

Valley Oaks Learning Center

"Creating World Class Leaders"

Parent/Child Handbook 2015



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Welcome

Welcome to Valley Oaks Learning Center. We hope your entire family will enjoy the center and the friends you will make here. This handbook has been written to describe our program, goals, policies and the myriad of practical details that go into making each school day as happy and successful as possible. Please keep it for a reference, as it should answer many of your concerns.

Statement of Philosophy

Our Philosophy is to provide the perfect balance of learning and play in a nurturing environment. Our goal is to stimulate the child's senses and guide them as they explore their world. We work with the individual learning style of each child to build their confidence and enthusiasm for acquiring knowledge.

Our Mission

Valley Oaks Learning Center's focus is to provide stimulating early care and educational experiences which promote each child's social/emotional, physical and cognitive development. Our goal is to support children's desire to be life-long learners and leaders.

Our Goals

- To provide clean, safe, high quality, and affordable care for our parents and children
- Stay committed to families by providing support and encouragement
- Maintain a cooperative partnership with the surrounding communities
- Offer a full range of extended day activities to include: before and after care for school age children, tutoring, mentoring, holiday, spring & summer camps, Music, Art, and Computer enrichment.

Our Program

Valley Oaks Learning Center offers complete childcare for children 6 weeks to 12 years of age. While our center operates programs that are individualized in their goals and objectives, each program forms its specific aims within the contexts of these principles. The programs of the center arise from a common desire for excellence in meeting the needs of children and their families for nurturing, growth and development, relationships and understanding.

We are Quality Rated! Quality Rated is Georgia's system to determine, improve, and communicate the quality of programs that provide child care. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated assigns one, two or three stars to early education and school-age care programs that meet or exceed the minimum state requirements. By participating in Georgia's voluntary Quality Rated program, programs make a commitment to work continuously to improve the quality of care they provide to children and families.

Quality Rated gives parents and families' greater confidence in their child care choice because independent, credentialed experts in early education have assessed whether programs follow best practices, such as:

- Employing qualified and well-trained teachers
- Providing a safe, healthy and caring environment
- Implementing individualized instruction
- Offering a curriculum that prepares children for kindergarten
- A focus on both active learning and social-emotional development
- Engaging families
- Providing a low teacher-student ratio

Hours of Operation

Valley Oaks Learning Centers hours of operation are from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. {Summer hours subject to change slightly.} We are open Monday through Friday, year round from January to December. The center is closed on most major holidays. During severe weather we will close the center in accordance with the Clayton County Public System. Tune in to WSBTV Channel 2 or Fox5 for a listing of school closings. We request that children arrive by 8:30 a.m., so that they may take full advantage of the learning program.

Posted Notices are posted at the front entrance of the center for your information, and copies will be made at your request:

- **State Rules and Regulations**
- **Current Reports**
- **Communicable Disease Chart**
- **Names and numbers of persons in charge**
- **Monthly Calendar & Newsletter**
- **Weekly Menu**
- **Emergency Plans for Severe Weather and Fire**
- **Statement of All Visitors to Report to the Office upon entering the center**

Valley Oaks Learning Center
Holidays and Closings

Observance of the New Year
Observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
Presidents Day
Memorial Day
Observance of Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Holiday
Christmas Holiday
Staff Planning Days{you will be notified in advance}

***In the event of storm or natural disaster we follow the Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) system closing schedule. Stay tuned to the local news channel for updated info.**

We are open for school age campers for an additional fee:

Fall Break
Winter Break
Teacher Workdays
Spring Break
Summer Break

Enrollment Policy

Valley Oaks Learning Center welcomes families of all faiths, race, color, national and ethnic origin with all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to the student at the center. Parents are expected to notify the Center immediately of change in Name, Address, Telephone numbers and family status so they can be reached in cases of emergency. We accept children fulltime, part time, Drop-ins and/or before/aftercare status. Parents are expected to notify the

Full Time= 3-5 days per week
Part Time= 2 or less days per week or 5 days a week for up to 4 hours daily.
Drop-In= Flat daily rate as long as the staff ratio allows
Before care= 6 a.m.-7:30 a.m.
After care= 2:30 p.m-6 p.m.

