



The Learning Continues After School Center Parent Handbook

Information in this handbook is subject to change at any time without notice.

Please be sure to get an updated handbook each year.

Mission Statement

Our mission at The Learning Continues... is to Create A Community of Life-Long Learners, by providing a premium level of care, which meets the safety, nutritional, developmental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of the children we serve. We believe that to have a strong program, we must have a strong foundation. We strive to be a staff of integrity.

Philosophy

We believe that children learn by doing. Therefore, we implement a thematic curriculum using a center-based, hands-on approach, based on Christian principles in order to prepare children for their future and create a community of life-long learners.

Statement of Policy

May we state that we are keenly aware of our responsibility to the children, parents, and community we serve, to maintain the highest level of childcare available. We expect every member of our staff and every child enrolled to be of the highest level of character, conduct, and cleanliness. Our policies governing these expectations are strictly enforced. We strive to provide each child and each family with as much personal attention as possible to ensure every reasonable need of every child is met or exceeded.

Staff

The staff of The Learning Continues.. consists of several diverse members, each bring different skills, passions, and abilities to the program, this help in creating a unique environment for your child to grow physically, mentally, and spiritually. All members of The Learning Continues... staff are carefully selected by checking references and conducting background checks. Teachers are thoroughly trained in teaching and managing children and are always highly supervised. All Management and Staff are required to obtain a minimum number of CEU (staff development) hours each year. In addition, most of our staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Enrollment

All enrollment forms must be completed before your child may attend. A \$50 registration fee, as well as first week's tuition are due before your child starts. The registration fee is due upon registration, as well as when returning from an unpaid leave. Applications are subject to review and approval by The Learning Continues management. We reserve the right to deny any application due to enrollment limitations or medical or behavioral problems, or any other reason we feel that enrollment of a child is in any way not in the best interest of our children. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, or race for the enrollment of children. Please inform us of any changes in addresses, work and home telephone numbers, places of employment, or individuals authorized to pick up your child. In particular, the state requires for the health of all children that a current Immunization Form 121 be on file. This must be on the state approved Form 121 provided by area Health Departments or doctor offices.

Activities and Dismissal

By enrolling your child at The Learning Continues, you as a parent or guardian give permission for your child to be involved in the activities and events at The Learning Continues. You further understand that The Learning Continues is a private childcare center whose goal is to provide a positive, enriching after-school environment. Although rare, a situation may arise in which it becomes evident that the needs of a child cannot be met effectively by our center. A decision to dismiss a child will only happen after we feel every option has been explored. Every measure will be taken to meet the needs of the child in question, and our Director will assess each dismissal not only with regard to the individual child's needs, but also the needs of all the children served. The parent will be a central figure in the discussions regarding this issue, but the decision to dismiss a child must be left to the discretion of our Director.

Attendance and Tuition Charges

Tuition and other fees are to be paid in full without deduction for absences of any duration or for any cause, and without substitution of other days of attendance as "make up" days. Please understand that this is because staffing and other operational costs are incurred on the basis of fixed levels of enrollment, and because few of these costs are eliminated when the child is temporarily absent. Our tuition charges are "all-inclusive", meaning there are no additional charges for regular activities, regular field trips, snacks, meals, transportation, or supplies.

Payment Policy

Child-care vouchers are welcome. Tuition is due in advance each Monday for the week. Monthly payments in advance (based upon the number of Mondays in a month) are accepted and encouraged. For those parents paying weekly, if tuition is

not paid by Wednesday evening, a \$20 late fee may be added to the balance due. Statements of your payments are available at any time. If your tuition check returns for any reason, \$40 will be charged to your account. In the event that you do not make payments or do not give 2 weeks written notice of withdrawal, you will be given a one-time written notice of charges owed. You will then have 15 days from that notice to pay or resolve any disputes with the management of The Learning Continues.... You agree to pay any reasonable attorney's fees or collection agency fees and court costs. Please refer to the current tuition agreement for prices.

Registration Fee

There is an annual Enrollment Fee of \$50 per child for registration for the school year and \$65.00 for Summer Camp.

