procedures	21-22
Late Pick-Up of Students	22
Student Placement	22
Schedule Changes	22
Parent Survey	23
Custody Disputes - Family Policy Statement	23
Daily Schedule	23
Meals/ Snacks	24
Personal Items	24-25
Lost and Found	25
Cubby Space and Change of Clothes	25
Nap Time/ Rest Time	25
Diapers	26
Potty-Training	27
Birthday Parties	27
Developmental Assessments	27
Early Intervention	27
Progress Reports	28
VPK Students	28
Kindergarten Readiness	28
Parent-Teacher Conferences	28
Enrichment Programs	29
Extra-Curricular Activities	29
School Aged Children	29
Summer Camp Fees	29
Summer Adventure Camp	29
Summer Adventure Camp – VPK & School Age	30
Employment of KITCA Staff by Parents/Guardians	30
Parent Involvement / Volunteer	30-31
Safety & Appropriate Attire	31

Shoes	31
Clothing & Hair Accessories	31
Appropriate Conduct for Parents and Guardians	32
Emergency Procedures	32
Hurricanes and other Weather-Related Incidents	33
Parent FAQ	33
Child Resources and Referral Agencies	34
Thank You	35
Acknowledgement and Acceptance	36

Our Mission

Our mission is to educate, nurture, and develop children in a safe, Christ-centered environment, empowering them to grow in faith, character, and leadership as future agents of change.

We believe that:

- Each child is a unique creation and a gift from God.
- Children learn best about the world through direct exploration and hands-on discovery.
- Family is a child's first and most influential teacher.

Everything we do is intended to:

- Nurture children
- Support families

We will use **B.E.S.T.** practices in all areas of our program.

- **B**elieving in one another
- **E**ncouraging one another
- **S**haring with one another
- **T**rusting one another.
- This applies to every relationship we encounter whether it's teacher to teacher, teacher to child, teacher to parent and/or child to child.

Our Philosophy

Kids in the City Academy has made a commitment to provide a high quality education for our preschool children. We recognize that each child is an individual with his or her own unique qualities and special needs. We respect each child's right to progress at his/her own pace. Our curriculum is designed to provide developmentally appropriate tasks to stimulate and encourage your child's intellectual, social, spiritual, and physical growth in a creative and fun environment.

Special attention is given to process and understand as children actively explore, discover, and develop thinking skills and autonomy. Our qualified and caring staff facilitates this challenging educational environment through gentle encouragement and positive reinforcement.

Our Spiritual Philosophy

We include God, prayer, and all other expressions of faith in our preschool life. We believe that these things are an important part of a child's development. Emphasis is placed on the common values taught by all faiths as well as basic virtues such as honesty, purity, kindness, and truth. We encourage parents to view this as an opportunity to share the deeper meaning of their personal faith and traditions with their children.

Our Statement of Faith

- We believe in the Bible, the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.
- We believe in one God, externally existent in three persons: the Father, Son & Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, his virgin birth, sinless life, atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension, and his return in glory and power.
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit which enables us to live a Godly life and perform good works.
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Program

At Kids In The City Academy, we recognize the need for a variety of stimulating and engaging learning activities with a focus on the development of early childhood minds. Our curriculum is a comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines to help each child meet the age-appropriate developmental milestones. Kids In The City Academy introduces your child to several curricula that align with the National Standards of Education in addition to our proprietary materials throughout your child's preschool experience.

- **Our Curriculum** provides accepted and respected teaching strategies according to leading early childhood educators.

The key components of our research-based curriculum include:

- Activities developed around early brain development research.
- Well-rounded scope of activities that address all developmental domains.
- Intentional instruction that optimizes key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Social and emotional emphasis.
- We also provide **biblical worldview experiences** in literature, music, art, sciences, math, health, and physical education. Also, your child will have an opportunity to gain in language skills, expand their core of knowledge to grow in curiosity, problem solving, creativity, improve coordination, balance, speed, grace, vigor, and strength.

VPK Scholars

This program offers learning experiences and materials that integrate instruction across developmental domains. The curriculum is organized around nine themes that include daily lesson plans for whole-group activities, small-group activities, and learning centers. It also incorporates language and literacy, math, science, social studies, creative arts, and social emotional development into each unit. Kids In The City Academy is proud to offer the Florida Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program (VPK).

Three-Year-Olds: Adventurers

This program provides intentional instruction in key areas of development so children ages 36-48 months can effectively continue the path to kindergarten readiness. The cognitive, physical, and social skills of most rapidly developing three-year-olds are significantly different

from other ages, according to early childhood brain research. By teaching to the specific developmental stages of our three-year-olds, we can optimize their learning experiences.

Two-Year-Olds: Explorers

This program is designed around the latest scientific early brain development research. It focuses on enhancing the simple joy of childhood while equipping caregivers to nurture curiosity through exploration. Our program for our two-year-olds includes activity choices specifically created for our little explorers.

Toddlers: Little Lambs

This program offers love and care for your toddler with the following:

- Activity choices organized around five developmental domains.
- Differentiated instruction options to meet the needs of all learners.
- Easy infusion into daily routines, such as diaper changing, transitions and outdoor play.
- Designed with intention and purpose to move children forward in their development.

Infant Program: Little Angels

Our Infant curriculum is designed to build strong foundations for little ones aged 6 weeks through 12 months.

This child-centered program includes activities that:

- Equip caregivers to nurture the little ones in their care.
- Optimize key windows of opportunity for growth and development.
- Are designed with intention and purpose and organized around developmental learning domains.

Registration and Enrollment Requirements

Before a child attends Kids In The City Academy, there are requirements and forms that must be completed and signed by the parents or guardians prior to enrollment.

The requirements are as follows:

- Children must be at least 6 weeks of age.
- Prior to the start date all physicals and Immunizations under Chapter 77-620 Special Acts Laws of Florida require that all children have the following on file the day that they begin school: a completed physical using Form DH680 and a current immunization record using Form DH3040, and a birth certificate.
- An original, validated Immunization Record, DH680, signed by a licensed Florida physician.
- All registration materials in the KITCA enrollment packet must be completed prior to your start date.
- A registration fee and/or tuition deposit must be received to complete enrollment.
- All required ELC documentation must be submitted in order to qualify for ELC reimbursable rates, which help reduce your family's tuition costs.
- If a child's immunization form is expired, the parent must notify KITCA of the upcoming appointment and provide documentation of said scheduled appointment.

Note: Failure to provide a current physical and immunization record will result in your child being unable to attend school until records are current. Please note that Kids In The City Academy does accept children with medical and religious exemptions for immunizations therefore some children may not be fully immunized.

