

# Wee Care Academy Parent Handbook



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**Wee Care Academy**

16727 Alderwood Mall Parkway

Lynnwood, WA 98037

425-743-0907

[www.weecareacademy.org](http://www.weecareacademy.org)

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## **Mission Statement**

Our mission at Wee Care Academy is to provide excellent, reliable, high-quality child care and education to the children and families we serve. Our goals are to:

- Provide an inclusive, safe, and healthy environment in which each child's social, physical, intellectual, and emotional development is enhanced.
- Offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum rich with learning opportunities so that each child can fulfill his/her greatest potential.
- Structure the learning situation in such a way that each child's creativity, enthusiasm, and excitement for learning is supported, encouraged and developed.
- Continue to support diversity among our children, families and staff.
- Encourage partnership with our parents to support the children in their growth towards becoming successful life-long learners.
- Demonstrate the professionalism in our teachers and staff that reflects our high standards and expectations for ourselves and our organization.

## **Educational Philosophy**

The educational philosophy at Wee Care Academy is based on highly respected models of early childhood education dating back to Piaget. We believe that children learn best in a rich environment that encourages creativity, language development, and total involvement in the learning process. This is accomplished by use of a curriculum based on experiential learning. Through play, imagination driven activities, and hands on projects based on the developmentally appropriate stages of a child's growth, learning occurs in a wonderful way. The environment is structured to include a great deal of sensory stimulation – children learn about things as they see, hear, touch, smell and, sometimes, taste them. Language is developed as children learn to describe their experiences, share with others, and engage in the magical world of books and story-telling. Hands on activities encourage social interaction, spontaneity, and discovery of a joy in learning to learn. Each child at Wee Care Academy is valued as a unique individual with an abundance of gifts and talents to be shared with us and with the world at large.

## **Curriculum Outline**

### *What is Emergent Curriculum?*

Emergent comes from the meaning that some-thing arises from a natural or logical experience or consequence. The curriculum itself is the tools, ideas, and materials that teachers use to build one concept upon another, upon another, upon another (with each block of the building process teaching them a little more and a little more). An emergent curriculum is a way of planning curriculum that is based on the children's interest and passion at a certain point in time. Children thrive and receive information best when their interests are captured, this way learning occurs naturally. Emergent curriculum relies on the educator, the environment, observation and documentation to be successful.

### *The Role of the Teacher*

Emergent curriculum summons a lot of creativity and flexibility on the part of the teachers. There is no knowing where the learning will end up but this openness makes the curriculum more exciting for both teachers and children. The emergent curriculum process starts when a teacher sees an interest “emerging” in the child. Once the “emerging” interest has been identified, the teachers brainstorm different ways for the children to study the topic in depth. To develop curriculum in depth, teachers must notice children’s questions and present ways to extend them, document what happens, and present more questions. The process is naturally individualized. During the lesson planning process, the teacher ends up with a “road map”. The end comes when the children have moved their interest to another topic and a new “emerging” interest has again been identified.

### *The Role of the Environment*

The environment plays a critical role in an emergent curriculum; essentially becoming another teacher. The environment should inspire, promote wonder, and encourage each child’s natural curiosity to explore and learn. Environments don’t just happen; they are thoughtfully planned so that the interests and skill levels of the people that occupy the space are reflected. Teachers accomplish this by planning enhancements in the classroom each week. This is done by adding specific items into interest areas, switching out toys, and planning activities in the environment that relate back to the topic.

### *Observation and Assessment*

It is important to remember that using an emergent curriculum is not just a free for all. Teachers must use careful planning and follow through with formal and informal assessments. Formal assessments of children are done within a short time period upon entrance into Wee Care Academy. Using the CDC checklist teachers can determine what developmental area they should be focusing on with each child. Each week, informal notes are taken so that their weekly progress report can be completed. Formal assessments will be completed at the beginning of each year before parent-teacher conferences are conducted. Additionally, CDC screenings are completed at every developmental milestone (from 6 weeks to 5 years).

