



Early Learners Academy Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the staff at Early Learners Academy, I am happy to welcome you to the new school year! We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential. We recognize that to be successful in school, our children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities. We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring that he/she:

- 1) Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready for the day's learning experience
- 2) Reads daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills
- 3) Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life

Early Learners
ACADEMY

Once again Welcome to Early Learners Academy

Early Learners Academy (ELA) Handbook

Welcome to Early Learners Academy (ELA) Family! This Handbook has been put together to give you the information you need and to hopefully answer any questions you may have. If you have any other questions after you read through the Handbook, just let us know!

Please read through the entire Handbook to ensure that you know and understand the information that has been provided. There are places in the Handbook where you will be asked to sign or initial, indicating that you have read, understood and follow the guidelines of Early Learners Academy **Handbook**.

Early Learners Academy (ELA) is a licensed child development facility. Licenses in the District of Columbia are issued by Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE); OSSE's Division of Early Learning. OSSE is the regulatory authority for child care licensing in Washington, DC and is responsible for licensing and monitoring child development facilities to ensure the health and safety of children in facilities.

Chain of Command

Communication is key to the success of any organization, therefore effective communication between families and staff is essential.

Director ----> Assistant Director ----> Teachers
Early Learners Academy Parent Handbook

On matters involving curriculum and instruction: Teacher, then Director

On matters involving health, safety/injury reports: Director

On matters involving confidential information: Director

On matters involving staff: Director

Mandated Reporters

Every staff member of Early Learners Academy is a mandated reporter which means mandated, by law, to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

Confidentiality

Your child and family's information are confidential and will not be shared with other parents or families. However, Washington, DC OSSE Licensing has the right to review files for compliance during announced and unannounced visits.

Early Learners Academy Handbook

Parental Involvement

Being involved in your child's education from the beginning increases your child's educational success. Custodial Parents have a right to enter Early Learners Academy any time during center hours.

Ways to get involved at **ELA** include:

- Showing interest in the work your child brings home;
- Maintaining open communication with caregiver(s) by letting them know how they can best help your child blossom during these important years (especially through the communication notebook);
- Volunteering to read a story to the children;
- Donating specific items for a cause or event;
- Participating in our music and movement activity;
- Being a field trip chaperone;
- Providing recyclables for arts & craft projects;
- Reading to your child at home at least once daily (suggested before bedtime as a routine);

Communication

Early Learners Academy staff uses Kayambu to communicate with parents along with emails and in person interactions. Parents will be able to see how the daily activities correlate with developmental milestones according to standards for early childhood education. There are so many milestones that are reached when children are in child care, and we want to ensure that we share them with you as your child progress to their next milestone and conquer their current milestone. This is also the place where parents can provide the caregiver with information via email such as the child's disposition the night before.

Philosophy on Discipline

At Early Learners Academy, we understand children's needs and abilities. Our discipline policy focuses on redirection, consistency and firmness. We encourage respect for others and respect for property. Children are always reminded of the rules and expectations. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children and there will be times when children test limits with adults. Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, kick and scream. We will try to prevent inappropriate behaviors and redirect when necessary.

friend whose feelings they've hurt, we are increasing their social emotional skills in social relations. It takes time for children to learn how to respond sympathetically to peers in need and express empathy for others. This is a developing skill and our staff will always help children develop this skill in social relations when it comes to friendships with peers.

When conflicts arise, we are pro-active, not reactive, with children. We must think about the underlying cause of a child's behavior so that the undesired behavior is eliminated. We must use continuous positive reinforcement to maintain desired behaviors in children.

If a child continues to exhibit an undesired behavior, he/she will be removed from the group for an amount of time comparable with the child's age. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any physical abuse, verbal abuse, name calling or isolation used. Food will never be withheld from children as a means of punishment. We will always create consistency for the child through open communication with parents and staff.

Educational Perspective

Education at Early Learners Academy is each child learning experience is personalized to the way the child learns. Our educators know that the child is our main curriculum and we teach every child based off their individual educational needs. Our goal is to ensure every child is learning. A well-developed child care environment motivates and enhances learning. We provide a well-organized, orderly, planned and safe environment, flexible, we can adjust to meet the needs of different children. It's our job to ensure classrooms and other learning spaces for children make them feel welcome, secure and ready to learn. We use Reggio Philosophy to further enhance children learning through play and exploration and Creative Curriculum to further their development in all aspects.