The required forms include the following:

1. **Application for Enrollment** – This form contains personal information such as the child's and parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, medical information, and authorization for emergency care in the event that a parent cannot be reached. It contains several important acknowledgments of receipt of certain other documents. *It also includes our **Tuition and Enrollment Agreement**, which clearly defines the financial responsibilities, payment terms and conditions of enrollment.* Every form that requires a signature must be signed and turned in prior to the child's first day of attendance. Please inform the Director in writing of any changes to the information on the registration form, email or via Brightwheel.
2. **Parent-School Enrollment Contract** – This form outlines parent responsibilities regarding early intervention, sign in/sign out procedures, illnesses, and attendance policy and photo release. In addition, the forms listed below **must** be completed and turned in to complete the enrollment process.
3. **Emergency/Authorization Contacts**
4. **Expulsion, Suspension, Dismissal Policy** - A policy required by Florida Administrative Code.
5. **Brightwheel App** – A parent-school communication tool used through technology and unique assigned PINs for pick up and drop off
6. **Child Care Food Program Application Form** – specifies which meals will typically be served while in care (breakfast, lunch and snack)
7. **Help Me Grow Form** – (optional form), organization connects families with community programs
8. **VPK form (if applicable)** – VPK attendance & Tardy Policy

Tuition, Fees, and Payment Policies

Registration Fee

Our program requires a \$75 non-refundable, non-transferable annual registration fee is required for each child upon enrollment and each school year thereafter to secure your child's placement at Kids in the City Academy (KITCA).

Tuition

Tuition is based on the total annual cost of the educational program and is divided into convenient weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or annual payment options. Regardless of the payment frequency selected, tuition is charged to reserve your child's enrollment and is due whether or not your child attends.

Tuition is still required in the event of:

- Illness
- Family vacations

- Personal absences
- Scheduled school holidays and closures
- Emergency or weather-related closures

No tuition credits, refunds, or make-up days will be provided for absences or school closures.

Tuition Billing and Due Dates

- Invoices for tuition and any additional fees will be issued on Fridays for the upcoming week.
- Payment is due no later than Monday at 5:00 p.m. of the current week.
- If payment is not received by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, a \$25 late fee per student will be added to your account.
- Students with unpaid tuition or outstanding fees after the payment deadline will not be admitted to the Academy until the account is paid in full.
- KITCA reserves the right to refuse attendance for any child whose account is delinquent.

Payment Methods

KITCA accepts the following forms of payment:

- Zelle
- Brightwheel Billing (credit/debit card)
- Check
- Cash can only be given to the Director
- Money Order
- Cashier's Check

KITCA reserves the right to require payment by cash, money order, or cashier's check for accounts with repeated late payments or returned checks.

Returned Checks

A \$50 fee will be assessed for each returned check, consisting of:

- \$25 Returned Check Fee
- \$25 Late Payment Fee

After two returned checks, all future payments must be made by money order, cashier's check, or another payment method approved by KITCA.

Late Pick-Up Fee

KITCA closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Parents or authorized pick-up persons arriving after 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$5.00 per minute beginning at 6:01 p.m. Late pick-up fees are due immediately upon pick-up and may result in additional disciplinary action for repeated violations.

Diapers & Wipes

See Diapers (below) for our \$3.00-per-diaper fee when supplies run out.

VPK Optional Fees

Although VPK tuition is funded through the State of Florida, optional fees may be charged throughout the school year for activities that are not included in the VPK program, including but not limited to:

- Special guests and educational presentations
- Special events and celebrations
- Field trips
- Graduation cap and gown
- VPK graduation ceremony and related expenses

Optional activity fees are non-refundable, including when a child is absent from the activity.

Agency Reimbursement

If you lose your Early Learning Coalition funding during any month your child is enrolled, you are then responsible to pay the private tuition rate for the remaining portion of your obligated month. All payments will be applied to your account first as an additional tuition fee as a parent fee owed. No "0" balance letters will be issued until all parent fees are paid in full. If the child exceeds the (3) excused absent days in a month or if the child does have an appropriate note for the next 7 allowable absent days in a month, the parent or guardian will be responsible to pay KITCA a \$40 per day fee for each day exceeding either the 3 absences or the additional 7 excused absences with an appropriate note allowed by the Early Learning Coalition.

Withdrawal Policy

We require that parents provide the Director of Kids in the City Academy with a minimum of two weeks' written notice prior to withdrawing your child(ren). This advance notice allows us to offer the open spot to families on our waiting list and ensures a smooth transition for everyone involved. If proper notice is not given, your account will be charged one full week of tuition, even if your child does not attend during that time. All accounts must be paid in full prior to the release of any documents from the student's file.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain quality care and accommodate all families in need of our services. We would also appreciate conducting an exit interview should you wish to participate.

For families receiving assistance through the Early Learning Coalition (ELC):

- Parents remain responsible for all required parent co-payments and any charges not covered by ELC.
- Any outstanding balance must be paid in full upon withdrawal.

Accounts with unpaid balances may be referred to a collection agency. Should legal action become necessary to recover unpaid tuition or fees, the parent/guardian agrees to be responsible for all reasonable collection costs, court costs, attorney's fees, and other legal expenses incurred by KITCA, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

Additional Items for Registration

Here at KITCA, we offer a fun and Christ-filled education that requires certain supplies from the parents in order to have a fulfilling experience to share with your child. We do require a list of age-appropriate supplies so that each child has the necessary tools for learning and personal use throughout the year. This allows our teachers to focus more on instruction rather than resource shortages.

Health Procedures

Illnesses

For the health and well-being of all our students, when a student becomes ill the child will be isolated in the school office and the school will reach out to the parent or guardian. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to pick up their child within 45 minutes of verified contact. In the event that a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts will be called in the order that they are listed on the *Emergency/Authorization Contact Form*. Upon recommendation of DCF, a child should not be brought to school if any of the following symptoms exists:

- Has a fever of 100 degrees F or higher (or has had one during the previous 24 hours)
- Is in the first 24 hours of antibiotic treatment
- Has vomiting or diarrhea
- Has a cloudy or green runny nose, persistent cough
- Has Head Lice, Ring Worms, Impetigo, or unexplained rash.
- Has any symptoms of childhood diseases, such as Scarlet Fever, Measles, Chicken Pox, Flu, or Strep Throat or any infections and/or contagious disease(s).
- Has two (2) consecutive loose bowel movements during a day.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Ear Infection(s)

Please do not bring your child to school if he/she exhibits any of the above symptoms.