### *Nature Exploration*

Wee Care Academy is a nature enhanced learning program situated on 5 acres of protected wildlife habitat. We know the natural world is full of wondrous opportunities and resources for children to build a strong foundation for scientific, technological, engineering, artistic, and mathematical thinking. It allows children to explore through hands-on play and it is through this play and regular use of the outdoors that children can experiment, cooperate with peers, test their personal limits, problem solve, and think creatively about their interests and curiosities. Practicing these types of activities promotes important skills related to self- regulation, persistence, entrepreneurship, and self-awareness. Our sensory play areas, walking paths, nature areas, and playgrounds are designed to be open-ended and inviting. The different outdoor spaces have both natural and manmade elements that give the children the chance to take healthy, safe risks and interact in many different ways.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Wee Care Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, gender, creed, sexual orientation, marital or family status, religion, or the presence of a disability in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or financial policies.

## **Enrollment**

The first step in enrolling a student at Wee Care Academy is to schedule a tour. Though we have an open door policy for enrolled families, those seeking admission should call first and make an appointment to visit. This will ensure that a staff member will be available to answer any questions. Once the tour has been completed, if a family wishes to continue with the enrollment process, they will be given a registration packet with necessary forms and will meet with administrative staff to complete the required paperwork. Our fees, discounts, and tuition terms are as follows:

- Registration Fee: One-time \$100 fee for the first child and 50\$ for each additional child. Non-Refundable.
- Holding Fee: Equal to two weeks of tuition for each child registering. The holding fee goes towards your first month's tuition and must be submitted before the child's can be fully registered. Non-Refundable.
- Annual Sunscreen Fee: \$5 for each day of your child's weekly schedule, applied to your account once a year in the spring. For example, children attending 5 days a week get a \$30 fee and children attending 2 days get a \$10 fee annually.
- ○ Sibling Discount: 5% off your total tuition if more than one child is enrolled at the same time. Cannot be combined with any other offers.
- Tuition Due Date: Tuition is due by the first business day of the month. A late fee of \$50 will apply if the current month's tuition isn't paid by the 10th. Past due accounts that go beyond the 15th will result in immediate disenrollment until the account is paid in full.
- Bounced or Returned Payments: There is a \$35.00 charge of any NSF transactions.

Once the child is registered, we recommend that the child and parents visit their new classroom once or twice before starting for 30-45 minutes to make sure the child is familiar with the classroom and the parents have an opportunity to view and ask questions about the expectations of the class.

## **Absence Credit Policy**

If a child is absent for part of a week, the full tuition is charged. If a child is absent for 5 consecutive business days, credit is given at one half the normal fee. This includes vacation as well as illness. There is a limit of 2 absence credits per calendar year. Absences cannot be traded for extra days. Additional days that a child attends the Academy will be charged at the daily rate from the current tuition schedule. All extra days and extended illnesses/absences are to be arranged with the Academy Director.

## **Hours of Operation**

Wee Care Academy is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Infant room open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30p.m., Monday through Friday. Drop off is **NOT** allowed between 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

## **Late Charge**

Wee Care Academy closes at 6:00. Children must be picked up prior to closing. There will be a \$2.00 a minute per child late charge for children picked up after closing, based on the time indicated on the tablet you're signing out at. There is also a \$2 a minute per child late fee for staying in care for more than 10 hours without written approval from WCA's administration. Families who are late to pick up more than 3 times per calendar year may have their care terminated.

## **Holiday and School Closures**

There are no tuition deductions any school closures including holidays and Professional Development Days. If the child is enrolled over a closure, parents are required to pay for that day. The Academy closes for one day in the spring and one day in the fall for professional development training. Wee Care Academy is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Observation of Independence Day (July 5th)

Professional Development Days (TBD each year)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Friday After Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

The Academy also closes at 5:00 p.m. on Thanksgiving Eve and New Year's Eve and closes at 3:00 p.m. on July 4<sup>th</sup>. If the holiday should fall on a Saturday, we will be closed on the Friday prior. If the holiday should fall on a Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday. There are no refunds, credits, or trades for any scheduled or unscheduled closures, including closures due to weather or emergency situations.

## **Religious Policy**

At Wee Care Academy, we acknowledge the individuality of each child. Though we are associated with the Unity Church of Lynnwood, our program and curriculum is not affiliated with any religious organization. Monthly themes may include accepted holidays, but will be kept secular in nature, focusing on secular characters commonly associated with the holiday and avoiding all religious reference. We respect and honor each individual's preference with respect to religion.