Center Hours

We are open Monday through Friday from 6:30a.m-9:30a.m. and 1:00pm to 6:00pm. We ask that when picking up your child, you arrive no later than 5:55pm so that you may have time to gather your child's belongings and speak with your child's teacher. We close at 6:00pm sharp. Your child has had a long day by this point, and so have our teachers and staff. After 6:00p.m. there is a late pickup charge of \$15.00 for each 10 minutes or portion thereof. After repeated late pick-ups, you may be asked to find a center that better fits your schedule.

Holidays

The Learning Continues observes and will be closed on the following holidays.

Labor Day	New Year's Eve
Thanksgiving Day	New Year's Day
Day after Thanksgiving	Martin Luther King Day
Christmas Eve	Good Friday
Christmas Day	Memorial Day
Day after Christmas	Independence Day

No discount from tuition will be made for holidays or other days on which the facility does not operate or opens late (i.e. snow days, etc.).

Inclement Weather

In the event of unusual weather conditions such as snow or ice, you may call us at (601) (after-school center). Though you may use the Jackson Public School closings as a general guideline, we will attempt to open or stay open later to accommodate our parents. Should schools close early for any reason, we will always make every effort to pick up our after-school children and get them back to the center for you to pick them up as soon as possible.

Notifying the Center of Your Intent to Resign

From the date you start, your child is considered to be enrolled in our school until we receive written notice otherwise. A minimum two-week written notice addressed to the owner or Director is required prior to resigning (although we request 30 days if at all possible). The two weeks begins on the date we actually receive written notice. This notice is common among high-quality childcare providers and allows us to notify the family of the next child on our waiting list of an opening.

Arrival and Departure

It is important that your child's day begin on a positive note. An authorized adult must accompany a child into and out of the building. From time to time, your child may experience some separation anxiety. This is normal. Experts suggest you hug and comfort your child, let them know you are leaving and will see them later, then promptly leave the center. While leaving a crying child can be a difficult thing, most children stop crying within five minutes, and your lingering in the center most often makes matters worse. You are welcome to call and check on your child. At pick-up, please sign your child out and check for any notes, messages, or permission slips you may need to sign.

Outdoor Time

State licensing regulations require that children spend 2 hours per day outside. With the exception of an extremely cold or hot days or smoggy days in summer, understand that your children will spend time outside each day. If a child is not well, and you do not want them to go outside, they are not well enough to be at school and need to be kept at home that day. During summer camp, please apply sunscreen before your child's arrival if we have any extended outdoor activities planned.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Children are encouraged to be dressed and groomed in a manner which reflects good taste, decency, and pride in appearance. On specified days, children may be asked to bring clothes appropriate for water games swimsuits or swim trunks with t-shirts or cover-ups over them. On these days, children may be asked to bring extra dry set of clothing and a towel. Please label all clothing with your child's first and last name. We cannot be responsible for lost articles. Long dresses, jellies shoes, cowboy boots, and flip-flops can be dangerous. Rubber soled or non-slippery shoes are best for school.

We require that you leave all food, gum, and toys at home. As seasons change, please send your child to school with appropriate Jackets or coats labeled with their name.

Food / Birthdays

Birthdays are important days for young children and we share your desire to make your child's day a special one. However, birthday celebrations are often over-stimulating to young children, and we ask that some limitations be respected. We celebrate birthdays during regular afternoon snack times. Parents may provide a special snack for all the children, with advance notice and the approval of your child's teacher, and are encouraged to participate in the celebration. Due to the fact that certain children have severe food allergies, please speak with the director ahead of time about the appropriateness of the snack. Peanuts, peanut butter, and snacks with peanuts or peanut oil in them (i.e. candy bars, etc.) are prohibited due to the severity of allergies associated with that food.

Access to Your Child's Classroom

Parents are permitted access to their child's classroom and play areas anytime their child is present. We request cooperation, however, in not disturbing our program.