Children can return when they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without the aid of medication. According to DCF Illness Policy 65C-22.004: Any child, childcare personnel, or other person in the childcare facility suspected of having a communicable disease shall be removed from the facility or placed in an isolation area until removed. Such a person may not return to school without a note from their doctor that states the individual is no longer contagious and is able to return to school. Parents should report any of the above conditions to the school immediately. Kids In The City Academy staff will always work together with parents to ensure our students are safe from illness.

When to Keep Your Child Home

If your child shows signs of illness or is not well enough to participate in group activities, please keep them at home. Our facility does not have provisions for caring for sick children. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be called and must make arrangements to

pick them up within one hour. If your child or someone in your household is exposed to a communicable disease or infectious illness, please notify the school immediately. This helps us watch for symptoms and alert other parents when needed.

Returning to School After Illness

If your child has had a fever over 99.6 degrees F or any contagious symptoms, they may return to school only after being fever free and symptom free for a full 24 hours, without the use of medication. In some cases, a doctor's note may be required for your child to return. However, the school reserves the right to override a physician's note if there are still signs of illness or risk of spreading infection.

Medications

The Florida Department of Children and Families prohibit any childcare facility from administering medication to children except under the following conditions:

- The medication must have a prescription label which contains the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, date of prescription and proper dosage and be accompanied by a Physician's Authorization Form. This form can be emailed to us by the doctor's office.
- All prescription medications must be brought to the front office where a "Medication Permission Slip" should be completed and signed by the parent before the medication is administered. For medications continuing longer than one week, a new permission slip must be completed for each week. When leaving medications in the office, please ensure that they are placed in a labeled plastic bag with easy-to-read medication dispensing instructions.
- Any medications left at the school for two weeks past the date listed for administration will be discarded. Medications are kept in a secure location at the school.
- Non-prescription medication such as Motrin, Tylenol, bug spray, sunscreen, and diaper cream can only be dispensed with written authorization from the parent or legal guardian.
- We may not keep fever reducing medications for "as needed" unless indicated by conditions such as allergies or febrile seizures.

Changes to Contact Information

Please notify the office in writing of any changes in your contact information, via Brightwheel or written notice, such as your address or phone number, as soon as possible. We must keep our records current in case of an emergency.

Communication

Kids In The City Academy uses a parent communication tool called Brightwheel. It is our goal at Kids In The City Academy to keep parents involved with the school's activities and your child's progress and daily experiences.

From the Brightwheel app, teachers can send photos and videos to allow you to see a glimpse into your child's day! We feel confident that you will love Brightwheel and the level of involvement it allows you to have with your child's daily experiences while at our school. Once enrolled at Kids In The City Academy, you will receive a welcome letter from Brightwheel. Once you receive the link you will be able to set up a username and password which will allow your ability to view all communication from your child's teacher.

All parent/staff communications shall be conducted on school property. Parents are specifically requested not to contact staff members at their respective homes as this is an invasion of their privacy. The Director is available during office hours should you have any questions or concerns.

Hours of Operation

Our facility is open year-round, Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. VPK hours are from 9am to 12pm Monday through Friday (wrap-around care is available for an additional fee). Our infant program operates from 7:30am to 5:30pm. Please ensure that your child(ren) is picked up no later than 6pm. A late fee of \$5 per minute per child will be charged for any pickups after 6pm. This fee is due at drop off the following business day. See Arrivals below for drop-off details and our 9:00 a.m. arrival guideline.

Holidays and Celebrations

Kids In The City Academy celebrates the following holidays with either tasty treats, art projects, and/or fun activities.

- Thanksgiving Holiday
- Christmas Holiday
- Valentine's Day
- St. Patrick's
- Spring /Easter
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Fourth of July

Other holidays and/or special days that may be celebrated include:

- New Year's Day
- Snow Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- 100 Day of School Celebration
- Cinco de Mayo
- Earth Day
- Dr. Seuss' Birthday

When possible, we welcome parents to share with our students any special traditions or customs they might practice. In addition, we make it a point to be inclusive when learning about different ways of life.

Holiday Closings

The campus will be closed for major holidays, including but not limited to the following:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- (2) days for Christmas Holiday
- (2) days for New Year's Holiday
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day

Please review our school year calendar for a complete list of holidays and dates when Kids In The City Academy is closed as well as which days there are no classes for our VPK ONLY students.

Discipline Policy

Kids In The City Academy is committed to providing a safe and positive learning environment for all children through the Conscious Discipline approach of classroom management. The school's behavior policy encourages students to develop social skills that reflect many of Kids In The City Academy's values including developing social skills such as self-control, respect for others and a positive self-esteem. Our teachers make sure to model appropriate behavior and guide positive interactions among not only the children, but adults as well. We strive each day to provide a nurturing and secure environment that is conducive for each child to learn.

Our discipline procedures will consist of the following strategies:

- Encouraging children to use words to resolve a disagreement with another child
- Redirecting behavior when this seems potentially effective
- Making parents aware of behavioral concerns

Disruptive behavior distracts from the full benefit of the preschool program and will need to be addressed cooperatively, both at home and at school, for greater effectiveness. The following behaviors are considered to be disruptive:

- Requires constant, one-on-one staff attention
- Inflicts physical or emotional harm to other children, adults, or self
- Consistently disrespects people and materials
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom

If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a reoccurring basis, parents will be asked to meet for a conference with the child's teacher and director to coordinate a plan to help the child control their behavior. If the child's disruptive behavior continues despite our efforts to work with the child's parents, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home for some time to be determined, or at the discretion of Kids In The City Academy, removed from the preschool program altogether.

Expulsion, Suspension, Dismissal Policy

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short-term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from Kids in the City Academy.

Immediate Causes for Expulsion

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms, including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse to staff.

Child's Actions for Expulsion

- Failure of child to adjust in a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

Prior to expulsion, suspension, or dismissal, a parent will be called and correspondence will be sent home indicating what the problem is, and every effort will be made by both Kids in the City Academy and the parent working together to correct the problem. If after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to seek alternate placement in another preschool setting. The parent will be given a minimum of one week's notice to find another center that will be able to provide care for this child.

Biting Policy

Biting is a natural behavior for young children and sometimes a behavior that is often difficult to control. There are many reasons why children may bite: teething, verbal frustration, and lack of social skills. While we strive to prevent and eliminate this behavior, it

does occasionally occur. It is our policy to address any biting incident on an individual basis. Every effort will be made to work with both the parents and the child to resolve the biting problem.