## **Signing In/Out Procedures**

Parents or responsible guardians (18 years or older) are required to sign their children in and out each time the child attends Wee Care Academy. Parents/guardians must sign their child in and out using their own individual codes and signature at the Procure check-in stations in each classroom. Children are not allowed to sign themselves in or out. Children are to be accompanied by an adult from the parking lot into the building. Children will only be released to authorized adults, unless written permission to release that child to another adult is received from the enrolled parent or guardian. Those approved permissions will receive their own individual codes for pick-up and drop-off. Staff

members may ask any person picking up a child for identification at any time. Staff members will not release a child to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

## **Classrooms**

*Please note: your child's developmental level and other individual considerations are taken into account for classroom placement. Age groupings are estimates only.*

### Infants

Roly Polies: Age 6 weeks -1 year; Up to 4 children with 1 teacher

### Toddler Groups

Caterpillars: Ages 1-2.5 years old; Up to 10 children with 2 teachers  
Ladybugs: Ages 2-3.5 years old; Up to 12 children with 2 teachers

### Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten

Preschool- Butterflies: Ages 3-4.5 years old; Up to 16 children with 2 teachers  
Pre-Kindergarten- Dragonflies: Ages 4-6 years old; Up to 20 children with 2 teachers

## **Classroom Move-Ups and Transitions**

When your child gets closer to moving up into the next classroom we will give you a visiting letter to let you know the expectations of the next classroom. It will also let you know your child is about to start visiting there. When we have an exact move-up date, a move-up letter will be provided to you that includes your child's move up date. With the move-up letter there will also be: the new classroom's welcome letter, social/emotional goals, and toilet training policy, if applicable.

At Wee Care Academy, we focus on each child's development when deciding to move a child up. We look at their social and emotional, communication, self-help, and other skills when decided if a child is ready to move to the next classroom. During these transitions, we expect families to let us know any questions or feedback they might have about the process.

If you would like a conference to talk about child's transition to another classroom or school, we can schedule a time to do so. If your child's next school has questionnaires for us to fill out, please give us at least 2 weeks to return them.

## **Typical Daily Schedule**

7:00 – 8:30:	Arrival, play-to-learn time, diapering and toileting.
8:30 – 9:00	Large group time
9:00 – 9:30	Breakfast
9:30 – 11:30	Cognitive activities, art, outside time, small groups
11:30 -12:00	Large group time
12:00 -1:00	Lunch and clean up
1:00 – 2:30	Nap/rest period
2:30 – 3:00	Put nap mats away, clean up
3:00 – 3:30	Large group time

3:30 – 4:00                      Afternoon snack  
4:00 – 5:30                      Outside time/large motor activities  
5:30 - 6:00                      Evening snack and clean up to go home

This is a general schedule. Specific schedules for each group are posted outside the classrooms. Flexibility is built into the schedules to account for developmentally appropriate activities.

## **Food**

Wee Care Academy serves an early morning snack, breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and evening snack on a daily basis and is part of the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program), commonly known as the free and reduced lunch program. All meals conform to U.S.D.A. guidelines and are also approved by the Public Health Child Care Team’s Nutritionist. Menus are posted in the lobby and substitutions are noted daily. Children diagnosed with food allergies will be provided equivalent substitutions with a written physician’s order. When a child has extreme allergies or other dietary needs documented through a medical professional Wee Care will make every attempt to provide foods that meet these restrictions. When Wee Care has determined that it is in the best interest of the center and the child, a family may agree to provide meals for their child. At that time the parents and Administration will meet and work to submit a “Parent Provided Food Agreement” form to keep on file. The meals provided must include breakfast, lunch, and snack and must meet the CACFP guidelines and requirements. WCA kitchen and classrooms are nut free zones, food provided must be nut free as well. If you would like Wee Care Academy to resume serving meals to your child at any point, you must contact the Administration at least two weeks prior to reintroducing center foods. You must also submit a “Wee Care Academy Reintroduction to Center Food” agreement. Substitutions based on family preferences cannot be made.