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POTTY TRAINING AT EARLY LEARNERS ACADEMY

Many children find toilet training difficult. Some learn quickly while others can take longer. It is not uncommon for children to slip back occasionally after they have made progress. Children learn better when they aren't anxious, so although it can be frustrating, especially when out and about, try to keep calm.

At Early Learners Academy we strive to take children to the bathroom who show interest every hour. We don't force children to use the restroom, if a child refuse or don't show interest. When an accident occurs we will change the child, inform the parent during dismissal and request additional clothing.



Registration

A tour of the learning environment will be provided, followed by an interview between the Director and the parents. Educational perspectives will be outlined, and the child's developmental needs will be discussed. Any questions posed by parents will be answered and the registration packet will be provided upon request.

The following is required before your child can enter the program:

1. All forms and all telephone numbers as well as personal and business email addresses that are checked regularly, to ensure that all available contact information is provided;
 - i) You must show your child's original birth certificate so that the birth certificate It can be written and kept in your child's file;
 - ii) If an original birth certificate is temporarily unavailable, the Proof of Birth letter must be provided until the original birth certificate becomes available.
The original birth certificate must be viewed by the Director and the birth certificate number must be documented in your child's file as required by the state.
2. An immunization form must be in the child's record by the start date of the child's enrollment. Immunizations must be recorded on either a Health Department form or a physician's form, have the child's name, date of birth, and be signed or stamped by the licensed physician, the physician's designee, or an official of a local health department;
3. First bi-weekly tuition payment;
4. Registration fee.

NOTE: Immunization forms must be updated every immunization schedule up to age 2, then every six months between the child's 4th and 6th birthday.

[PLEASE NOTE: for each subsequent well-visit to the doctor, after your child is enrolled In our program, a copy of all immunizations that were given must be provided upon return to The Vine Preschool. This is to ensure that your child's file remains up-to-date. The Vine Preschool must have record of your child's sick and well visits on file. For every sick visit, a doctor's note is required upon return that states when the child can return to school. _____

If the absence involves a communicable illness, a doctor's note alone does not ensure that the child can return to school. This will be further determined by the Director based on factors

A \$100 non-refundable registration fee is paid to reserve a space for your child on the waiting list. If your child does attend, the \$100 will be applied to the first week's tuition.

Tuition Policy

Tuition is paid bi-weekly. **Tuition is paid for all 52 weeks, including holidays, sick days, and vacation days.** Tuition is paid in advance of child care services. _____

Tuition Late Fees

Declined Payments-When a tuition payment has been declined, an alternate form of payment (another credit/debit card or cash) must be provided the same day that the tuition payment is scheduled to be drafted. If an alternate form of payment is not provided the same day that the tuition payment is declined, a \$25 late fee will be assessed the next day. Tuition payment must then be made in cash if not paid within 24 hours. If tuition payment is not received within 48 hours, the child cannot return to school until full tuition payment for that time period has been paid. In some cases, Parents may be asked to submit a tuition deposit as a security payment, as a result. _____

If tuition payment is not paid within 14 days, enrollment will be terminated. A child may be re-enrolled upon full payment of account plus the registration fee if a space remains available.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

- Please turn off your car's engine and take your car keys when dropping *Off* and picking up your child.
- You must enter with your child to ensure a smooth transition.
- Sign in and out on the Drop-Off/Pick-Up Log with your name and the child's name, the date and the drop off time. When picking up your child, sign your name and the pick up time.

Children will only be released to people authorized in the registration packet. Changes to this form or others must be done in person. For individuals whose identity needs to be verified, a driver's license must be presented.

Information subject to change

Drop-Off Policy

Early Learners Academy provides childcare services from 8:00am-6:00pm. Breakfast is served on a rolling basis as children arrive. However, children must arrive no later than 8:30am in order to have Breakfast.

If your child will be absent, please notify us as early as possible. If you are running late, please call to notify us by 8:45am so that we can plan accordingly. The latest drop-off time is 9:00am. We do have a 30-minute grace period. We will not accept children after 9:30am unless morning doctor's appointment. Thank you for your courtesy, in advance.

Drop-Off Policy:

- Morning Doctor Appointments;
- Delayed Openings due to Weather;

For morning doctor appointments and delayed openings due to weather, please note that children must be dropped off NO LATER than 11:00am, and this only applies to weather-related delays and morning doctor's appointments. For morning doctor's appointments, you must have a doctor's note and for well visits, we must have an updated immunization schedule.