It is the policy of Kids In The City Academy and it is recommended by the Department of Children and Families that the name of the child who has bitten not to be revealed. In the event of repeating biting incidents, the child's parents may be asked to remove their child from the school for the remainder of the day or longer. If the biting occurs despite redirection and behavior modification techniques, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from Kids In The City Academy.

Incidents / Accidents

Despite all precautions taken at our school, occasional accidents do occur. If a child receives a minor injury, such as a scraped knee, stubbed toe, bumped elbow, etc., the parent will receive an *Accident/Incident Report* at the end of the day. If any child receives a bump on the head of any kind, the parent will be notified by phone and given the details of the injury. Please note that we make every effort to report all injuries. Per DCF: All *Accident/Incident Forms* must be signed the day of the incident, by the parent or designated pick-up person as well as by the Director. A copy of all *Accident/Incident Reports* will remain on file in the school office.

In the case of a medical emergency, 911 will be called so that the necessary emergency medical measures can be taken. A parent will be notified immediately, and appropriate actions taken to ensure that the child receives professional medical treatment as soon as possible. Emergency Authorization must be completed on your child's enrollment so if serious injury occurs, medical treatment can be given.

Blood-borne Pathogens

All teachers are trained in using universal precautions to protect themselves and children from blood-borne pathogens. Latex gloves are kept throughout the school to be used when encountering children's body fluids.

We require all teachers to be certified in Infant & Child CPR & First Aid which always provides a trained individual on site. We are required to advise you, however, that we are limited by law in the extent of treatment that may be administered.

Open Door Policy

Kids In The City Academy has an open-door policy for the families of children enrolled in our programs, however certain situations may arise that would limit visitors to our campus. We ask that you wait until your child acclimates to their daily routines before you volunteer or visit. Please notify the office in advance of your visit and check in at the office prior to going to the classroom.

Child Abuse

Chapter 415 of the Florida Statutes protects children from abuse and/or neglect. Florida Law legally obligates professionals working with children to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. It is our policy at Kids In The City Academy to follow up on every incident which is in any way suspicious in nature for the safety and well-being of the child.

All staff and administrators at KITCA are designated as mandatory reporters in accordance with the laws of the state of Florida and the Department of Families and Children (DCF). This means that if there is any suspicion or concern of possible abuse or neglect, we are legally required to report it to DCF for further investigation, even if the evidence is unclear or uncertain.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is a key factor in student involvement and achievement. Therefore, students in our preschool classrooms are expected to be present and arrive by 9am each day school is in session. Should your child be absent 10 or more days in a school year, Kids In The City Academy will NOT be responsible for your child's achievement relative to the rest of the class. At the beginning of the month, you will be required to sign the Brightwheel attendance form and the Parental Choice Certificate for the prior month.

If your child receives ELC, your child is not permitted to have more than three (3) absences per calendar month per child except in the event of extraordinary circumstances justifying the excessive absence for up to ten (days). Extraordinary circumstances do not include a family vacation, oversleeping and/or because a parent did not feel like bringing their child to school. A parent statement form and/or documentation listed below is necessary for more than 3 absences per calendar month.

Examples of extraordinary circumstances (or excused absences) include the following:

- Hospitalization of the child or parent with appropriate documentation and/or illness requiring home-stay as documented (that is, doctor's note, hospital note)
- Death in the immediate family with appropriate documentation (that is, obituary, death certificate)
- Court ordered visitation with appropriate documentation (that is, court order)
- Unforeseen documented military deployment or exercise of the parent(s) (that is, military orders of deployment, reserve duty)

Attendance for VPK

Kids in the City Academy will be operating a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) school-year program that requires 540 instructional hours. Since our goal is to prepare children for kindergarten success, VPK students who are absent for ten days may be terminated from the Kids in the City Academy VPK program.

All enrolled families received a calendar showing the scheduled days off during the operational period. The calendar is also available online at kidsinthecity.fun. Attendance during the scheduled instructional days is of utmost importance to remain in the VPK

program. Not only is Kids in the City Academy funding linked to attendance, but also the child's success upon entrance into kindergarten. You will be required to sign and comply with the following policy on Attendance and Tardiness to remain in the VPK program.

Tardiness

Arrival for the VPK program is between 8:30am and 9:00 a.m. VPK arrivals should be signed in at the Pre-K Classroom. The earliest time arrivals will be accepted in the classroom is 8:30 a.m. The instructional day starts at 9:00 a.m. and all children are expected to be in place and ready to start the day. Arrivals after 9:00 a.m. are disruptive to the group in progress and difficult for the arriving child as well. We understand that it is occasionally unavoidable to be "running late", but more than twice a month will not be acceptable and will be cause for termination from the VPK program.

Late Pick Up

The VPK program ends at 12:00pm daily (with the exception of occasional extended VPK days that will end at 12:30pm). A late fee of \$5 per minute will be assessed if your child is not picked up by 12:00pm.

Absence

Daily attendance in the VPK program is necessary for optimal learning, however, you will be allowed (3) absences per month. Any absences beyond those require a written note from the parent for one of the following reasons:

- Illness or injury of the child or the child's family member which requires hospitalization or bed rest.
- Physician or dentist appointment.
- Infectious disease or parasitic infestation.
- Funeral service, memorial service, or bereavement upon the death of the child's family member.
- Compliance with a court order (e.g. visitation, subpoena).
- Special education or related services for the child's disability.
- Observance of a religious holiday or service.
- Family vacation, not to exceed 5 excused absences per program year.

Please note

Absences of 5 consecutive instructional days will be considered a withdrawal from the VPK program. Withdrawals from the VPK program will not be eligible for re-enrollment. KITCA will allow one documented 5-day absence during the 180 day instructional period. Documentation must be submitted in advance, explaining the reason for the 5-day absence, and be dated and signed by the child's legal custodial adult.

Verifying your child's attendance and absences

Kids in the City Academy office staff will ask you to stop by the office at the end of each month. You will be given a form to review and confirm your child's recorded attendance for the month. Your signature on this form will not only verify the attendance, but also will direct the Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County to direct payment for the month's VPK

program for your child to Kids in the City Academy, and that you continue to choose Kids in the City Academy to provide your child's VPK program for the upcoming month.

Arrivals

Parents/guardians are to drop their children off to a staff member at the center's designated drop-off location. The center opens at 6:30 a.m. each morning. Children must arrive no later than 9:00am so they may fully participate in the morning activities. We will not accept children who are dropped off after 9am. If your child has difficulty with separation, please ask for assistance. If you are late but have received approval to still bring your child to the facility, we ask that you wait outside the front office with your child until someone is available to walk him / her back to class to avoid disrupting the class when in session.