Bottles are not used for children once they move into the Caterpillar classroom. Sippy cups are not used for children 22 months and up unless medically necessary.

### *Special Treats*

Wee Care Academy offers special treats for some events throughout the year. These treats include but are not limited to: allergy-friendly cookies on Valentines day, allergen friendly candies to go home after the harvest party, and popsicles on ladybug release day/ some hot summer days. Additionally, Wee Care Academy has options available for birthday celebrations. Families may choose either homemade allergy-friendly cookies (for a small fee) or to provide Wee Care Academy approved popsicles.

### *USDA Nondiscrimination Statement*

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating

in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

## Clothing and Supplies

Children should be dressed with comfort and safety in mind. Tennis shoes are the best footwear for busy little people that are always on the go. The following items, **labeled with the child's name**, must be kept at Wee Care Academy at all times:

- Diapers. [Please see following section for more diaper information.]
- Two sets of extra clothing, including pants, shirts, socks, and underwear (if toilet trained)
- ○ Coat or jacket with hood
- During colder or wetter months, 1-2 pairs of gloves, hat, rubber boots and rain gear (pants and coat, or suit)
- Fitted crib sheet (standard size) and small blanket
- Crib sheets and blankets must be brought in at the beginning of the week and taken home to be laundered at the end of the week

Cubbies should be checked on a daily basis for items and dirty clothes that might need to be taken home. After 11 months, children are not allowed to have pacifiers at any time. Toys and other items from home are not allowed to be brought into the classroom, unless it is Show 'n' Share Friday in either the Preschool (Butterflies) or the Pre-Kindergarten (Dragonflies) classrooms, which are subject to approval.

## **Diapers and Toilet Training**

Each family is responsible for providing disposable or cloth diapers for their child on a daily or weekly basis. For planning purposes, know that your child will have a diaper change every 1 ½ - 2 hours, except when asleep. If cloth diapers are used, at least 5 plastic liners/wraps must be supplied every day. As a child shows signs of readiness for toilet training, staff will work with the family in assisting the child to achieve this developmental step.

## **Behavior Management Policy**

Children learn to manage their own behavior appropriately by being in an environment that has clear, consistent, simple rules and expectations for behavior. These expectations are presented in a positive manner and consequences for not meeting expectations are clearly explained.

At Wee Care Academy, teachers and staff use simple, positive messages to help the children understand appropriate behaviors. A teacher will attempt to redirect a child that is misbehaving. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the child might be offered the choice of discontinuing the behavior or leaving the area. When a child needs to be disciplined, the teachers are trained to respond quickly, consistently, and with the understanding that a child's emotions need to be protected and no child should ever be humiliated. Corporal punishment (shaking, hitting) is never permitted on the premises, nor is psychological abuse (threats or derogatory comments).

In the rare event of an extreme behavior issue, after multiple attempts at redirection and guiding the child towards appropriate behaviors have failed, a parent/guardian will be contacted and a plan of action will be determined to assist the child in managing the challenging behavior.

The best behavior management policy is to avoid problems before they happen by providing an environment where there is a core understanding that we do not hurt ourselves or each other and where all individuals, particularly the adults, are positive, reinforcing, and have clear, well-defined expectations for behavior. At Wee Care Academy, we strive daily to provide just such an environment for your child.

## **Child Developmental Screening and Assessments**

When your child first starts at Wee Care Academy, their lead teacher will perform a developmental screening. Developmental Screenings continue at every important milestone checkpoints that follow their start date: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, and 5 years. More extensive assessments are conducted on an annual basis, in addition to the weekly assessments performed on Procure, our online portfolio system. Each time a developmental screening or assessment is done, the teachers will share the results with you, letting you know what the teachers are observing when your child is at Wee Care Academy. The teachers will use the information documented in screenings and assessments to create a customized learning environment for the children in their classroom.

## **Developmental, Health, and Other Individual Needs**

Wee Care Academy strives to meet the needs of all children enrolled. Within a month of enrollment, your child's teacher will perform a Developmental Milestones Checklist provided by the CDC. A copy of the checklist will be given to you and you will sign the copy that is kept in your child's file. A new checklist will be performed every time your child reaches an age milestone. These checklists help us know your child's developmental needs and if there is anything that you should consult your pediatrician about. Wee Care Academy, however, is not a therapeutic center.