For parents who plan to bring their child to school after they have been to the doctor for a morning appointment (before 10:00 am, SICK OR WELL) they must have a doctor's note. WE CANNOT ACCEPT CHILDREN WITHOUT A DOCTOR'S NOTE WHETHER SICK OR WELL VISITS.

We cannot accept children later than 11:00am as it interrupts the daily routine that your children are accustomed to. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Pick-Up Policy for Afternoon Doctor Appointments

Please notify the Director and the staff in your child's classroom if your child is getting picked up early for a doctor's appointment. For communication, safety, and security, it is necessary to communicate that information. The staff will then be prepared to have your child ready, to help minimize any disruptions to the classroom routine (or to other children who may be sleeping if it is nap time).

If your child is picked up early, they cannot be dropped back off at school. Once they are picked up from school, it constitutes as the end of your child's school day. Thank you in advance for adhering to our drop-off and pick-up policy.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Early Learners Academy provides childcare services from 8:00am-6:00pm. Please call us by 5:15pm if you know that you are going to be late picking up your child and notify us of which emergency contact will pick up your child.

ELA follows the local school system SNOW/ICE policy for closures and delayed openings. ELA WILL make an independent decision based on the safety of our students and staff.

For a two-hour delay, TVP will open at 9:00 am and will not accept children after 10:00 am. For early closures.

Sick Child Policy

Parents will be notified to pick up their child when their child exhibits one or more of the following:

- a temperature/fever of 100.4 degrees or higher;
- Vomiting *or* diarrhea two consecutive occurrences in one day;
- A communicable disease such as hand, foot and mouth, strep throat, chicken pox, measles etc.
- Severe coughing or wheezing;
- Thick mucus that significantly affects breathing;
- Difficult or rapid breathing;
- Continuous tearing of the eye(s) with discharge (**with or without redness or pick color**);
- Mouth sores with or without drooling;
- Unusual spots or rashes;
- Or any other symptoms that cause apparent discomfort to the child.

Parents are expected to pick up their child within 1 hour of being notified about their child's illness or have an emergency contact with identification, pick them up. _____

24-Hour Requirement for Children Returning From Illness

Fever-child may not return until there has been NO FEVER for 24 hours without any fever-reducer medicine;

Prescriptions-must be administered at home for a 24-hour period before child can return to school;

Diarrhea (definition: 2 consecutive loose stools) -child cannot return until 24 hours AFTER the LAST OCCURRENCE;

Vomiting (definition: 2 consecutive occurrences of vomiting)-child cannot return until 24 hours AFTER the LAST OCCURRENCE;

A doctor's note* is required every time your child is seen by a doctor/nurse practitioner, whether it is a sick visit or a well visit. — — — — —

*When returning to school from an illness, a doctor's note alone does not guarantee that Your child may return to school. _____

Director will decide on a case by case basis depending on the severity of the Illness and the current overall health of other children who may have also been affected (while maintaining confidentiality). _____

Medication Administration

Early Learners Academy may not provide medicine or treatment, except for emergency first aid, to any child, unless we have obtained a written medical order or prescription from the child's licensed health care practitioner and written consent from the child's parents/ guardian.

"Authorization is needed for all medications, ointments, lotion, oral teething medicine, sunscreen and insect repel/ant.

Prescription Medication Tip:

Ask your pharmacist to split the prescribed medication into two identical, labeled containers. That way one can be sent to school and the other can be left at home. Also, be sure to fill out any necessary forms such as the Medication Consent form.

Accidents or Injuries

When an accident or injury occurs with a child or between 2 or more children, the appropriate procedures will be performed by the childcare provider such as immediate first aid.

Early Learners Academy staff is trained in CPR, FIRST AIDE, and AED.

The accident/injury will be recorded on an Accident/Injury Report and the parents of the children involved will be notified. When the children involved are picked up, parents must sign the Accident/Injury Report acknowledging that they have been informed and return the original form back to school. Parents will be provided with a copy of the Accident/Injury report.

Emergency Medical Form

If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, hospitals must have parental consent to perform emergency services. This form is included with the registration materials and must be completed and signed upon registration.

Fire Drills/Shelter-in-place Drills

We conduct fire drills once a month. We conduct shelter-in-place drills two times a year. We also conduct "locked down" drills.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency that requires complete evacuation with the inability to return to the preschool building, the children will be transported to 155 L St. NW Washington, D.C. 20001.