Departures

Children will be released only to authorized persons listed on the child's registration form who are at least eighteen years of age. Should the need arise for a different person to pick up your child, please let the front office know as soon as possible. You may inform us in writing or by calling the office and giving us the name of the person who will be picking up your child. That person will be asked to come to the office and show a valid picture ID.

Sign In / Sign Out Procedures

Each child **MUST** be signed in each morning and signed out when picked up. The person signing in/out **MUST** be a responsible adult. When signing in/out full signatures and an accurate time must be used and/or assigned personal Brightwheel PIN; PINs should not be shared.

Children will only be released to the person(s) whose name(s) appears on the *Emergency/Authorization Contact Form*. If you send someone else to get your child and their name does not appear on the *Emergency/Authorization Contact Form*, we will NOT release your child to that person. Please be sure that your pick- up list is updated and accurate. For your child's safety, we will request a photo ID if we do not recognize the person picking up your child.

The individual picking up must be 18 years of age or older (as required by DCF) and have an assigned PIN in Brightwheel.

Under no circumstances will we release a child to an adult who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We will request another adult be sent to pick up your child. If the intoxicated individual refuses to leave the premises, we will notify the police immediately.

Late Pick Up of Students

Classes end promptly at the designated dismissal time, according to the school's clock. Therefore, any parent that arrives after 6pm will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per minute. This fee is payable directly to the school director or supervisor on duty. Consistent tardiness will cause your child to be terminated from our program.

Student Placement

Classroom placement of children will usually be by birth date and potty habits. In most cases, children will remain in their starting classroom throughout the year. Exception: some children's birth dates may allow for a classroom move at semester break (end of December/January).

Our goal is to provide stability and continuity for your child while helping each child reach their maximum potential. Kids In The City Academy reserves the right to place a child in the classroom appropriate to their age and ability.

Schedule Changes

We understand that due to work schedules and/or other circumstances, you may find it necessary to change your child's attendance schedule. If space is available, we will make every effort to accommodate your needs. When reducing the number of days your child will attend, a two-week written notice is required. In the event of adding additional days, changes will be made based upon availability and at the Director's discretion.

If you have enrolled your child at Kids In The City Academy in a program other than full time, please remember that it is important for you to adhere to that program schedule. Exceptions can be made only if cleared with the Director.

Adjustments in tuition for additional days can be made by the Director on a space available basis only. If a holiday party, special event, or activity is held on a day that your child is not scheduled to attend, you may bring your child to the activity, but must stay with your child. Please ask the Director if you have any questions.

Parent Survey

At Kids In The City Academy we value your input and opinions. That is why from time to time we may ask you to fill out a parent satisfaction survey. The information we gather from this survey helps us to identify areas for growth and/or improvement.

Custody Disputes – Family Policy Statement

Kids In The City Academy provides a safe, nurturing, and supportive Christian environment for its children, staff, and families. To that end, we do not engage in activities that might

endanger the personal safety of our children, families, and staff. Marital disputes and custody battles **cannot** and **will not** involve Kids In The City Academy.

Families involving Kids In The City Academy in marital or custodial disputes will be disenrolled after one warning. Furthermore, grounds for immediate disenrollment include the following:

- Any parent threatening the school or its owners or employees in any way.
- Non - custodial parent attempting unauthorized pick up.
- Non - custodial parent present on Kids In The City Academy property.
- Any parent disrupting school activities or threatening staff, families.

Parents or legal guardians requesting copies of their child's records, including immunization records, physical exams, and related documentation must submit a written request at least two weeks in advance.

Please be advised that biological parents cannot be removed from a child's authorized pickup list without a valid court order signed by a judge. KITCA reserves the right to request a subpoena or other appropriate legal documentation prior to releasing any records.

Daily Schedules

We strive to provide your child with a fun filled day of stimulating activities. We follow a daily schedule and routine regularly, except for special guests or special activities. Since the time frame in which activities take place varies by age group, a daily schedule for each classroom is posted in the room. Please check your child's classroom for the schedule that is to be followed in his or her room. Each preschool class consists of the following periods:

Morning Activities, which may include:

- Greeting Activities / Creative Time
- Breakfast
- Circle Time – Language Development
- Center Exploration
- Creative Arts
- Music
- Math
- Outdoor Play
- Social Studies
- Science Enrichment
- Story Time / Literacy
- Lunch

Afternoon Activities, which may include:

- Nap / Rest Time
- Snack
- Circle Time
- Math

- Creative Arts
- Outdoor Play
- Story Time / Literacy
- Center Exploration

Meals / Snacks

Kids in the City Academy provides your child with breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack each day. If you choose for your child to consume foods not included on the school menu or wish to supplement meals with additional snacks or food, it is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to ensure that the child's nutritional needs are met. Formula is to be used within a 48-hour period. If your child has food allergies, or qualifies for religious exemption, please bring a doctor's note to keep on file. Please note that we are a nut free and popcorn free preschool.

Meal/snack times are as follows:

- Breakfast is served from 8:30am – 9:30am
- Lunch is served between 11am – 12:00am
- Afternoon snack is served between 2:00pm - 2:30pm

KITCA encourages healthy eating habits that support children's growth, learning, and overall well-being. Parents are encouraged to avoid sending sugary snacks, candy, soda, energy drinks, and other highly processed "junk foods." Whenever possible, please provide nutritious foods that promote healthy development and establish lifelong healthy eating habits.

Personal Items

All items brought to school should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. This includes, but is not limited to, bottles, sippy cups, lunch boxes, clothing, bags, diaper bags, blankets, backpacks, and any other personal items. All bottles and sippy cups must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized between each use. Items such as toys, electronics, etc. should not be brought to school as these items may be lost, stolen or become a distraction for the class.

It is the responsibility of the parent to see that nothing dangerous is brought into the center by the child. Kids In The City Academy reserves the right to take away any item that is perceived as potentially harmful to someone in the school. Kids In The City Academy does not assume responsibility for loss or damage of any personal possession brought to school. There are days during the school year when children may bring in a special item for Show and Share or for a special day as determined by each teacher. These items must fit in your child's backpack and be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Lost and Found

All found articles will be placed in our Lost and Found basket, which is kept in the front office. If your child has misplaced an item, please feel free to check our Lost and Found basket. Any items left at the school for over thirty days will be donated to Goodwill or a local charity. The school is not responsible for toys, games, jewelry, trinkets, etc. brought in from home.