## **Expulsion of a Child**

In cases where there is concern about our ability to meet the needs of an individual child, we will make every attempt to engage all resources to enable us to make necessary changes. This may include the following elements:

- 1) Teachers observe children who have challenging behavior. They identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that predict challenging behavior and may contribute to the child's use of challenging behavior.
- 2) Employees will discuss the concerns and devise strategies, involving family members in developing a plan of action.
- 3) Written consent may be obtained to have other professionals, such as the Public Health Nurse, observe and assist in developing a plan of action. This may include referrals to outside agencies.
- 4) The plan of action will be given a reasonable time to be implemented and weekly consultation with the family will occur.

If, after all of these steps have been taken, it's obvious that we cannot meet the needs of the particular child, the parent or guardian may be asked to dis-enroll the child from the Academy. If you have any concerns about your child's development, you are encouraged to contact Child Find within your child's school district or talk to your child's pediatrician.

## **Termination of Care**

Wee Care Academy may choose to end care for a family for any of the following but are not limited to:

- Non-payment of tuition and/or late fees
- Picking your child up after the academy closes at 6 more than 3 times per calendar year
- Violating our Parent Code of Conduct
- Violating any of the Policies stated in the Parent Handbook and/or registration paperwork.

## **Restraining Policy**

In special cases, a child may be restrained, but only if they are being a danger to themselves or to others and as a last resort. "A danger" would include the following behaviors that the child is unable to stop on their own: hitting, slapping, spitting, punching, kicking, biting, scratching, head banging or butting, throwing toys or furniture, running away from the class or school property, climbing on furniture or fences, or other behaviors that could hurt themselves or others. Before intervening physically, the teacher will tell the child to stop. The teacher will continue attempting to calmly

communicate with the child throughout the incident, and will make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as the child is able to be safe. Restraining can include:

- Picking up and holding the child to move away to a safer area, while having the child facing away from the employee, usually while holding the child's hands.
- Sitting behind the child, with the child also sitting and facing out, giving them a hug while holding their hands.

Before restraining happens, the teachers may try the following techniques to help the child be safe:

- Stepping between children during a conflict
- Blocking a child's path
- Holding one or both of the child's hands
- Leading the child away by the hand, arm or back

If a child is restrained, an incident report will be written to notify the parents and the director or assistant director will be informed.

## **Immunizations**

The State of Washington requires all enrolled children to have a current, medically verified immunization form on file. Failure to do this will result in the child being denied admittance to the Academy. Children with medical and religious documented exemptions will be allowed to attend WCA.

## **Illnesses**

Families are required to notify the Director if their child has contracted a contagious illness. The office will post notices of any illnesses the children may have been exposed to. Parents/guardians will be notified in the event of a serious illness or injury of their child. If this attempt is unsuccessful, 911 will be called or the child will be transported to the emergency room.

If a child is feeling ill, his/her temperature will be taken and a parent/guardian will be notified. If the child exhibits any of the following symptoms, a parent/guardian will be required to pick the child up within 1 hour: a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, or two or more of the following: an earache, sore throat, rash, diarrhea or vomiting, unusual sleepiness, low activity level, irritability, or confusion; they appear pail, have a lack of appetite, are cranky, or crying more than normal; vomiting two or more times in a 24 hour period; two loose/watery stools more than normal for the child in a 24 hour period or any stool with blood or mucus in it; drainage from the eye with redness; mouth sores with drooling; open oozing sores or wounds; untreated head lice, ringworm, or scabies. A child exhibiting any of these symptoms should not be brought to the Academy until the symptoms have subsided or medical treatment has been obtained. When a child is excluded from care due to illness or injury, Wee Care Academy reserves the right to request a physician note stating the child may safely return to our care.

## Medical Emergencies

911 will be called immediately in the event of a medical emergency, and staff will continue to administer care until the paramedics arrive. All staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid (see “Staff Qualifications”). Parents/guardians will be called after 911 notification. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be notified. The child will be transported to the nearest hospital, most likely: Swedish Edmonds Hospital, 21607 76<sup>th</sup> Ave. W, Edmonds, WA 98026. Phone: 425.640.4000.