USDA-Regulated Food Services

- ELA serves a hot lunch which consists of a grain, protein, vegetable, fruit and milk;
- ELA serves AM Snack which consists of cold cereal with milk or a variety of breads, such as cinnamon bread; Fruit such as bananas, apples or applesauce will be served; Milk will also be served;
- ELA does not provide a PM Snack. We ask that Parents send in a PM Snack with their child every day.

Nutrition

Early Learners Academy aims to provide high-quality nutrition in addition to high-quality child care. Pork will not be served.

Only milk and water will be served.

For allergies or medical conditions, parents must provide a doctor's note and supply whatever items that need to be supplemented from what the provider provides (such as an alternative milk product if lactose intolerant)

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are held at the request of the Parents, Teacher, or Director.

For children exiting kindergarten in the fall, there will be an exit conference that will include the exiting preschooler's Developmental Report.

The conference is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress. Each conference will address the developmental milestones your child has achieved. These milestones are discussed between the parents and the caregiver before a decision is made about the milestones that will be worked on until the next conference.

Contact information :

Address: Early Learners Academy 474 Ridge Street NW Washington DC 20002.

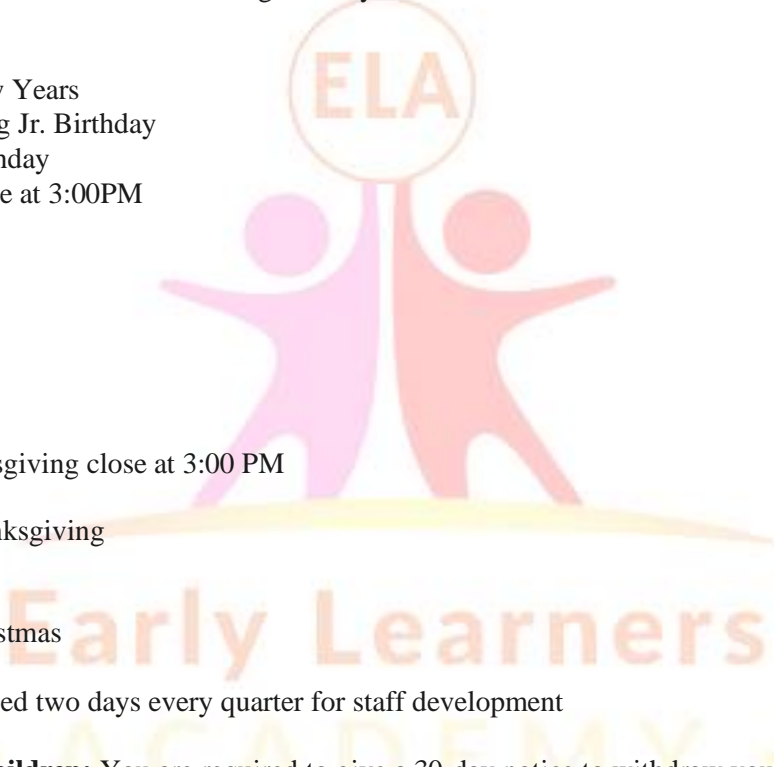
Phone Numbers: (703) 589 - 0990

Center: We serve children from 2 months – 5 year old all year around and school-age children as needed. All our staff meets the education and training requirements by the OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINDENDENT OF EDUCATION IN WASHINGTON, DC.

Care for toddlers: Diapering for children will take place in the bathroom with the changing table. Teachers are required to properly clean and sanitize changing tables and toilets after each change/ use.

Days and Hours of Operation: We are open Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Holidays: We are closed on the following Holidays



New Year's Day
The Day after New Years
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
Washington's Birthday
Good Friday- Close at 3:00PM
Easter Monday
Emancipation Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Day before Thanksgiving close at 3:00 PM
Thanksgiving Day
The day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
The day after Christmas

- We're closed two days every quarter for staff development

Withdrawal of Children: You are required to give a 30-day notice to withdraw your child from our program.

Upon notice, you will be asked to complete a withdrawal form and go over any necessary details.

Emergency Plan: In case of an emergency and we must evacuate the building, we will gather at the local library.

155 L St. NW Washington, D.C. 20001. You will receive a call/email/text advising you of the emergency along with the necessary step you will need to follow.