Cubby Space & Change of Clothes

Please be sure your child has a change of clothing including socks and underwear in case of an accident or spill. It may be necessary to update these items as your child grows. All soiled clothing will be placed in a Ziploc style bag, labeled with your child's name, and given to you at pick up.

Please be advised that a parent will be contacted immediately should your child need a change of clothing and does not have a spare set in his/her cubby. Please put your child's name on each item of clothing and place the clothing in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name on the outside. All cubby items (including those hanging on hooks beneath the cubbies) should be taken home and laundered every Friday.

Nap Time / Rest Time

Kids In The City Academy provides each child with a nap / rest time. Infants follow their own nap / rest schedule and have a specific supply list to meet their needs.

Please provide the following items for nap/rest time:

- A small blanket (baby blanket)
- A fitted sheet that covers a small cot/mat
- For infants, per DCF regulations, infants are only allowed to have a fitted sheet only and nothing else in the crib (no pillows, no toys, no blanket, etc.)
- If desired, a small comfort item

Please label any personal items with your child's name. We will send home your child's blanket at the end of each week for laundering; please return them the following week. We will clean the mat your child rests on daily.

Diapers

Diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream may be brought in daily, or a supply may be left for ongoing use. Please label all of your child's supplies. Your child's teacher will notify you when the supply is low. Should you forget diapers, a fee of \$3.00 per diaper will be assessed to your tuition cost. If your child has allergies or sensitivities to certain diapers, wipes, or diaper rash creams, please inform your child's teacher and the front office. Parents must provide approved products when needed.

Potty-Training

It is best to start the potty-training process around the time your child displays the ability to recognize that their diaper needs to be changed. At this point, they may be ready to control their bowels and bladder. Beginning the training process too early will simply cause frustration for the child and place unnecessary pressure on them. Training is generally recommended for children between two and three years of age.

We have adopted the following policies and procedures to ensure the safety and health for all those persons present in our two-year-old classroom:

- Children will have a minimum of four regularly scheduled bathroom times during the day (however, children may use the bathroom at any time necessary).
- After two or three consecutive "accidents" during the day, the child may be required to return to wearing a diaper for the remainder of the day.
- Children shall continue to be asked to try to use the bathroom even if they have returned to diapers on any given day.
- Parents will be informed of progress and of the teacher's desire to proceed with potty-training.
- No child will be reprimanded for having had an "accident".

All students entering our 3-year-old program must be potty-trained by the first day of school (usually mid-August). We understand that "accidents" can occur. If a potty "accident" does happen, we will, of course, provide appropriate care for the child. However, "accidents" should not be a common occurrence.

To be considered potty-trained, a child must be able to:

- Recognize when he/she needs to use the bathroom.
- Independently pull pants up and down.
- Independently clean themselves.

Our teachers will assist children in potty-training. The responsibilities of the teachers include asking the child if he or she needs to use the bathroom at regular intervals, assisting the child on scheduled visits to the bathroom, frequent verbal reminders to the child throughout the day and communication with the parents regarding the child's potty-training. Children are supervised when using the bathroom, although we do allow older students a measure of privacy by standing near the restroom while they use it.

It is the parents' responsibility to bring in extra clothing. Soiled clothes will be sent home at the end of the day in a sealed plastic bag. Potty-training at Kids In The City Academy shall be a positive experience for your child, and we will do everything possible to assist you in this endeavor.

Birthday Parties

We ask that parents talk with the child's teacher before bringing in a birthday snack. We can then communicate with the parents of children who have food allergies or food intolerances, so that they can bring a similar snack for their child that is safe to eat.

Birthday snacks should be a healthy and safe choice. In accordance with our food policy, we encourage all families to pick healthy alternatives to traditional large cupcakes. For example, small muffins and fruit with yogurt are favorite birthday snacks.

To create a safe environment for children with food allergies, we ask that you NOT send birthday snacks and/or holiday party snacks containing either peanut butter or nuts. Also, please do not send popcorn, which is considered a choking hazard in groups of children.

Please note that we do not allow balloons as they pose a choking hazard.

Developmental Assessments

If requested by a child's parent, a child may be given the Ages & Stages Questionnaire at an appropriate time during the school year. This Developmental Screening is used as an indication of how the child is developing. If there are concerns regarding a child's development, parents may meet with the Director to discuss any concerns or to determine if further evaluations are needed. Evaluations can be scheduled through the local Early Steps (ES) program, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) or with private certified therapists at our campus.

Children that receive School Readiness funding will have an Ages & Stages Questionnaire within 45 days of enrollment and annually on their birth month as required by the Early Learning Coalition.

The local Early Steps (ES) program provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers from birth to age three and their families. The local Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) provides early intervention services for preschoolers to four years of age and their families. Both organizations provide services for children who are developmentally at risk or are demonstrating developmental delays free of charge.

Early Intervention

Kids In The City Academy is a strong proponent for early intervention for children from birth through five years of age. Children born with any type of developmental delay are at risk of falling behind in their educational potential. The purpose of early intervention is to lessen the effects of disability or delay. Services are designed to identify and meet a child's needs in five developmental areas, including: physical development, cognitive development, communication, social or emotional development, and adaptive development.

The following interventions will be offered for your child:

- Vision Screening & Hearing Screening
- Speech/Language Screening

- Behavior Evaluations

Progress Reports

Preschool assessments are a great way to record a child's progress throughout the year to ensure each child is meeting or exceeding developmental milestones. Preschool assessments in an early childhood classroom is important because it drives the teacher's lesson plans. This is an informative assessment. This assessment provides information for teachers to share with parents periodically throughout the school year. Kids In The City Academy believes in open communication with parents so that we can work together for the best interest of each child.

VPK Students

During the VPK school term, there are three formal evaluations performed during the school year at Kids In The City Academy. One at the beginning of the year, another mid-year and the last at the end of the year. The evaluations cover various skills and concepts in the areas of math skills, phonological awareness, print knowledge, oral language, vocabulary, physical, emotional, social, and academic development. A report of the results will be provided to you. The purpose of these evaluations is to gauge the student's strengths and weaknesses in all areas of development so that we may adequately prepare the child for Kindergarten entry.

Kindergarten Readiness

At Kids In The City Academy we pride ourselves on the readiness of our students to enter and excel in Kindergarten. Our Kindergarten readiness scores are always among the highest in St. Lucie County. To help families with the transition to Kindergarten, we provide information about the local elementary schools as well as a list of Kindergarten round up dates and times.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are always welcome at Kids In The City Academy. We encourage family participation in the classroom and on campus activities. If you would like a conference with your child's teacher or the Director, please contact the school office to schedule a mutually convenient time when your child's teacher will be available to meet with you. Please refrain from trying to "conference" with the teacher when the teacher is with our students.