A Wee Care Academy employee will accompany your child to the hospital and stay with the child until a person listed on your Emergency Release Form arrives. All illnesses and medical emergencies will be recorded in the child’s file and a report filled out. For major emergencies, a copy of the injury/incident report will be sent to the State Licensing Office.

## Medications

If your child requires medication to be administered while in our care, please notify the Director. Medications must be given to the administrative staff when the child arrives in the morning. **No** medications may be left in cubbies, diaper bags, etc. For medication to be distributed, please provide the following:

- The “Permission to Administer Medication” form must be properly completed.
- A signed note from the doctor listing medication dosage and times to be administered **or** a labeled bottle from the pharmacy with the child’s name, dosage and administration times of the medication for any prescription drugs. The bottle must include the date the prescription was filled, the expiration date, and the prescription number.
- A signed note from the parent/guardian with medication instructions including the in-school dose, name of the medication, and duration of administration. Specific times for administration of the medication must be included – “3 xs per day” is not sufficient.
- Any deviation from the manufacturer labeled directions for dosage or administration must be accompanied by a written physician’s order.
- Families must provide applicators for medications that indicate proper dosage amounts.

For non-prescription drugs, a note from your doctor is required if no written instructions for the child’s age indicated. Medication should be in the original box with complete instructions. All medications must be taken home daily unless the medication is ongoing such as medications for severe allergies. For children that require medications for chronic conditions or serious illnesses, a medication plan will be set up and followed by the family, Academy staff, and the child’s physician. All staff members are trained on the proper administration of medications. For bulk medications, such as sunscreen, a doctor’s note is required for an alternative to be provided.

## Child Abuse Reporting Requirement

Washington State Law and Licensing guidelines require that any suspected signs and/or suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, physical or emotional abuse, or child exploitation be reported

immediately to the Police or Child Protective Services (CPS). Notification of parents/guardians of such a report is at the discretion of the police or CPS. Wee Care Academy staff are mandated reporters.

## **Staff Qualifications**

All staff members at Wee Care Academy are certified in Child CPR/ First Aid, Blood-borne Pathogen/HIV training, safe sleep training, and have a current Food Handler's permit. Staff members are also required to complete the 30 hour basic STARS (State Training and Registry System) class within their first three months of hiring. This training assists our teachers in the areas of classroom management and child development. Teachers are required to take 10 hours of "STARS" continuing educational training per year or be taking college level courses in Early Childhood Education. In addition, all staff members go through an extensive orientation and supervision period when joining Wee Care Academy.

## **Inclement Weather**

Wee Care Academy is a nature enhanced program and do our best to get children outside multiple times a day for 30-90 minute periods. The Administration will observe weather conditions and other possible hazards and will take appropriate action for our children's health and safety. Conditions that will cause Wee Care Academy to limit children's outside time include but are not limited to: temperature and poor air quality.

Wee Care Academy will keep children inside if any of these conditions occur:

- (a) Heat in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- (b) Cold less than 20 degrees Fahrenheit
- (c) Lightning storm, tornado, hurricane, or flooding if there is immediate or likely danger;
- (d) Air quality Index above 100

The academy will also follow all requirements that are pursuant of local or state authorities.

### *Storms and Snow*

The Director will determine prior to opening hours whether or not to open the center. Every effort will be made to remain open in severe weather conditions, but the safety of our families and staff is always our first priority. Wee Care Academy uses *FlashAlert* to notify staff and families of closures. You may also receive an update through Procure, email or on our private Facebook page as things change and or progress.

If childcare must close during hours of operation because of a storm or snow, the staff will notify parents by phone. Children will only be released to adults designated in Procure by the parents. There are no refunds or credits of tuition or trades for closures due to inclement weather

## **Crisis/Disaster Response**

As parents, we are all concerned about what will happen to our child in a crisis/disaster situation when we cannot immediately reunite. Rest assured that the staff at Wee Care Academy are prepared to respond to these situations. Each classroom has an emergency "Grab 'n Go" bag that we take with us whenever we leave the classroom. This backpack has but is not limited to any of these items: emergency medication that is prescribed to a child (such as an epi pen), first aid supplies, flash lights,

cups, wet wipes, and tissue. A 72 hour disaster supply kit is stored on site. Wee Care Academy is prepared for many different emergency situations. These include but are not limited to:

### Power Outage

Parents will be notified by telephone if a power outage is prolonged for more than one hour and the center will close. Wee Care Academy will not open if power is lost prior to opening.