Procurement Fee for Hiring Our Teachers

Hiring of our teachers by parents is highly discouraged because it presents a conflict of interest for the teacher. If a parent does hire a teacher for a position (i.e. nanny or caregiver) that competes with the center during enrollment or for a period of 12 months after withdrawal from school, then the parents shall have 30 days to notify the center and pay the center a \$2500 placement fee. This fee is common and in line with what many nanny agencies charge for placement. This does not apply for after-hours babysitting.

Class Directories

From time to time, we may provide parents with a list of children in his/her classroom. This is mainly for birthday parties or special days. Unless you instruct us otherwise in writing, you agree to allow us to use your name and address for this purpose.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Immunizations

We ask that your child's immunization record (MS Form 121) be presented with enrollment forms. You must update and provide a new form as appropriate. Failure to maintain a current Form 121 will result in your child staying home.

Illnesses / Medical conditions

Please understand that for your child's protection and the protection of our staff and other children, we strictly enforce our illness policy. We kindly request your full cooperation by not bringing in sick children, and picking up a sick child within one hour when you are called to do so. We cannot allow children with contagious diseases in the Center. A child with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, must go home. You understand that if your child is ill, including, but not limited to a severe cough, undetermined rash or spots, boil, congestion, non-clear runny nose, pink-eye, head lice, temperature over 101 degrees, severe headaches, nausea, diarrhea, or severe sore throat, he/she cannot be accepted into the center until well or has been without fever or other symptoms for 24 hours.

In the event your child has a contagious disease, please notify the center immediately so we may notify other parents. A release form from a doctor may be required before your child re-enters the center. The Education Station will notify parents if a contagious disease has been introduced into the center. A child who, due to a temporary health condition, cannot play outside should remain at home. For safety reasons, we are simply not staffed to watch a single child inside while the rest of the class plays outside. A child who is too sick to go outside is too sick to be at school.

Any child with special medical conditions or needs must have written documentation from a physician stating his/her individualized medical plan and protocol for action in an emergency.

Medicines

The Learning Continues does not administer medicine. Please do not send any medicine to the center with your child. Parents and anyone on your pick-up list may come to the school and give your child medicine.

Emergency Information

It is incumbent upon parents to keep the center informed of how they can be reached at all times in the event of an emergency. This includes all work, home, and cell phone numbers for parents and any other emergency contacts. Because we strive to maintain a safe environment for your child, we make every attempt to be prepared to handle emergency situations. Many members of our staff are trained in first aid and CPR. An emergency plan is posted in each classroom. We conduct regular fire and tornado drills. The local fire department makes annual inspections with recommendations for improved safety.

Accident Reports

Although many precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment, occasional incidents do and will occur as children explore the world around them. If an incident or injury occurs, first aid is administered. Also, for pre-school children, an accident report is filled out, and a copy is given to you. This report will describe the nature of the incident and the follow-up care that was provided. Please understand that in a group care setting, we do witness most incidents, but occasionally there may be an incident which we do not see.

Emergency Medical Care

Should your child become ill during the time that he/she is in the care of the Education Station, or suffers a serious accident, the center will contact a parent or guardian immediately and shall be authorized to secure such medical attention, transportation, and care for the child as may be necessary (The parent shall assume responsibility for the cost of any such care). The Learning Continues uses UMMC (University Mississippi Medical Center) Hospital as its designated emergency care center.

We will make all attempts to contact you and other emergency contact numbers first, so it is important that you keep the center informed in writing as to changes in your telephone numbers (cell, pagers, work, home), as well as those of emergency contacts.

Building Safety and Evacuation Policy

The Learning Continues center is equipped with a weather band radio, fire alarm system, sprinkler system and fire extinguishers, as well as firewalls and other fire-prevention devices.