Enrichment Programs

In addition to the regular curriculum, students may have the opportunity to participate in enrichment programs throughout the school year. Enrichment activities may include Music, Spanish and Bible for children based on age appropriateness. Each of our enrichment activities are included in your yearly tuition and will be offered during the school day.

Extra-Curricular Activities

There may be opportunities for students (potty-trained and age three and up) to participate in extracurricular activities based on family interest. For these activities, the registration payment and monthly fee will be paid directly to the provider of the activity. For more information, please see the school office.

School Age Children

On the days that the St. Lucie County Public School System is closed, we plan special activities for our school age children. Parents who would like their school age child to attend these scheduled school closings will be charged a daily rate for each day they wish to attend. Children in the School Age Program are not provided breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks, at this time. Please call ahead regarding availability.

Summer Camp Fees for VPK & School Age

Prior to the start of Summer Camp at Kids In The City Academy for VPK graduates and school age children, each parent will be requested to complete a Summer Camp Registration Form and return the paperwork with a registration/activity fee to secure placement for your camper. The summer camp registration/activity fee will cover all costs associated with both on campus activities for your camper. You may be responsible to provide breakfast/morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack.

Please note that with the hot Florida sun we ask parents to apply sunscreen to their children in the morning. All campers must bring a water bottle/thermos with your child's name to keep hydrated during the hot summer months.

Summer Adventure Camp

This program is for our toddler, two, three and four year olds. Children participate in weekly theme activities to make their summer fun! Each family will be required to complete an Adventure Camp enrollment form for Kids In The City Academy to plan our camp.

During the summer, our campers participate in a variety of activities and on-site field trips, such as magic shows, water / mud play days, puppet shows and more. There will be a minimum registration/activity fee for summer camp which will cover the many fun-filled activities planned for your child's summer fun.

Employment of KITCA Staff by Parents/Guardians

To maintain a safe, professional and ethical environment for all children here at Kids in the City Academy, parents and guardians may not hire or employ any KITCA staff for babysitting, nanny services, transportation, tutoring, or any other private childcare services while their child is enrolled in our program.

This policy is in place to:

- Protect professional boundaries between families and staff.
- Prevent conflicts of interest or situations that could compromise the staff member's professional responsibilities.
- Ensure fairness and consistency in staff interactions with all enrolled families.
- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of children, families, and staff.
- Reduce potential liability for both KITCA and its employees, as private arrangements are not supervised, endorsed, or covered by the academy's insurance.
- Maintain a safe and impartial learning environment where all families receive equal treatment and staff decisions remain free from outside influence.

Any childcare or services provided outside of KITCA's operating hours and outside of this policy are considered private arrangements and are not affiliated with, authorized by, or the responsibility of Kids in the City Academy.

Parents who have questions regarding this policy are encouraged to speak with the Director.

Parent Involvement / Volunteer

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in our educational programs. We enjoy having parents and family members volunteer at the school. Activities such as picture day, parades and holiday parties are all great ways to be involved with your child's special events and help the school at the same time. There are other volunteer opportunities that may arise throughout the school year. We will request assistance well in advance for these activities.

The following list offers some possible suggestions for parent involvement opportunities:

- Volunteering in the classroom.
- Participating in our Raising Readers Program by visiting a classroom to read to the children.
- Attending meetings / seminars offered through our school.
- Sharing knowledge, interests, or talents with the children.
- Participating in a special art project.
- Assisting with the Scholastic Book Fair.
- Coordinating any fundraising activities.
- Supporting special program activities.

Please communicate frequently with your child's teacher so that you may reinforce classroom learning at home. Always remember to check your child's classroom folder for special notes, art projects, and school events. Also, remember to check your **child's** classroom Parent Board for information relating to your child's curriculum as well as any special activities that may be planned throughout the year.

Safety & Appropriate Attire

Shoes

Please help us to keep your child safe and protected while he/she is at Kids In The City Academy by dressing him/her in sneakers or other soft-soled, close-toed shoes. No flip-flops, sandals, or crocs, without a back strap, or cowboy boots as they can pose a tripping or injury hazard during outdoor or indoor play. Please avoid all jewelry. Only small, pierced earrings are acceptable - no hoops.

Clothing & Hair Accessories

Clothing

Many of our activities involve sand, water, paint and play dough, so children should be dressed in comfortable, washable play clothes that they can enjoy without worry. Please provide at least one or several changes of clothing daily including socks and underwear. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name, preferably on the tag or inside collar. While we do our best to keep track of belongings, the center is not responsible for the loss of unlabeled items.

Hair Accessories

For children under two years old, hair beads and small hair accessories are not allowed as they can present a choking hazard.

Please be sure to notify a staff member when dropping off or picking up your child. Never leave your child in an empty classroom without notifying a staff member. Please notify a staff member, upon arrival, of any rashes, insect bites, etc., your child may have. This might preclude us calling you during the day for clarification.

Appropriate Conduct for Parents and Guardians

Kids in the City Academy (KITCA) is a religious-exempt, Christ-centered educational program. We are committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and loving environment that reflects the character of Jesus Christ. We ask all parents, guardians, family members, and visitors to partner with us by demonstrating courtesy, kindness, and respect while on campus and during all KITCA-sponsored activities.

To help maintain a positive environment, we ask that parents and guardians:

- Speak respectfully to staff, children, and other families.
- Refrain from gossip, slander, or behavior that creates division within the school community.
- Do not use profanity, abusive language, threats, intimidation, or engage in argumentative or disruptive behavior on school property or during school events.
- Do not solicit or advertise personal businesses, products, or services to other families, staff, or visitors without prior written approval from the Executive Director.

- Dress modestly and appropriately while on campus, recognizing that young children are present.
- Follow all school policies and cooperate with staff to ensure a safe and orderly environment.

KITCA reserves the right to address inappropriate conduct that disrupts the educational environment or compromises the safety, well-being, or mission of the Academy. Repeated or serious violations of this policy may result in restricted campus access, dismissal of the child from the program, or other appropriate action, as permitted by law and consistent with KITCA's policies.

Emergency Procedures

At KITCA, our top priority is the safety and wellbeing of our students, families and staff. In the event of emergency evacuations (hurricanes, flooding, poor air quality, or other extraordinary conditions, KITCA will follow the guidance and decisions made by the St Lucie County School Board and directives from ELC. If the St Lucie County Public Schools close due to weather or emergency conditions, our center will also close. However KITCA reserves the right to resume normal operations after the emergency has passed, provided clearance is granted by the appropriate legal and safety authorities.