### Earthquake

In the event of ground movement, staff will direct all children away from windows, bookcases, and hanging shelves and to “DROP, COVER, and HOLD.” Staff will have children remain that way until the earth has stopped moving. We will then evaluate the building and determine the need to evacuate. In the event of an evacuation, we will evaluate our evacuation routes for damage and then proceed to the top, right corner of the parking lot. We will then notify parents and/or call out of area contacts located on the back of your child’s Consent for Emergency Treatment/Earthquake Information form.

### Fire Alarm/Emergency Evacuation

If smoke or fire is seen or if there is another emergency requiring evacuation, we will evacuate children, visitors, and staff. We will meet at the top corner of the parking lot where we take attendance, call 911, and notify parents.

### Intruder Alert Procedure/Lockdown Procedure

An intruder is defined as any unauthorized individual who, through act or deed, poses a perceived threat to the safety and welfare of children or WCA employees. The Director or designee will signal our lockdown procedure to staff and call 911. Each classroom locks their interior and exterior doors, closes the black out curtains, turn off lights and gathers children in the designated part of the classroom, away from windows and doors. When “All Clear” is given by administration, children will be reunited with their parents.

Please see our “Crisis/Disaster Response” handout for more details. There are no refunds or credits of tuition or trades for closures due to emergency situations.

## **Family Communication**

Communication between families and Wee Care Academy is critical to ensuring your child has a happy, healthy, productive experience while in our care. Several communication pathways have been developed to make sure parents/guardians feel they can keep up with what is going on and that staff can feel they have a communication network with the families.

### Child’s Mail Pouch

Each child has a labeled mail pouch in the classroom. Art projects, notes from the office, and correspondence from other parents can be found there.

### Quarterly Newsletter

Every quarter a newsletter is distributed to the families via email and on our Facebook page updating information on news and activities of the Academy.

### Procure Parent Engage

All children have a continually updated portfolio on an online platform called Procure. This includes a weekly written report, photos, daily reports for infants and toddlers. The teachers also write a Today Wee... each day to let parents know what the classroom did as a whole during the day. Parents can also send messages to their child's teacher on Procure. A paper copy of the reports can be given to the parent/guardian upon request, but is always available for parents to view online. To view your child's portfolio, you must either log-in to Procure or go the Procure app on your phone. Wee Care Academy emails a link to your email address of choice for you to set up your child's profile. If you need the link resent, please let an administrator know.

### Telephone Contact

Parents/guardians are welcome to call Wee Care Academy at any time to check on their child or have a conversation with the Lead Teacher regarding questions or concerns.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

A formal parent-teacher conference is scheduled for the winter. Sign-up sheets for available times will be available online. At this conference, teachers share their Progress and Planning Reports. What a great way to see the wonderful growth that occurs over the course of several months! Remember, informal conferences can be set up at any time with your child's teacher or the Director by calling or emailing.

### Flash Alert

When WCA will be closed, closing early, or opening late due to inclement weather or power outage, we use the Flash Alert system to quickly contact families. You can sign up by following the directions below:

1. Go to: <https://flashalert.net/id/WeeCare>. (You can also use this link to just view our updates)
2. Fill in email and other prompts to finish registration
3. Check your email to validate your email address
4. Your email address is now signed up to receive alerts.

If you would also like to receive pushed phone messages, please follow the instructions below:

1. Download the FlashAlert Messenger App on your phone
2. Click Register and input your FlashAlert login information
3. Login to FlashAlert
4. Click "My Linked Phone Apps" under Manage Your Messenger Subscription
5. Scroll down and click Send Test. An alert should pop up on your phone.

## **Thank you for choosing Wee Care Academy!**

We know there are many childcare options available to your family and we take very seriously our responsibility to provide the finest care and education available for your child. The staff at Wee Care Academy will strive every day to make sure that the trust and confidence you have placed in us is earned and well deserved.