We conduct fire drills each month to insure that all staff and children are able to vacate our buildings quickly (under 2 minutes). We also conduct tornado drills. In the event of an evacuation, we will work with city and emergency officials. for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

Food and Nutrition

Meals are included in the price of your tuition. Meals include two afternoon snack and dinner. We will serve milk or water with dinner or a drink may be sent with the child's food. Children are not allowed to share food. Our meals comply with the State and Federal Minimum Nutrition Standards. We use a menu that rotates on a regular basis. Menus are prepared and displayed each month so that the parents know what their child is being served. Children are encouraged to take at least one bite of each food offered; however, they are not forced to eat.

For safety reasons (i.e. children with severe allergies, etc.) and behavioral reasons (it is better if all children are served the same food), no other food is allowed in the center. In the case of special dietary needs as prescribed by a physician, parents must furnish the food items and/or make arrangements with the Director. Please notify the Director and your child's teacher of any food allergy your child may have, including the severity of such an allergy, and what to do in the event a child accidentally ingests such food.

Discipline

At The Learning Continues we use a method of “redirection” to guide children toward appropriate behavior. If a child is engaged in behavior non-conducive to a safe and happy learning environment, the teacher will “redirect” the child toward appropriate behavior. Use of physical punishment or harsh language is prohibited and we ask that parents and guardians refrain from such actions while at the center, including the parking lot.

School-age children receive written discipline reports for serious behavior problems. Three discipline reports within 12 months will result in the child being removed from our program.

Behavior that invades the rights of other children, such as stealing, fighting, or using foul language, may result in immediate permanent removal from our program. NEITHER CORPORAL PUNISHMENT NOR TOTAL ISOLATION SHALL BE USED AS DISCIPLINE MEASURES IN LICENSED CHILDCARE FACILITIES.

Mandated Reporting Information

Teachers and Directors are required by law to report evidence of child neglect or abuse. Those who fail to report according to state regulations can be held accountable under the law. No one, including school management and/or a child’s parents, can interfere with this reporting requirement.

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

The use or presence of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs is prohibited in the building or anywhere on the grounds by any staff, parent or visitor. Smoking is NOT allowed in the facilities or on the parking lot and we ask parents to not dispose of cigarettes on the grounds.

Homework

After-school children, after snack and a short outside play time, will be required to work on their written homework assignments. Our teachers assist with homework until every child has completed his/her work and it has been checked for accuracy.

Transportation

The Learning Continues After-school conducts regular field trips and provides transportation for such. The Learning Continues After-School Center will pick up children from Midtown Head start Center, Mary C Jones Head Start, Martin Head Start, Midtown Public Charter School, Galloway, Walton, Johnson Elementary, Isable Elementary, at their dismissal time daily. Parents will be responsible for informing us, before school dismissal, if their child is not at school or will not be riding our bus for any reason. A \$15.00 fee will be charged for failing to meet this requirement.

The Learning Continues will follow the transportation policy as stated below:

- 1. All drivers will be appropriately licensed for the vehicle they are driving.**
- 2. All vehicles will have current safety inspection stickers, licenses and registrations, and proof of insurance.**
- 3. Children board or leave the vehicle from the curb-side of the street when applicable.**
- 4. Seat restraints will be used.**
- 5. Proper teacher/child ratio shall be met during transportation.**

6. After transporting children, the bus or vehicle will be checked by a teacher and the driver to ensure every child has exited the vehicle.

Insurance

The Learning Continues After-school does not carry liability insurance. It is the parent's responsibility to maintain a health and accident insurance policy for each child.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Calendars

Each month we print calendars for most age groups. These calendars are for the purpose of keeping parents informed about the following; snacks, meals, activities, weekly units, field trips, what to bring, holiday closings, picture day, and other important information. Please pick up and keep a current calendar at home so you can check it each day. Calendars are available at the front check-in desk.

Parent Grievance Procedure

If an issue arises that cannot be addressed by your child's leader, we ask that you notify one of our Directors. If you still feel that your issue has not been addressed properly, please feel free to contact the owner. The owners of our centers are onsite daily and welcome your input.

School Pictures

We have arranged with an outside vendor to take pictures of your child 2-3 times each year. You will be given advance notice of the schedule so that you can prepare your child. Purchase of pictures is optional and is made directly with that vendor.

Signature _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____