During times when schools are not in sessions (summer break, spring break, winter break, etc), we will follow the guidelines of local government and emergency management agencies.

We will make every effort to notify families of any closures in advance whenever possible. If a decision must be made outside of normal operating hours, we encourage families to:

- tune in to local news stations
- pay attention to Brightwheel notifications
- call the school at 772-448-4963
- check KITCA's social media platforms
- look out for emails (if you provided us with your email)

If needed, we will evacuate all children to the nearest Emergency Location unless otherwise directed by EOC. Alternative evacuation facilities are posted in the office. Please see the Director for more details.

- **Fire Drills** - All students and staff participate in monthly drills in preparation for the unlikely event of a fire. Students will follow the teacher's direction for evacuating the building according to the escape routes posted in the classroom.
- **Lock Down** – In accordance with the Florida Department of Children and Family Services we will perform at least one lock down drill per year.
- **Other critical events or emergencies** - Critical incidents are events requiring an immediate response by public safety agencies and are managed by the preschool staff only until public safety officials arrive. Examples include fire, hazardous material spills, threats involving weapons, explosions, and a fugitive being pursued near the preschool by law enforcement. For any of these possible incidences during preschool hours:

- Do not drive to the school unless it is safe to do so, and you have been directed by Kids In The City Academy to pick up your child.
- Do not call the school in times of emergency. It is important to keep phone lines open for emergency communications and other calls that need to be made.
- Kids In The City Academy asks that you listen to local TV and radio for updates.

See Tuition, Fees, and Payment Policies above for our tuition policy during closures.

Hurricanes and other Weather-Related Incidents

Kids In The City Academy serves many families throughout our county. Communication is critical during times of a hurricane and/or weather-related incident. Because we serve so many children, we have found it necessary to align ourselves with the public-school closings in St. Lucie County. If St. Lucie County Schools close for inclement weather, hurricanes, etc., Kids In The City Academy will close as well. Please tune in to your local TV and/or radio stations for school closing information.

If it becomes necessary for your child to be picked up, you will be notified by phone. With the increased activity of the Hurricane Season, we are aware that parents will be concerned about getting their child(ren) from school should the need arise. Times such as these create anxieties. To minimize frustrations, please remember to update your emergency pick-up list. Children may only be checked out by the person(s) whose name appears on the *Emergency Authorization Form* student enrollment form. If you send someone else to get your child and their name does not appear on the enrollment form, we will **NOT** release the child to that person. Please think ahead and be certain your emergency pick-up list is complete and accurate at all times.

Please note that we will dismiss students and close the school based on the St. Lucie County School District guidance. Every effort is made to keep our children safe at Kids In The City Academy. We apologize in advance if our closings cause any inconvenience. The school re-openings are at the discretion of Kids In The City Academy and the Florida Department of Children and Family (DCF). Please check Kids In The City Academy's website, Brightwheel, local TV and radio for re-opening dates. Reopening dates are **NOT** dependent on county schools. Full tuition is due as Kids In The City Academy will pay our teachers for disaster days.

Parent FAQ

- If you have a past due balance, you will not be able to drop your child off the following morning. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- If your child is enrolled to attend 5 days and misses a portion of the week, or the entire week due to any reason including sickness or vacation, there is no discount. A full week's tuition is still due.
- Drop off is no later than 9am. Unless you have a doctor's note, drop off is no later than 10:00am.
- Kids in the City Academy closes promptly at 6pm. Any child still in attendance at 6pm, the parent will receive a phone call and a late fee of \$5 per minute per child. If the late

payment is not received by the next business day, you will not be able to drop off your child the following day.

Child Resources and Referral Agencies

Tykes & Teens, Palm City, 772-220-3439

Tykes & Teens helps children and teens overcome a variety of challenges including depression, anxiety, behavioral issues, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

Early Learning Coalition of St Lucie County (ELC SLC), Fort Pierce, 772-595-6424

ELC SLS is committed to providing a collaborative delivery system of equality child development programs and services to ensure our children become competent and productive individuals.

Children's Services Council of St Lucie County (CSC SLC). Fort Pierce, 772-408-1100

CSC SLC's mission is to improve the quality of life for all children in St Lucie County by ensuring that every baby is healthy, by stopping child abuse before it starts, keeping kids off the streets and away from drugs and alcohol as well as keeping kids in school with the tools they need to be successful.

Treasure Coast Early Steps, Port St Lucie, 772-380-9972

Provides guidance, support and intervention services for children and families dealing with special development needs from birth to 3 years of age. Early Steps specializes in developing competence and confidence for families and caregivers to help their child learn and develop. Services include testing and therapy.

Helping People Succeed, Stuart, 772-320-0780

Provides educational home visits to families with 2-month-old infants and follow up developmental monitoring tools from 4 months to 48 months.

FDLRS, Fort Pierce, 772-429-4601

FDLRS Parent Services provides information, training, and support to districts and families, to promote effective parent participation in the education of children who are exceptional and/or have special needs. Parent services include assistance in the development of family-friendly programs, training and support for children with disabilities, and the support of partnerships between schools and parents to support student achievement.

Thank You

Kids In The City Academy would like to thank you for entrusting us with the care and education of your child(ren). We consider it our privilege to work with you in introducing your child to the wonderful world of learning. Each child is encouraged to progress in a nurturing Christian environment designed to foster cognitive, physical, social, spiritual, and emotional growth with a love for Jesus.

Outdoor activities, music, arts and crafts, games and language and literacy will be daily activities in your child's life while growing at Kids In The City Academy. With each new activity, your child is learning how to respectfully interact with others, to cooperate and communicate with greater skill, and to feel good about themselves through increased confidence and self-esteem. Our goal is to create lifelong memories.

Our teachers are excited to guide and stimulate your child's imagination and desire to learn. Our individualized attention and low student to teacher ratio presents an opportunity for a gently structured learning environment conducive to learning and school readiness. Our graduates successfully transition to the kindergarten classroom at our local elementary schools. We are blessed to have this opportunity to impact your child and your family at Kids In The City Academy!

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Acknowledgement & Acceptance

As the parent/legal guardian of my child(ren), I have received a written or electronic copy of the Kids in the City Academy's Parent Handbook, and I have read and agreed to all policies provided. I understand that a violation of any of the policies and expectations is considered misconduct and appropriate corrective action will be initiated. I further understand, should I have any questions or concerns, that I may contact the Kids in the City Academy Director in which my child(ren) attends.

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Staff Initials: _____