Each child must have on file (at the time of enrollment)

- Completed enrollment forms including medical history and emergency contact information, etc.
- A copy of the birth certificate, current immunization form, and any required physical examination forms

- No child will be permitted to stay in the center past 30 days without proper immunization and updated health records

Children are not to enter or leave the center unattended. They must be escorted by the parents or authorized personnel. Children must be signed in and out daily. Children will not be released to anyone other than that of a parent or guardian unless the person is listed as an authorized person on the child's enrollment form. Any changes to pick up, authorization must be in writing and signed by the parent. **NO TELEPHONE CALLS ACCEPTED UNLESS YOU SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE DIRECTOR/OWNER.** Any person other than the parent must show state issued photo identification before the child is released. All persons picking up must be 18 or older.

Termination of Care

Either party may terminate our contract at any time for any reason with proper notice. According to the contract, proper notice will consist of written/verbal notice to the provider not less than two weeks prior to the child's last day of care. If you choose to terminate care with less than proper notice, you agree to forfeit the regular tuition charges for the remaining time your child is in our care. Leaving without proper notification will still deem you responsible for paying any balance forward. If at any time, after consultation with the parent or guardian, I feel that you or your child pose a safety risk to the staff or any of the children in our care, We will give you as much written notice as possible that care is terminated. This action will be reserved for extreme cases only, and we will first attempt to resolve any issues with you before resorting to termination of care. Under these conditions, forfeiture of the deposit will be at owner's discretion.

We reserve the right to terminate for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- * Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- * Failure to pay or pay on time
- * Failure to complete required forms
- * Lack of parental cooperation
- * Disrespect
- * False information given by parent either verbally or in writing
- * Consistent late pick up
- * Failure of child to adjust to the child care after a reasonable amount of time
- * Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- * Our inability to meet the child's needs

Tuition/Fees

There is a \$50 *non-refundable* annual registration fee (due July 30th). You will be notified in advance in the event of an annual tuition increase. Weekly tuition is due on Fridays: all payments must be received before the close of business on Monday. Weekly tuition not received on Monday will accrue a late charge of \$25. There will be a \$35 charge on all returned checks. After (1) returned check, tuition must be paid by cash, credit card or money order.

Tuition is charged weekly. In the event of absence (all or part of the week) payment is due. This includes CAPS co-payments. If absent for more than one week without acceptable notice to the center, the slot may be forfeited. Keep in mind you are paying for a slot not the child's attendance. You may earn 1(one) consecutive week of unpaid vacation per year after 1 (one) initial year of enrollment. Allowances will be made for sick time at the discretion of the director/owner (must have doctors note). Your child will be dis-enrolled after the 2nd week of non-attendance and required to pay a re-registration fee and subject to new rate. If you need to be late PLEASE talk with director/owner prior to due date. If you are late past 3 days, daycare services can and will be terminated until payment is made, unless PRIOR arrangements have been made. If you are late more than two times, this may also cause termination of daycare services. If we are closed on our scheduled daycare tuition due date of Fridays, Tuition is due by last day open for that week. In order to provide our staff with a stable financial situation, **we cannot offer exemptions of tuition payment for days your child is not in our care, such as when you are on vacation, days when your child is ill, or other days when you choose not to bring your child.** Such absences need to be put in writing and submitted to the center as far in advance as possible so that we may operate and plan accordingly. Though we realize daycare is a major expense for most working parents, we also rely on this business to help support our own families. Since we will be holding your child's space for you to use at will, we need to charge your weekly tuition whether you use it or not. Rare exceptions may be made at the owner/directors discretion for extreme circumstances.