Personal Care items : Please bring in the following (if applies to your child)

A picture of your child and/or a family photo (everyone)

Diapers/pull ups

Blanket and a sheet (sheet also fit the cots well)

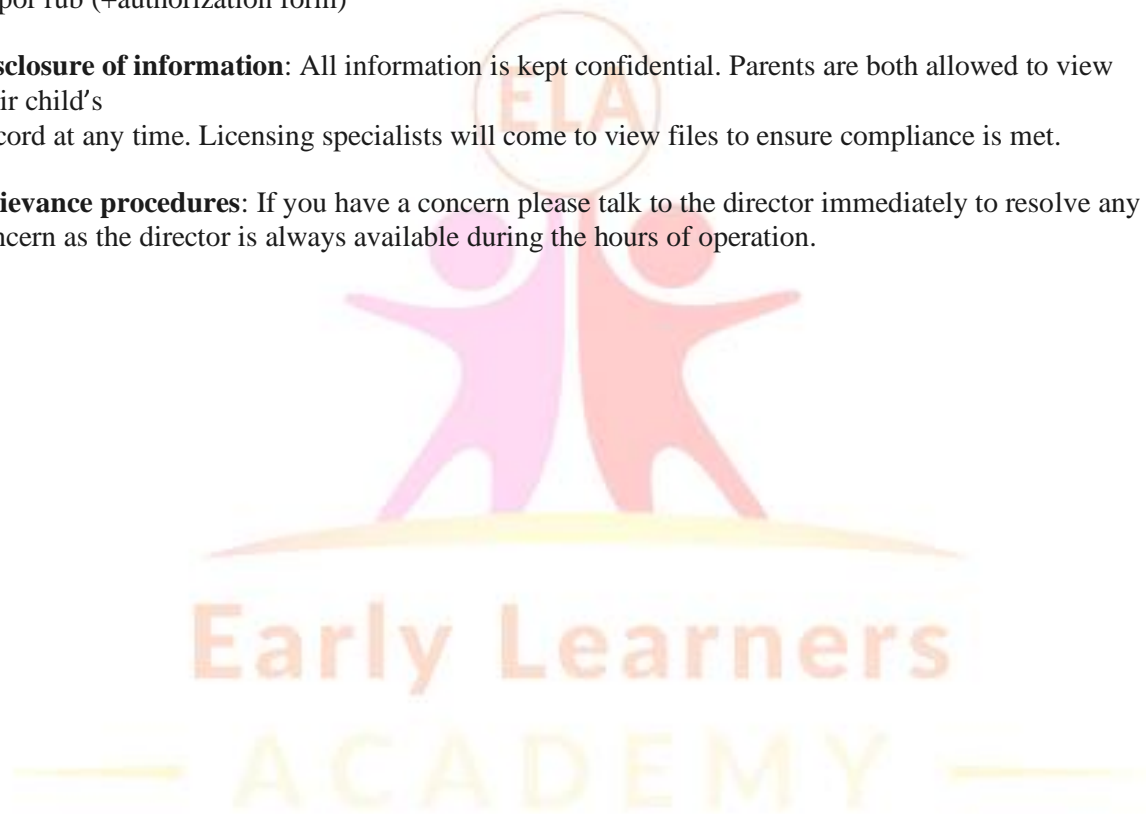
Wipes

Diaper cream (+authorization form)

Pacifiers (extra to keep at school for back-up)
10 bibs/ 1 food bib (vinyl)
Bottles (enough for the day)
Sippy Cup (just one)
Breast milk or Formula (+plus back-up that stays in school)
Food if child has allergies
Special milk if child cannot have regular milk
3 changes of clothes including socks
Birth certificate (if I haven't viewed it yet)
Health Form (immunizations, etc.)
Medical items (epi-pens etc. + documentation is required)
Sunscreen (+authorization form)
Bug spray (+authorization form)
Teething gel (+authorization form)
Vapor rub (+authorization form)

Disclosure of information: All information is kept confidential. Parents are both allowed to view their child's record at any time. Licensing specialists will come to view files to ensure compliance is met.

Grievance procedures: If you have a concern please talk to the director immediately to resolve any concern as the director is always available during the hours of operation.



Please provide your signature acknowledging that you have received, read, understand, and agree to Early Learners Academy policies and procedures placed in the parent handbook.