Late fees for children for children picked up after 6:05 p.m. are \$1.00 per minute. This fee is due at the time of pick-up. LATE FEES ARE ASSESSED ACCORDING TO THE CLOCK IN THE WAITING AREA. AFTER 6:15 AND NO WORD IS RECEIVED FROM THE PARENTS, Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS) will be notified to pick up the child.

*******Excessive tardiness in fee payment or failure to pay fees in a timely manner will result in termination of enrollment from the center.**

Curriculum

The ABEKA Curriculum is a high quality program that prepares children for success in social development, reading, math, science, music, art, small and large muscle development and practical life skills. Our program is bias-free based, focusing on the individual child's social, emotional and intellectual needs. We use a structured environment to facilitate learning through developmentally appropriate practices. The teacher's expectations and classroom activities are safe and achievable by children of the age span of the group. We will observe your child throughout the year to assess their development in all areas along with their language skills. Semi-annually, we will complete an assessment. This information will provide the basis for parent-teacher conferences, which will be held in December and May each year; however, conferences may be held at anytime per either parent or teacher request. Homework may accompany your child Mon-Thurs. Completed folders should be turned in on Friday. An annual book fee will be charged at the beginning of each school year.

In addition, beginning Fall 2016 we are excited to offer the GELDS Georgia Early Learning Development and Standards. Georgia has a long history as a leader in promoting early learning and development outcomes for children. Recently, Georgia introduced its latest set of high-quality, research-based early learning standards for children birth to age five called the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). The GELDS promote quality learning experiences for children and address the question, "What should children from birth to age five know and be able to do?" They are a set of appropriate, attainable standards that are flexible enough to support children's individual rates of development, approaches to learning, and cultural context. The GELDS are a continuum of skills, behaviors, and concepts that children develop throughout this time of life. They are divided into age groups and

serve as a framework for learning. The GELDS are aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, the CCGPS for K-12, and the Work Sampling System Assessment.

Nutrition

We provide nutritious meals and snacks in accordance with Childcare and Adult Care Food Program, USDA standards and childcare licensing regulations. The teachers are responsible for supervision of mealtime and encourage proper table manners. Parents may check the weekly menu on the parent/teacher bulletin board.

We serve breakfast between 6:30 a.m.-7:30 a.m. Lunch will be served from 10:45 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. An afternoon snack will be served from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

If your child has food allergies, please make sure that it is documented in the enrollment packet. **It must be documented by a physician's statement**, which will be posted in the kitchen, classroom and a copy kept in the child's file. When a child requires a modified diet for medical or religious reasons, a written statement from a medical authority and/or parent shall be on file. Food provided by parents must be sealed in the original package. There should only be enough for one serving, as the center cannot store food overnight.

Non-nutritional foods such as potato chips, certain types of candy, most cakes or cookies and fruit drinks with less than 100% fruit juice, may be served on special occasions only.

Transportation

Transportation will be provided for an additional fee, if needed. Transportation needs will be considered by individual circumstances. The center provides transportation to and from schools within a ten (10) mile radius.

Educational and enriching field trips are planned at least a month in advance. Parents will be given information about the field trip. The center encourages parents to volunteer as schedules permit to chaperone during field trips. Permission to go on field trips requires a signed and dated Authorization & Transport form.

All van riders must adhere to the safety policies. Each child must be fastened in seat belts when the vehicle is moving. Riders ages 8 and under must use state approved car seats. Food is not permitted in the van.

All van drivers have a valid Georgia's Driver's License, and CPR/First Aid Training. The drivers have attendance sheets, first aid kit and fire extinguisher and permission forms for each child being transported.

Our Staff

Our staff is made up of highly qualified and trained individuals dedicated to offering an excellent childcare program. These standards are maintained each year as staff members attend Workshops, Seminars and In Service Trainings. Current literature keeps staff

members abreast of new ideas and new research in childcare. 100% of our staff is trained in First Aid/CPR, AED and Fire Safety; 95% of our staff has a combination of an AA, TCC, CDA, BS and MS degree/certification.

Our Students

We value each student

- With praise, reward and encouragement
- With reason and set limits for children
- By modifying the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur
- By listening to the child
- By providing alternatives for inappropriate behavior
- By providing natural and logical consequences of their behaviors

Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

All students at Valley Oaks Learning Center will be expected to follow the rules established by the Director for the purpose of safety and smooth operation of the program.

1. The Center does not administer any type of corporal punishment nor permit it on the Center’s premises. When a child misbehaves, the staff will explain why the behaviors are wrong and show the child how to correct it. In accordance with the severity of the infraction and the number of times it occurs, a child may have special privileges taken away, or placed in isolation for short periods of time from the group. If a child’s behavior threatens the safety of him or herself, another child and/or staff, we will remove the child to the office and call the parent to come and immediately remove the child from the property.
2. If your child intentionally destroys school property, we assess the parent the cost of replacing the property.
3. A child’s enrollment may be terminated for (and not limited to): the child intentionally going into an unauthorized area of the facility, refusing to remain with his/her assigned group during activities, using foul language, being disrespectful to staff and other students, fighting, stealing or defacing other student’s property and belongings, the parent or guardian does not follow our policies or the child becomes disruptive and/or uncontrollable and the parent does not work with the Center to improve the situation.
4. Biting is a stage that many toddlers go through. Staff members will encourage children not to bite and will watch for habitual biters. Children that insist on biting others may be asked to leave the Center for health and safety reasons. If a bite occurs and skin is broken, parents of both children will be notified.

5. ‘Time-out’ is the removal of a child for short period of time (3-5 minutes) form a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to other discipline techniques. The ‘Time-Out’ space usually a chair, is located away from classroom activity but within teacher’s sight. During time out, the child has a chance to think about the misbehavior, which led to his/her removal from the group. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown to other children.

Our school staff is committed to positive reinforcement and to promoting a feeling of unity and warmth among both teachers, as well as children. Please cooperate with us in our efforts to stress the importance of appropriate behavior. We want to keep the program fun and safe for everyone.

Sick Child

Valley Oaks Learning Center is not equipped to care for sick children. State regulations do not permit the Center to admit Children with a 101 degree or higher oral temperature and other contagious symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea
- Symptoms of a sore throat in conjunction with fever and swollen glands
- Impetigo or any stubborn blisters on the upper lip or other parts of the body
- Streptococcal Infection (Strep Throat)
- Pin works (Ring Worms)
- Chicken Pox
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Thick Green or Yellow mucous coming from the nose
- Drainage from the ear
- A cough bringing up yellow phlegm (Whooping Cough)
- Watering eyes
- Head lice

If a child shows any symptoms of illness, he should be kept at home or taken to see a doctor and receive medication. **Children may return after 24hours of watchful care of the illness.** Take time to investigate any symptoms your child may complain about or you may notice. **Please DO NOT bring your child to the Center if he/she is sick.** If your child becomes sick at the Center, he/she will be isolated and you will be notified to pick him/her up as soon as possible, this if for the health and safety of your child and the other children at the Center. Asthma (or similar breathing treatment) pump medication will be administered by the Center upon receipt of written permission from the parent and child’s pediatrician. Permission forms are located in the director’s office. **NO OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION WILL BE ADMINISTERED.**

Sick Care Policy

1. Children suspected of having a contagious illness will not be admitted to the Center. Teachers will observe children daily for symptoms of illness. If the child appears ill, the parent will be requested to keep the child at home and seek medical attention as needed.
2. Parents will be notified if there is an epidemic of contagious disease at the Center. A memo will be sent home immediately along with suggested, necessary precautions for you and your child.
3. Children with open abrasions, minor scrapes and/or burns will be required to cover the injury.
4. We will administer breathing treatments as stated by the parent. The child must have a completed medication authorization form. We will record all noticeable adverse reactions to treatment given.
5. According to the universal precaution in day care rules we store children's SOILED OR WET clothing in individual plastic bags. We will not rinse out soiled diapers or under pants.
6. If a child gets hurt and need immediate medical attention, 911 will be called then the parent will be notified and the children will be transported to the nearest hospital. (Southern Regional Hospital)
7. The Center will request a note from a doctor once your child has been cleared of any illness; to return to school.