*Information is subject to change

X

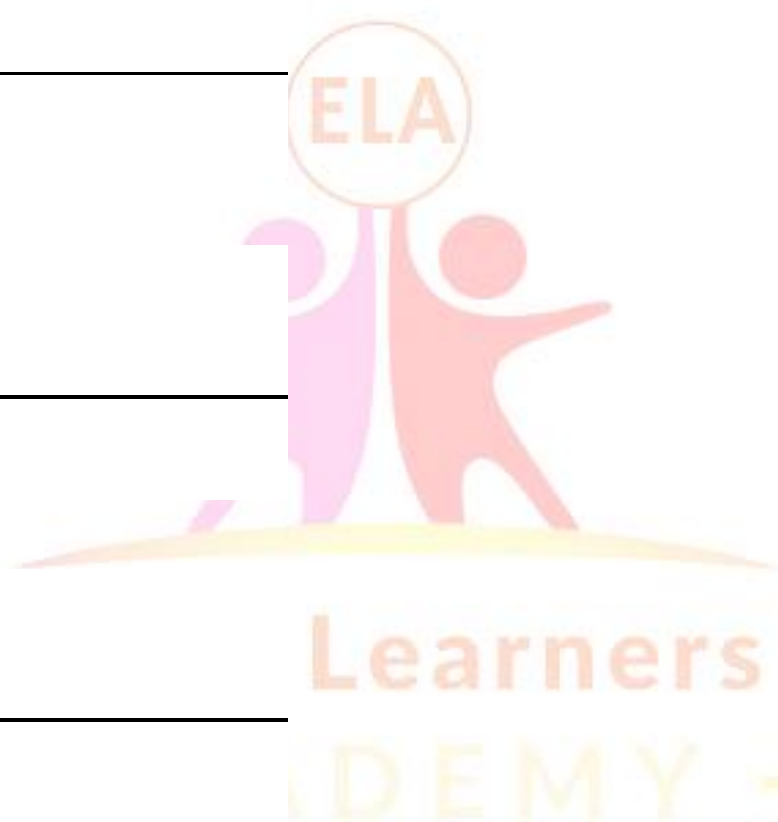
Parent Signature

X

Parent Signature

X

Director

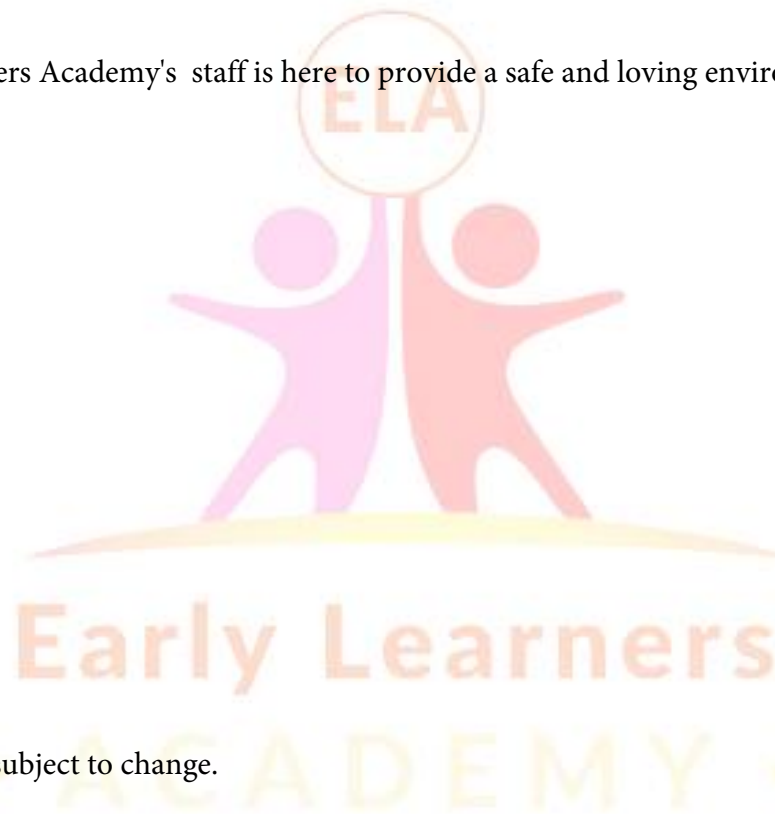


Termination Policy

Early Learners Academy reserve the right to terminate childcare immediately due to but not limited the following:

1. Non payment of childcare services
2. Offensive and inappropriate behavior and language from parent and or students
3. Aggressive language and behavior from parents and or students
4. Excessive absents of child/children in the center
5. Threats

Early Learners Academy's staff is here to provide a safe and loving environment for everyone.



Polices are subject to change.