Child's Medication: {Only Asthma pump (Albuterol) or Epipen}

1. Prescription medicine must:
 - a. be dated within the past 30 days
 - b. have child's name printed clearly on the label
 - c. have dosage amount and times
2. Prescription medicine must also be accompanied by a "medication log" which must include:
 - a. date
 - b. Child's name
 - c. Doctor's name and phone number
 - d. Pharmacist name and phone number
 - e. Name of medication
 - f. Dosage amounts and times to be administered
 - g. Route of medication, i.e. oral, eye, etc.
 - h. Why medication is needed
 - i. Date medication is to end
 - j. Special directions, i.e. take before eating, etc.
 - k. Parent's signature

Uniforms

All children enrolled that are able to walk (2 & up) are REQUIRED to wear their uniforms everyday except on Friday. The uniform consists of Khaki bottoms, logo polo shirt and closed toe shoes suitable for outside play. An extra set of clothing (well labeled/suitable for weather) including underwear, socks, pants, and shirt must be left at school permanently in case of accidents.

Potty trainers should wear clothing that allows for easy access to the bathroom.

Cubbies/Personal Belongings

A cubby is provided for each child and is marked with the child’s name. Please check cubbies daily as your child may have papers to go home. Cubbies are our only storage space for personal belongings for the children. Therefore personal play items and toys will not be permitted, exceptions during Show-N-Tell. Unclean items and items of a violent nature (ex. Toy guns, knives etc.) will not be allowed at the Center. Parents should provide diapers/pull-ups and wipes as needed. Pacifier clips and tie bibs are prohibited!

***The Center accepts no responsibility for and discourages children from wearing jewelry, hair bows and hair beads. Hair beads pose a choking hazard to all children.

Supplies:

Parent/guardian will provide diapers, diaper wipes (if you wish to use a certain brand) and baby bottles with adequate formula. To eliminate the daily bundle of items to carry you may bring us a package of each item to leave at the center. We will notify you if items are running low. All items will be marked with the child’s name.

Parent/guardian will provide a change of clothes on a weekly basis or keep a change of clothes at day care until needed – replacing as needed. An infant may require more than one change of clothing daily; please provide a few changes of clothing based on your own experiences with your infant.

We will offer an emergency change of clothing, wipes, sleeping mats, cribs, for your child.

Birthdays/Celebrations

Birthday celebrations are usually planned around snack time (2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.) Parents are always welcome at their child's birthday celebration. Birthday treats are optional. If you plan to bring a treat, please notify The Director or supervisor ahead of time so that we may plan accordingly. Occasionally throughout the year we will acknowledge certain holidays with a special celebration of some type. Parents will be informed ahead of time if donations are requested.

Parent Involvement/Volunteers

We love volunteers! All parents with children enrolled at Valley Oaks Learning Center should learn as much as possible about the Learning Center's programs. Parents are encouraged to take part in the learning experience as often as possible. A parent may volunteer in the classroom, on field trips and other outings, or by donating supplies, materials and monies toward special projects. While our staff members are nurturers and care for you children during the day, Valley Oaks Learning Center will not be held liable for any harm that may come to the child in the care of a staff member after hours and off the premises. We also ask that parents not date staff members and vice versa. Doing so will jeopardize the job of the staff member. Please respect the teacher-parent relationship.

Open communication with the teachers to discuss your child's development at home and in relation to their child care experiences is essential. It is important that parents work with the teachers and other staff to help prepare your child for kindergarten.

Thank You for your commitment in helping us to "Create World Class Leaders"!